

# *CONSERVATIVE CLUBS MAGAZINE*



February 2025 75p



## **ACC Chairman Visits Biggleswade**

**Charity Updates From Clayton and Dunstable Clubs**

**Preparing For An AGM Guidance**



# Message From The Chief Executive

*CONSERVATIVE  
CLUBS  
MAGAZINE*

With 2025 well underway, we thought it would be useful to deal with a few housekeeping issues. The first is a reminder to those clubs registered with the FCA (typically clubs which do not have Trustees and include the word Limited within their title) that an annual return and accounts must be submitted to the FCA. We are seeing more and more clubs falling behind with this requirement, which is a very concerning trend and one that ultimately can result in a club being struck off the Register. Please do put this an item on your next Committee Meeting and ensure you are up to date with your FCA filings.

Secondly, a reminder that we still receive many enquiries relating to Energy Supply Consultants. There are no easy answers regarding energy supply and costs but there is some common-sense advice we can offer. Make sure to read and understand the standing daily charges as well as the unit costs, there is no point agreeing to low unit costs if high daily charges cancel this out. And make sure you look at the length of the contract, a one-year deal that turns out to

be uncompetitive is much better than a five-year deal which turns out to be uncompetitive. Above all, ensure you give yourselves time to review and understand the contract – do not be rushed into entering into an agreement without soberly reflecting on the terms being offered. Energy supply costs are a huge part of any club expenditure and should accordingly take up a large portion of the Committee’s time. If in any doubt, do not agree to a deal, it is much easier to escape a bad deal before it is signed than after it is signed.

Finally, we have been dealing with a number of concerns being raised by clubs regarding Bird and Howe. This firm deals with Business Rates and potential rebates. If your club has any causes for concern, then please let the ACC know. The complaints we are dealing with at the moment concern contracts signed in past years which contain clauses permitting new invoices to be raised in respect of alleged continued Business Rates savings. Do let us know you are having any issues with this firm.

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# CLUB LAW AND MANAGEMENT

## Preparing for an Annual General Meeting

An AGM is held to transact certain business: the report on the ballot for officers and committee (unless they are elected at the AGM itself); the report on the accounts; the adoption of the accounts, as audited; and other reports as required by a club's own rules.

Firstly it is essential for the AGM to be properly summoned. This usually involves a notice being placed on the club notice board announcing the date and time of the meeting and requesting motions to be submitted to the Secretary by a certain date.

The rules of most clubs provide that a notice of the AGM shall be exhibited at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting; and the notice of any motion must be submitted within ten days following the posting of the notice. Rules can also say that the agenda must be posted for a specified number of days before the date of the meeting.

Before the meeting it is essential for whoever is taking the Chair—Club President or Chairman depending on the club's rules—to undertake a careful study of the agenda. This will mean he can conduct the business effectively and also spot any difficult matters that might arise. Preparation is crucial to the success of the meeting.

When the meeting starts, the Chairman should satisfy himself that the requisite quorum is present. Most club rules require

a quorum. This is to prevent a small, poorly attended meeting making decisions which affect the whole club.

The meeting must proceed with each item of business taken in the order in which it appears on the agenda. A normal agenda begins with confirmation of the minutes of the previous AGM, any business arising from them, then the Treasurer's report on the accounts, the election of officers, and so on.

The presiding officer, mindful of the need for a well-ordered, good tempered and constructive meeting, must see that the agenda is followed strictly. Speakers should stand when called by the chairman and, to preserve order, only one person should be on their feet at the same time. When the Chairman rises any other speaker should sit down and this should be insisted upon. Unless this is done, a meeting can degenerate into disarray and chaos.

A proposal for discussion is a 'motion' and when it is accepted it becomes a 'resolution'. Before discussion begins, a motion must be proposed and seconded. A motion that is proposed, but finds no seconder, lapses and the meeting proceeds to next business. When a motion is proposed and seconded it is open for discussion. No speaker should be allowed to address the meeting more than once on each motion, except for the proposer, who may reply to the

debate. A motion may be ultra vires—that is, outside the scope of the meeting—and should immediately be ruled out of order by the chairman.

An amendment is a proposal to alter the wording of a motion and may be moved at any time during the discussion of the original motion. Special care must be taken over this if the meeting is not to be allowed to become confused. The proposal requires a proposer and seconder before it can be considered by the meeting. The chairman should present an amendment to the meeting, once it has been properly proposed and seconded, in terms such as: 'To the motion before the meeting has been duly proposed and seconded, that...' The wording of the amendment then follows and the immediate discussion must be confined to the subject of the amendment. Some bodies permit amendments to be moved to amendments but it is NOT recommended for clubs. If it is allowed it can prolong discussion and make for a complicated passage of business. In practice the proposer of the main amendment may incorporate in it what he considers best in suggestions for further amendments, if he accepts they will improve his proposal. No amendment may be a direct negative to the main motion for this would merely duplicate the need to vote on a particular proposition. An amendment must be disposed of before the meeting can proceed to a further amendment. If an amendment is accepted it becomes part of the original motion; it is then called the substantive motion. Further amendments may be considered in turn until all have been dealt with. Then, discussions may continue on the substantive motion until it is put to the vote. Before the vote on each amendment the chairman should repeat its wording so that there is a clear understanding of the matter on which a vote is being taken.

Similarly the substantive motion should be read out again

before the vote. When those 'for' and 'against' in each vote have been counted, the chairman should announce the result. If a large number of people are voting, the President should appoint two 'tellers' to count the votes. The tellers should both count the 'yes' and 'no' votes. If there is any disagreement the vote MUST be taken again. When an issue is controversial a close vote may be disputed so it is useful to be prepared for a written vote.

One further possible motion is 'That this meeting do now adjourn.' This takes precedence over all other business and may be moved at any time during a meeting. The Chairman should not accept such a motion if he thinks it is being moved with the intention of disrupting the meeting. The decision is made on the vote of the meeting, on a motion proposed and seconded, and without lengthy discussion. Amendments are possible but only to set, limit or extend the period of the adjournment.

The correct conduct of a meeting is not an easy skill to master, but many difficulties can be avoided if the presiding officer follows the procedures set out here. However, even this will not guarantee that meetings are without problems. Some issues will so divide the membership that heated, and sometimes irresolvable, exchanges are inevitable. Nevertheless, a basic knowledge of tried, and accepted, procedures will help ensure that most meetings are managed efficiently.

### Election of Club Officials

The rules of a club should provide the method whereby its officers and committee are elected. Such rules must be strictly adhered to, otherwise the election may be rendered invalid and a fresh ballot has to be taken. What follows should be read and applied subject to anything appearing to the contrary in the club rules—

### Nominations

It is the duty of Secretary to post a nomination sheet on the

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Trade Management Services

## ◀ From page 3

notice board, which records the names of candidates for the committee or other offices. The nomination sheet must remain displayed for whole period stipulated in club's rules. Day and time when nominations close should be stated on the sheet, even if not definitely fixed by club rules. The proposer and the seconder of any candidate should personally sign their names against the candidate they put forward, having previously ascertained that their nominee is willing to stand and serve if elected. A member may be nominated for any number of offices in the club unless the rules provide otherwise; if elected to more than one office, he can select the one he desires to hold. If the rules say that no candidate shall be nominated for more than one office, it is in order for an officer or committee member who is not due to retire to be nominated for another office without first resigning. If unsuccessful, he would retain his present office.

## Qualifications

Candidates for office, nominators and seconds must be either honorary members, life members, or subscribing members who are not in arrears with payment of their subscription before nomination sheet is due to be taken down. Otherwise nominations may be objected. Where a rule provides that a certain period of membership is an essential qualification for office, this must be calculated from the date when the candidate was elected to membership to the last day of nominations. For example, should six months be specified, a person elected to membership on 6 July would first become eligible on 6 January the following year.

## List of Voters

Unless the rules provide otherwise, every member of the club is entitled to vote. It is the duty of the Secretary to prepare a special list of members for this purpose. The list should be handed to scrutineers, together with the precise number of requisite ballot papers if all such members voted.

## Ballot Paper

The ballot paper is compiled from the nomination sheet. In preparing the ballot paper, names

of candidates for presidency and other offices are usually typed or printed in separate sections on the same sheet as names of candidates for committee. The different sections are nevertheless distinct, and if one section is spoilt by the voter, it does not invalidate other sections.

Names of all candidates should be set out alphabetically on the ballot paper and in uniform type. The 'starring' of ballot papers i.e. putting an asterisk (\*) against the names of retiring members seeking re-election or distinguishing them by printing their names in larger or thicker type is irregular.

## Marking the Ballot Paper

If a voter makes some mark other than the customary 'X' against the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, it does not necessarily spoil his paper. The vote is good, if the intention of the voter is clear. Practically the only grounds for the rejection of the paper are—

- Because too many votes have been recorded
- Uncertainty of the voter's intention
- Writing sufficient to identify the voter

If a member spoils a paper he should, on request, be supplied with another, having previously handed back the one spoilt. A member may vote for a fewer number of candidates than there are vacancies—he cannot be compelled to use all his votes—but if he votes for more candidates than there are vacancies, the paper, so far as the particular section is concerned, must be regarded as spoilt.

## Taking the Ballot

Unless the rules contain specific instructions on the matter, committees decide how ballot papers are to be distributed—whether sent to members by post or handed to them on request. Where the former method is adopted and the member returns the paper by post or hand, the envelope containing it should be sealed and marked 'ballot.' It should be addressed to the scrutineers, who must deposit it unopened in the ballot box. Where ballot papers are handed to members, the scrutineers should first make sure from the list received from the Secretary that the member is entitled to vote. When this is done,

the member's name should be scored off, thus preventing anyone voting twice.

## Close of Ballot

The ballot must remain open the full time stated in the rules. When it is closed, the scrutineers count the votes recorded. The results, signed by them, together with the marked list of members to whom they have handed ballot papers, and also all unused ballot papers, must be handed by them to the Chairman at the Annual General Meeting.

## Demand for a Scrutiny

If a majority of the meeting

demands a scrutiny, the box containing all the ballot papers should be sealed by the Chairman and arrangements made for a recount in the presence of the scrutineers. Once it has been declared and accepted, a ballot stands no matter what discrepancies a subsequent examination of the papers may reveal. Prior to the signed statement being handed to the Chairman by the scrutineers, a system of checking and double checking should be carried out to ensure absolute accuracy in the matter of the votes recorded.

# Duties of Club Officials

After the AGM there may well be Members who are holding new positions or have been elected to the Committee for the first time. We hope the following guide will help new and existing Committee Members and Officers with their role.

Only those prepared to carry out the duties of any club, faithfully and fully, should accept nominations. Elected officers, who include members of the committee, are individually and collectively responsible for seeing that the law of the land and rules of the club are observed. Their position is one of trust and authority and should be regarded as such. The rules of a club should specify the duties attached to each office.

## The President

He should identify himself actively with the club and its affairs and be more than a figure-head. He should also preside *ex officio* over all meetings (other than committee meetings).

## The Chairman

Clubs can be very successful when they have a body of enthusiastic and dedicated members, for the membership is the heart of a club and at the head of a club, the Chairman often holds the key to success. The importance of a hard working Chairman, together with the Secretary, is paramount. If such a duo also has the support of a hard-working and harmonious committee, then the club will be doubly blessed.

The records of clubs show that many have enjoyed the benefits of devoted Chairmen and Secretaries, without whom the facilities enjoyed by their

members would not exist. Therefore, it may be recognised that an important duty of the members is to choose an able and reliable man or woman to represent the club as Chairman.

The Chairman presides *ex officio* over all committee meetings and, in the absence of the President, those of the club. He should be thoroughly familiar with the rules of the club and the procedures which govern club meetings. He must, at all times, endeavour to maintain the dignity of his office and, by precept and example, the reputation of the club. The Chairman should not be afraid to exercise his authority, quietly and tactfully, when occasion arises. He should work in the closest co-operation with the Secretary in assuring that all legal and other club obligations are carried out.

Chairmen may be elected directly i.e. by the members in a general meeting or, if the rules provide, indirectly by the committee from among their own number. In the latter case, as the members will have elected all the members of the committee, they will have already signified their confidence in the person who becomes Chairman.

On assuming the responsibilities of the post, the first obligation of a new Chairman is to become familiar with the duties it entails. It would be impossible to describe every situation and problem that might confront a Chairman, which is why the Chairman needs to maintain a cheerful and dignified presence, and to act with tact and fairness at all times.

The Chairman presides over committee meetings and, consequently, will be instrumental in securing the smooth running of the club and the competent conduct of business. Committee meetings have to be held at least once a month in order to settle club policy, and to make decisions affecting the operations of the club and its development. The Chairman's handling of these meetings will determine, above all, how committee members retain their commitment and interest in serving their club.

The Chairman is the vital link in creating an atmosphere that is indispensable to a successful club. If the Chairman fails, it is possible that one of two trends, or both, will become apparent. There may be a lack of interest among members generally, or difficulties may be experienced in obtaining nominations to fill vacancies occurring on the committee.

Most members learn the art of conducting meetings and running the club, and also develop the confidence to address a wide audience at general meetings, by working within the committee. An efficient Chairman, who holds the trust of colleagues, will do much to secure the continued success and development of the club. It is up to the Chairman to weld the diverse characters that form a committee into a working unit.

The Chairman will be assisted in his duties if there is a code of standing orders which the committee members themselves have accepted and agreed upon for the proper conduct of their affairs. In conjunction with the Secretary, the Chairman is responsible for arranging the agenda and the priorities of the committee. A carefully prepared agenda will help to ensure that business may be dealt with quickly. As long as all essential business is catered for and all correspondence considered, their choice of priorities is unlikely to cause dissension within the committee.

If an agenda cannot be completed in time, it is better that the committee should agree to adjourn to a later date to conclude the outstanding business. The Chairman and Secretary should not take it upon themselves to omit items from the agenda in order to

shorten the meeting. It is for the committee to decide what they will consider for the business is theirs and needs to be dealt with. The authority of the committee should never be usurped. However, a good Chairman will be able to influence them towards wise decisions.

Patience and the avoidance of argument are the best instruments for the smooth conduct of meetings. It should go without saying that the Chairman must conduct meetings in accordance with club rules, standing orders and recognised rules of procedure. This may not guarantee totally trouble-free meetings in all circumstances, but it will prevent most problems from occurring. If the occasion does occur when disorderliness develops, and the Chairman believes business cannot be satisfactorily concluded, the meeting may be adjourned to another date.

In addition, a Chairman should remember that a committee never performs the tasks which are specifically allotted to individual officers or the steward. Not only is this likely to be both confusing and a waste of the committee's time, it can be irritating and frustrating for an intelligent body of people who have given their time to committee work to find they are also engaged in trying to perform duties specifically allocated elsewhere. Similarly, neither the officers nor employees should be allowed to take decisions that are the prerogative of the committee collectively.

The Chairman will fulfil the duties of chairmanship by adopting a conciliatory attitude and try to avoid riding roughshod over even the most awkward participant from the floor. A cheerful, firm, tactful and judicious person will avoid most of the possible pitfalls of chairmanship and earn grateful thanks from the membership.

## Trustees

The dictionary definition of the word 'trustee' sums up what is expected of such an office holder. The definition says, simply, 'one who is trusted or to whom something is entrusted.' It adds that the definition in law is 'one to whom property is entrusted for the benefit of another; one of a number of persons appointed to manage the affairs of an

institution.' Even on that basis it is clearly not a task that should be undertaken lightly. It is not an office held just for the honour itself, although many justifiably regard it as an honour bestowed by the club.

Trustees must be eighteen years of age or over and elected by members of the club at a General Meeting. They are usually ex officio members of the club committee by virtue of their office. Trustees attend meetings and are subject to the decisions of the committee. Neither the Secretary nor Treasurer of a club should hold the office of trustee.

Generally speaking, trustees are appointed 'at the pleasure of the club' which, in ordinary language, means until resignation, removal or death. It is possible for the club rules to provide for a fixed term of years. Rules should state the method of election or appointment of trustees and how the tenure of office is terminable subject to any separate deeds. On the election of a new trustee, a Deed of Appointment must always be made and conveyances updated. The committee must see to it that the club's lawyers are involved in the appointment of the elected trustee to his office so that the essential legal formalities are carried out. The lawyers, too, must be involved when a trustee is 'discharged' at the end of his or her term, or when death, in office, occurs.

It is very important that club trustees gain an understanding of their position. It is essential for trustees to appreciate fully, what they are called upon to do, what they do and why they are doing it so that they do not, through inadvertence, become personally liable. They must remember at all times that they are acting on behalf of the club.

Legal proceedings are taken in the name of the trustees on behalf of or against the club, unless its rules specify some other person. Orders obtained against trustees do not lie against the property and possessions owned personally by the trustees but against the assets of the club. This is the case providing they are suitably indemnified, which should be in the club's rules, and they have been appointed properly by Deed of Appointment. In other words, trustees' personal effects are not at risk if they are involved

in legal proceedings on behalf of the club so long as they have acted strictly within the club rules. If they have knowingly allowed the club funds to be used for objects not authorised by the rules, they become personally liable.

All leases and agreements of the club should be in the names of the trustees and no documents should be signed by them until they are satisfied they are acting on behalf of the club. Clubs must seek advice when any documents are to be signed that involve the future of the club, its property, or its finances no matter who is the other party involved. It is vital that such documents and anything similar should be examined and approved by the club's legal advisers before signature. The club might well have to pay a fee for expert advice, but the peace of mind which it can bring will be well worth the expenditure.

Trustees must pay particular attention to the use of club funds, and must always ensure that no moneys of the club are spent contrary to law or the club rules, or for purposes not connected with the club or its objects. Proceedings against any person or persons, for fraud or misappropriation, are instituted in the names of the trustees. Two of the duties of trustees which are generally well known are that they are the people, when things have gone badly wrong, who sue on behalf of the club and those who are sued as representatives of the club.

For generations in the club movement, the appointment to the position of trustee has been seen as the very peak of achievement. Trustees are chosen from members who have served their club well and faithfully and sometimes the appointment is seen as a 'reward' for their fidelity and long service. That however must not be the sole consideration.

It goes without saying that anyone being considered for the position of trustee must be a person of integrity, held in high regard and be ready to play a full part in the life of the club. Older members will bring the benefit of a lifetime of experience in the club and the outside world to the office. However, the case for the appointment of a younger person who can build up the knowledge

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required while working alongside an older trustee should not be dismissed. Whatever the age of the trustee, clubs should bear in mind, and have faith in, his or her judgement, integrity, and continuing devotion to the interests of club members. At all times trustees have to ensure that whatever they do is in strict accordance with the rules of the club and, in accordance with the law of the land.

Another very important point is to ensure that a club is never left with only one trustee. The number of trustees set out in the club's rules should be maintained at all times. This is necessary because if the one remaining trustee dies, then the 'statutory vesting' of the club's property passes to his executors or administrators. It is important to remember this procedure, as failure to follow it could lead to difficulties which, in turn, could lead to a costly legal process to resolve.

If the need arises to remove a trustee from office, a Special General Meeting should be summoned in the manner laid down in the club rules. The rules should also state by what majority such action can be taken. Remember, a vacancy created in this way must be filled—and the appointment made in the correct manner—without delay.

## The Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for seeing that all moneys, whether received by himself, the Secretary, the steward or any other official or employee are duly banked. He is to ensure that all debts of the club are paid as directed by the committee and that cheques are signed by himself and one, or more, members of the Finance Committee, then countersigned by the Secretary. It is his duty to produce the Paying-in Book, Bank Statement, Daily Takings Book etc. at every meeting of the committee, or whenever required.

## The Secretary

It is the duty of the Secretary to keep the books, documents and papers of the club in proper order and carefully filed. He must summon and attend all meetings and take Minutes of the proceedings.

Other responsibilities may be summarised—

- Keep the register of members up to date, with record of last payment of subscriptions
- See that the names, addresses and occupations of candidates for membership are duly displayed on the club notice board for the period stipulated in the rules
- Issue notices of default to members in arrears and see that names are removed from the register if subscriptions are not paid within the period stated in the rules
- Post all notices in connection with General or Special General Meetings
- Check nominations of candidates for office and allow none to go forward which are not in order
- Comply with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003
- Comply with the requirements of the National Insurance Acts, Statutory Sick Pay and see that all paid employees are insured
- See that the club is insured against liability at Common Law, for accidents occurring to club employees, and also against fire and burglary

The duties imposed on a club's Secretary make the person undertaking this office the linchpin in the conduct of club affairs. Unless the Secretary is truly competent, a club will find that it is unable to operate effectively and in accordance with the increasingly complex legislation affecting clubs. The Secretary acts under the superintendence, control and direction of the committee of management and is responsible for seeing that the decisions of the committee are conveyed to the proper quarter.

The position of Secretary requires not only considerable administrative skills, but must also fulfil the vital role of providing liaison between the membership and the committee. The Secretary's basic functions are to ensure that the club's clerical and organising activities are carried out, to see that all subscriptions are collected and that correspondence is dealt with.

A competent Secretary should be thoroughly familiar with the rules of his club, so that he can advise authoritatively when necessary. He should possess an intimate knowledge of the Licensing Act in so far as it applies to clubs. He is the official primarily held responsible in law for seeing that its provisions are complied with. The Secretary might be made a party to any proceedings instigated against the club for any breach of the requirements of the Licensing Act. Therefore, the Secretary must be conversant with the demands of licensing and gaming laws and of registration and other statutory duties under the Licensing, Friendly Societies, and Industrial and Provident Societies Acts. Failure to meet some of these requirements will cause the Secretary to be held personally liable. A plea that it was committed without his knowledge and connivance would be a good defence to any proceedings taken against him personally, if it could be established.

Before considering the possibilities surrounding the choice of Secretary, it must be reiterated that the Secretary, like the Chairman, requires qualities of integrity and impartiality and must be capable of commanding the respect of members. He should be a good mixer who does not yield to the influences of pressure groups or factions within the club, and is not suspected of favouritism. Again, he must always be aware that he is responsible to the committee and the members for his actions, and that his decisions must reflect the policies of the committee.

The choice of Secretary is governed by the rules and the period of tenure is determined by them. They should be sufficiently flexible to enable members either to elect or to appoint a Secretary, depending on their view of the post's requirements. Rules should include a provision for clubs to choose between electing a member from their own ranks, or to appoint some other person. Among the many reasons for members preferring an elected Secretary is that they may feel it possible for him to cope with the work entailed on a part-time basis. Certainly, the volume of work falling to the Secretary

will be a fundamental pointer in deciding whether the post should be filled by election or appointment.

If the club chooses to elect a secretary, then the election takes place in exactly the same way as for any other officer. If elected, the Secretary remains a member of the club. He will be entitled to propose or second motions, and to speak and vote both in committee and in General Meetings just like any other officer or club member.

Larger clubs may consider that the demands placed on their Secretary are beyond the capacity of a voluntary officer. The appointment of a Secretary is not normally made by members in general. The committee makes such appointments just as they appoint other employees of the club. Applicants may come from within the membership or from outside. Therefore, the rules customarily provide that where an appointed Secretary is to be preferred, the committee will carry out the appointment. In this position he is an officer without power, except as delegated by the committee.

## Committee

It is the duty of the committee to attend their meetings regularly. The committee conduct the general business of the club; are responsible for its management and control, and for seeing that the rules are duly observed. Acting in a quasi-judicial capacity they are empowered—subject to what the rules say—to suspend or expel offending members, having first given them an opportunity of being heard in self-defence. The appointment, control and dismissal of all club employees rest solely in the hands of the committee.

The committee is responsible for checking books kept by the Treasurer or Secretary and seeing that all takings have been duly paid into the bank. They should examine the Order Book and be satisfied that only goods authorised by them have been purchased and that accounts submitted for payment have been duly checked and verified with the Goods Received Book kept by the Steward. The committee, realising their position of trust and authority, should rigidly observe the rules of the club, thus setting an example to the members.

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# 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.

## Positive signs for 2025 as consumer confidence recovers

CGA by NIQ's latest On Premise Consumer Pulse Report reveals some welcome signs for spending into 2025.

**M**argins for the on-trade remain under strain, with additional burdens from the Autumn Budget likely to make for a high-pressure trading environment for some time to come, according to **Violetta Njunina, CGA by NIQ's Client Director**. But there are positive signs ahead.

"While the cost of living crisis is far from over for some people, there are encouraging signs that confidence is gradually building back after a very challenging few years," said Njunina. "Venues and suppliers will be hopeful for a release of pent-up demand over the recent Christmas period, and we can be cautiously optimistic that footfall and spending will continue to increase over 2025."

The *On Premise Consumer Pulse Report*, published in January, shows that that 92% of those surveyed visited the On Premise in November 2024 – up by 2 percentage points from October. Three quarters (75%) had been out to eat – making November the second best month of 2024 on this metric – but numbers vis-



iting for drinks fell by 6 percentage points to 43%.

In further positive signals, half (49%) of consumers said they had been out at least weekly, and the average visits per month rose slightly to 5.0. Numbers visiting on Saturdays jumped 10 percentage points to 61%, and more than a third (36%) said they had tried a new drink in the On Premise over the last week – two more indicators that some people are feeling slightly more confident about their spending.

This continues a steady easing in the cost of living crisis in 2024. Around one in seven (14%) consumers

still feel severely impacted by rising costs, but this represents a drop of 6 percentage points in the last 12 months.

However, CGA's research confirms that after-shocks of the crisis continue to be felt. While nearly a quarter (23%) of consumers are going out more frequently than they were a year ago, a higher number (42%) are going out less – largely because of increases in their cost of living and rises in food and drink prices. These twin trends have accelerated the polarisation of spending in the On Premise, between those with more cash in their pockets and those still feeling the pinch.

Despite the difficulties, the report confirms that consumers want to prioritise bars, pubs and restaurants for their spending. Two in five (40%) say they would prioritise their visits if their disposable income fell – more than the number who would protect areas of spending like clothing (36%), home improvements (33%) or international holidays (30%).

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

## Insights from Diageo's consumer trends report Distilled 2025

Diageo's *Distilled* report uncovers key trends shaping the future of socialising, examining the most pressing consumer trends facing brands today and driving understanding of consumers in all its markets.

**D**iageo's *Distilled 2025* report has identified the following five top trends as being key for the on-trade during the year.

### 01. NEO- HEDONISM

Consumers are reevaluating how they spend their money, searching for innovative ways to experience pleasure in their everyday lives.

### 02. CONSCIOUS WELLBEING

There has been an evolution in how consumers define health and happiness, with consumers having a more holistic view of wellbeing.

### 03. EXPANDING REALITY

Technologies like AI, Virtual Reality (VR), and



Augmented Reality (AR) are revolutionising how consumers perceive and interact with reality.

### 04. COLLECTIVE BELONGING

Consumers are increasingly seeking physical and virtual spaces that embrace unity, acceptance, and allow them to engage with like-minded individuals.

### 05. BETTERMENT BRANDS

Consumer conversations show them to be increasingly eco conscious, becoming more aware of the environmental and social impact of their choices.

Speaking on the report, **Cristina Diezhandino, Chief Marketing Officer**, said: "*Distilled 2025* delves into the biggest trends shaping socialising this year – from the rise of the 'zebra striping' phenomenon (alternating between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks) to people worldwide wanting to spend their well-earned money on one incredible experience. People socialising goes back thousands of years and by tracking how it evolves, it helps us, and our brands, to stay deeply connected with our consumers."

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



# YouGov survey shows low and no alcohol at record levels

The Portman Group's seventh annual survey in partnership with YouGov reveals more people are drinking low and no alcohol alternatives than ever before, showing the UK is drinking more moderately than ever.

The results show that well over a third (38%) of UK drinkers are now consuming low and no alcohol alternatives semi-regularly (12% regularly and 26% occasionally) compared to 35% in 2023 and 29% in 2022, with a notable increase in regular consumption from 8% in 2023 to 12% in 2024.

Young adults continue to drive the trend as the biggest consumers of low and no alcohol alternatives, with close to half (46%) of 25-34 year olds surveyed considering themselves either an occasional or regular drinker of alcohol alternatives, compared to 37% in 2023, whilst 40% of 18-24 year olds also drink these products semi-regularly.

Trends show that the younger generation also continue to be the most sober age group overall, with 39% of 18-24 year olds not drinking alcohol at all.

The results continue to highlight the positive impact of low and no alcohol alternatives in helping people to moderate their drinking, with almost a quarter (24%) of current alcohol drinkers stating that their weekly consumption has fallen due to low and no alcohol products, up from 23% in 2023 and 21% in 2022.

The survey also highlights an increasingly health-conscious UK consumer, with 29% of low and no drinkers citing collective 'health and medical' concerns as a key reason for choosing an alcohol alternative – an increase of almost a third (32%) when com-

pared to 2021(22%).

Not only are UK drinkers increasingly using low and no alcohol alternatives as a tool with which to moderate their drinking, but their rise in popularity is playing an important role in helping to tackle wider alcohol harms such as drink driving.

For the seventh year in a row, being able to drive home from social events is the number one reason cited by low and no drinkers for choosing an alcohol alternative, with over a quarter (28%) stating they will most commonly drink low and no alternatives in situations where they are unable to have a regular strength alcoholic drink such as when they are driving.

Almost a quarter of adults (24%) would still like to see more low and no options available on tap, and also want to see greater use of price promotions (30%) and greater availability of low and no products in non-traditional hospitality spaces (26%) such as live music and event venues.

**Matt Lambert, Chief Executive of the Portman Group, said:** "It's fantastic to see low and no alternatives continuing to soar in popularity, while helping to encourage more mindful and moderate consumption among UK alcohol drinkers. We welcome the drinks and hospitality industry continuing to work together to increase choice, availability and visibility of low and no alcohol alternatives, and we continue to urge the UK government to provide us with the outcome of the recent consultation on low alcohol descriptors which will further facilitate growth of the UK low and no alcohol market."

• [portmangroup.org.uk](http://portmangroup.org.uk)

# Former footballers urges everyone to "Know Your Score"



Former EFL footballer Jay Bothroyd is encouraging everyone to better understand their relationship with alcohol by taking the Drinking Check - a free online alcohol quiz designed to help people assess their drinking habits.

Although Bothroyd believes he has a good relationship with alcohol, he admits that he has never taken the time to check how much he actually drinks. That's why he's decided to take the Drinking

Check to find out if his drinking is putting his health at risk.

"Everyone needs to see where they're at," he says. "It helps people understand whether their drinking is at high risk or not. There's no bad result; it gives you the information you need to make adjustments if necessary."

The test is available at Drinkaware's website.

• [drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk)



## Heineken Silver to be discontinued in UK

Heineken Silver is being discontinued just two years after its launch.

The lager was originally promoted as featuring all the same pure, 100% natural ingredients as the original recipe, but using an ice-cold lagering process which removed proteins and rough-tasting tannins for a less bitter taste and a crisp, subtle finish.

The brew targeted Generation Y and Z consumers who aimed to moderate their alcohol intake while also looking for a more refreshing lager.

**A Heineken spokesperson, speaking to *The Sun*, said:** "The decision was made after careful consideration of market conditions and as a result, we are substantially increasing our investment in Heineken Original and Heineken 0.0 in 2025.

"Prioritising these brands will allow us to better serve the needs of our customers and consumers moving forward."

• [heineken.co.uk](http://heineken.co.uk)

## Penderyn Distillery – flying the flag for Wales

Penderyn Distillery, producer of award-winning Welsh whisky, is proudly representing Wales on the global stage, with its products now available in over 50 countries worldwide. This milestone achievement underscores the distillery's commitment to sharing Welsh craftsmanship and heritage with whisky enthusiasts across the globe, says the company.

**Stephen Davies, CEO of Penderyn Distillery, said:** "We're thrilled to be ambassadors for Wales in the international spirits market. Our presence in over 50 countries is a testament to the quality of our whisky and the growing appreciation for Welsh craftsmanship worldwide."

The distillery has reported unprecedented growth across Asian markets in 2024, particularly in China and Taiwan, and has made significant strides in India, the world's third-largest single malt whisky market.

Following its success in Asia, Penderyn has set its sights on the South American market. With whisky revenues in the region projected to reach US\$6.04 billion, this move represents an exciting new frontier for Welsh whisky.

• [penderyn.wales](http://penderyn.wales)

## The predicted seven essential fitness trends of 2025

David Lloyd Clubs' experts have been busy looking into the future, and they've picked out seven key fitness trends for 2025. And these are trends, not fads, stresses the company.

The seven trends that the experts have zeroed in on are those with the potential to change the face of fitness in the long term.

### 1. Movement meditation

Meditation doesn't have to mean silence and stillness. You can use the power of music and movement to escape the everyday, specifically through dance meditation.

### 2. A focus on sleep

"It's no longer just about physical conditioning; trainers now play a pivotal part in guiding clients toward sustainable, whole-body health," said Lucy Day, Head of Gym and Sport. "By integrating training techniques that support mental wellbeing, stress management and quality sleep, personal trainers can help clients enhance vitality and resilience at every stage of life."

### 3. AI fitness solutions

Looking to the future, the experts predict new ways to blend person-to-person coaching and artificial intelligence (AI) for an even more focused way to get to fit. This is something David Lloyd members have already taken on board, with 62% already using wearable technology.

### 4. Focus on recovery

As fitness understanding progresses, it's becoming clear that post-workout recovery is just as important as the workout itself. In 2025, expect to see an even greater emphasis on this.

### 5. Post-workout tools

Sticking with recovery, watch out for some high-tech tools, such as red light therapy which promotes cellular regeneration and speeds up muscle recovery.

### 6. The social side of fitness

According to a recent survey, 54% of Gen Z would rather sweat it out in the gym than on the dance floor. This is part of a recent trend that plays up the social side of working out.

### 7. Taking hormones into account

Google searches for hormone health have shot up by 72% since December 2023, with people increasingly recognising the importance of listening to your body and shaping fitness routines around it.

• [davidlloyd.co.uk](http://davidlloyd.co.uk)



## Diageo brands granted five Royal Warrants

Diageo has received five Royal Warrants of Appointment to His Majesty The King for the supply of spirits and wines to the Royal Household.

The Royal Warrants have been granted to Justerini & Brooks as Wine & Spirits Merchants, John Walker & Sons (Johnnie Walker) and Royal Lochnagar for Scotch Whiskies, Tanqueray Gordon & Company (Tanqueray and Gordon's) as Gin Distillers, and The Pimm's Company.

For Justerini & Brooks, this association dates back to the supply of wines for the Coronation of King George III in 1761, Johnnie Walker has held a Royal Warrant to the Monarch for the supply of its Scotch

whiskies since King George V in 1934, and this is the fifth Royal Warrant to be granted to Tanqueray Gordon & Company over almost a century, since 1925.

**Dan Mobley, Global Corporate Relations Director at Diageo, and Grantee for the Royal Warrant held by John Walker & Sons, said:** "It is a great privilege to supply our products to the Royal Household, and with the granting of these five new Royal Warrants to HM The King, we will display His Majesty's Royal Arms on these brands with immense pride."

• [diageo.com](http://diageo.com)

## Five trends shaping the future of the drinks industry

To plan for the evolving landscape of 2025, ambitious drinks brands and venues need to sift out the gimmicks, zone in on data-backed patterns, and tie their learnings together with a strong sense of brand, according to brand agency Continuous.

"When it comes to identifying which 'trends' will have legs – there's a big difference between a short-term gimmick and a movement that reflects shifting consumer behaviour," said **David Beattie, Senior Client Director and beverage branding expert at Continuous.**

Following is a summary of the company's top five identified trends.

### Trend 1: Mindful drinking

*The data:* The sale of non-alcoholic beer, wine, and spirits increased by 35% in 2023 (*Source: NIQ*). NCSolutions also report that 41% of adults planned to drink less in 2024.

### Trend 2: Second nature sustainability

*The data:* 72% of UK consumers reveal that sustainability practices influence their choice of bar or pub.

58% will pay a premium for drinks served in venues with strong sustainability credentials (*Source: BBPA*).

### Trend 3: Mass personalisation

*The data:* More than a third of consumers expressed an interest in personalised products or services. 1 in 5 of those who expressed an interest are willing to pay a 20% premium, and 42% of consumers want to be led by brands on customisation (*Source: Deloitte*).

### Trend 4: Digital innovation

*The data:* 83% of people begin a 'restaurant' discovery journey online, underscoring the importance of a robust digital presence for venues (*Source: Right Response AI*).

### Trend 5: Branding that builds loyalty

*The data:* 77% of consumers state they have remained loyal to specific brands for more than 10 years. An impressive 61% of loyal customers go out of their way to spend with them, and 75% of them will recommend a brand to friends and family (*Source: InMoment*).

• [wearecontinuous.net](http://wearecontinuous.net)

## Awards success for Brakes



Leading UK foodservice supplier Brakes has enjoyed spectacular success at the Cash & Carry Management Chefs' Own Brand Awards, scooping a massive 22 awards, including the much sought-after Star of the Show for its Portico Pan Ready Cornish Sole.

The company, which won around half of the categories available, took home 18 category awards as well as three Best of the Best awards for its Sysco Classic Mighty Pea Croquettes, Sysco Classic Roasted Mediterranean Vegetable Medley and Sysco Simply

Plant Based Veg & Harissa Chickpea Tart, along with the Star of the Show.

**Paul Nieduszynski, Chief Executive of Sysco GB, said:** "Winning so many awards highlights the depth of our new product development and how hard we are working to drive innovation across the sector.

"Our product development teams have done a fantastic job creating products that support customers in developing standout menus which deliver quality dining experiences."

• [brake.co.uk](http://brake.co.uk)

## Hoshizaki unveils IM CUBE series of ice makers

Featuring a new enhanced motor that delivers energy and water saving proficiencies, Hoshizaki's new range aims to improve serviceability, with optional features including an integrated internal drain pump and UV sanitation.

**Simon Frost, Hoshizaki Director UK & Ireland, said:** "Our already incredibly clear ice now benefits from even greater clarity and sharper edges – accomplishing a flawless 90°C angle not previously seen in the market. Beyond aesthetics, we've focused on refining several key elements, including water and energy efficiency, hygiene, durability, and maintenance accessibility to improve longevity."

The CUBE and ULTRACUBE are also retrofit com-



patible with Hoshizaki's drain pump, meaning operators can later add functions as their requirements evolve. All IM CUBE spare parts are compatible with Gen II models, meaning operators can continue to operate these machines until the end of their product cycle.

• [hoshizaki.com](http://hoshizaki.com)

## Making a difference with tableware trends



In 2025, tableware trends are being shaped by sustainability, aesthetic innovation and cultural fusion according to hospitality company Alliance. The company provides the following insights.

### Sustainable tableware continues to rise

In 2025, sustainability is not just a trend but an imperative. Outlets are increasingly choosing tableware crafted from eco-aware materials such as bamboo, recycled glass, biodegradable materials, and stainless steel. According to a report by the Green Hospitality Alliance, 72% of consumers are more likely to support establishments that prioritise sustainability in their operations.

### Artistic and aesthetic evolution

Natural, handcrafted aesthetics dominate the tableware designs of 2025. Plates, bowls, and glasses with asymmetrical shapes and organic textures create a sense of individuality. A 2024 survey by Hospitality Design Magazine found that 68% of diners felt unique tableware enhanced their overall dining experience. With advances in digital printing technology, these customisations have become more affordable and accessible.

### Cultural fusion and storytelling

The globalisation of culinary tastes is mirrored in tableware designs, with influences from diverse cultures taking centre stage. Mediterranean mosaics, and bold patterns inspired by African and South American traditions are increasingly prevalent, reflecting broader trends in cultural fusion within cuisine. Farm-to-table establishments favour rustic, earthy designs that underscore their connection to nature.

### Trends in glassware and bar accessories

Bars are embracing vintage glassware designs, with influences from the Art Deco and Mid-Century Modern periods. Cut crystal glasses and elegant coupe designs appeal to patrons seeking a touch of sophistication, and coloured glassware is a defining feature of 2025, adding vibrancy to cocktail presentations.

### Data and consumer preferences

A 2025 survey by Global Hospitality Insights shows that 79% of diners are willing to pay more for a premium dining experience, which includes high-quality and aesthetically pleasing tableware. A study by Social Dining Trends found that 61% of diners choose restaurants based on their Instagram appeal.

• [alliance.co.uk](http://alliance.co.uk)

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Recommended supplier to the Association of Conservative Clubs

# ACC Chairman Visits Biggleswade

On the 10th January, the ACC Chairman (Rt Hon Alistair Burt) visited and met with the Committee of the Biggleswade & District Conservative Club. The Biggleswade Club has occupied its premises since 1914 and enjoys a loyal membership with approximately 1,600 members.

Like many clubs, Biggleswade faces escalating costs maintaining and heating an old building and innovates to attract new members and increase member attendance. A key part of that strategy has been a varied entertainment calendar that appeals to a wide range of current and potential members. ACC affiliation card holders are

always welcome. The Club's large garden make the venue a popular destination in the summer, and the Club is also home to bowls and tennis clubs.

The Club has also partnered with the local branch of CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) to host the annual Biggleswade Beer & Cider Festival since 2023. The festival is a great way to bring the community together and bring new people into the Club. The festival will return between 8th-10th May 2025 and features 45+ ales, ciders, and perries. To find out more about the Biggleswade Club, and the beer festival, visit [www.biggleswadeconclub.com](http://www.biggleswadeconclub.com).

# Dunstable Conservative Club 100 Bag Challenge

A collaboration between two charity shops in Dunstable led to a challenge being issued to the Members of the Dunstable Conservative Club. The Members of the Club were challenged to fill and donate 100 bags of unwanted clothes and items before a two-week period had elapsed.

The challenge was in aid of AGE UK which is the country's leading charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life.

The Club's Members absolutely smashed the target set with a grand total of 235 bags filled and collected before the end of the two week challenge period.

ASM Lesa Byford from AGE UK said: 'Kevin and Karen from the Dunstable Conservative Club have been amazing and really supported AGE UK in this challenge. I am so proud of them and all the Club's Members for this achievement.'



Left to Right: Mavis Massingham (Governor), Carol Hornsby (Secretary), Pauline Gatward (Committee), Maxine Connolly (Committee), Mark Knight (Vice Chairman), Cliff Jones (Chairman), Rt Hon Alistair Burt (ACC Chairman), Rob Pullinger (Committee), John Massingham (President), Gill Backhouse (Governor), George Welsted (Steward)

# Clayton Conservative Club Holds Charity Darts Marathon

On Saturday 18th January 2025, Rob Sykes from the Clayton Conservative Club, Manchester, took part in a darts marathon for charity.

Joined by 4 of his fellow club members, known as the 'Con Club Cowboys' they completed the 100,000 darts marathon in 8 hours 54 minutes raising over £450.00

for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Timothy Russell said "A massive thank you to our members for putting themselves forward to do this amazing effort for a very worthwhile charity! We are so proud when our guys do such amazing fund raising events that are supported by all our other members!



# Waterloo and Taunton Celebrates Christmas Jumper Season

The Christmas Jumpers were out during the festive season at Waterloo and Taunton Conservative Club, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Club members came out in force wearing their woolly attire,

from penguins to reindeers, with a whole host of colours on display.

Club Chairman Leon Tamcken said "It was fabulous to see so many club members make the effort, thank you to everyone who took part"



# Churchtown Conservatuive Club Holds Charity Q&A with Tommy Fleetwood

During December the Committee of the Churchtown Conservative Club held a Charity Afternoon including a Q&A with local professional golfer and world ranked number 9, Tommy Fleetwood.

The event was organised by former Club Chairmen Jamie Barton & David White, & compered by 'Tiny' Trevor Ford, & Dave 'The Mighty' Quinn from local Mighty FM Radio station.

In the first session, Tommy answered a variety of questions from Trevor about how Tommy

got involved in golf and the highs and lows of his career. After a short break, Tommy answered questions from the floor. This was followed by Tommy happily posing for pictures, signing memorabilia, & chatting to everyone in attendance. In total, £1,660 was raised for Tommy's chosen charity, in memory of his late mother Sue. Well done to all involved & all those in attendance for making it an unforgettable day.

Photos courtesy of John McCabe



## Pages From The Past

In this month's Pages From The Past we go back to July 1938 which details the honour bestowed upon Mr Thomas Trott who was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Mr Trott was with the ACC when it was first formed in 1984 and created the ACC's Advisory Department. Some 40 years later that same department had grown to almost 30 employees dedicated to assisting Clubs with their problems. The

article is a fascinating look at the changes which had occurred within the ACC from 1984 to the present time of the article and the growth which the ACC had undertaken whilst the Club movement itself had swelled.

Mr Trott was formally awarded the OBE for political services in connection with the Conservative Club Movement.

Across the page was an equally informative article detailing precisely why 'Beer is Best'.

## HONOUR FOR A.C.C. OFFICIAL.

Mr. THOMAS TROTT APPOINTED an OFFICER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE ORDER.

The names of many notable personages appeared in the list of the King's Birthday Honours published last month. There was one, however, which at the Headquarters of the A.C.C. gave especial gratification, viz.,



MR. THOS. TROTT, O.B.E.

Photo Gordon Chase, Bromley, Kent.

the appointment of Mr. Thomas Trott to be an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, "for political services in connection with the Conservative Club Movement."

Ever since the formation of the A.C.C. 44 years ago, Mr. Trott has been the responsible head of its Clubs' Advisory Department. This, as is well known, is concerned

with the business side of our Clubs, affording them expert guidance and advice on all matters connected with their internal affairs—premises, book-keeping, bar, stocktaking, auditing, income tax problems, assessments, and the like. To helping Conservative Clubs in these directions Mr. Trott has devoted his life.

### "From Strength to Strength."

When first appointed in 1894, Mr. Trott himself constituted the A.C.C. Clubs' Advisory Department! Under him it steadily developed until now its staff numbers close on 30, all of whom he has trained and made qualified to give, under his direction, that assistance to Clubs which stands them in such good stead.

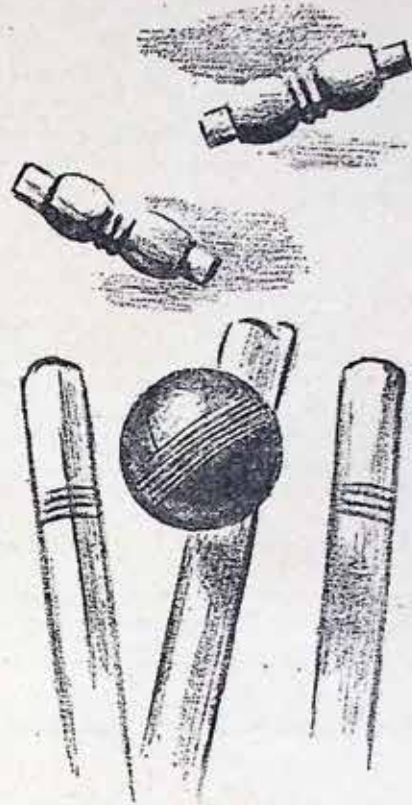
In his early years, when the A.C.C. was in its infancy, Mr. Trott himself visited Conservative Clubs in all parts of the country, set them going on the right lines and subsequently assisted in their development. Several of our most flourishing Clubs largely owe their foundation, and present prosperity, to the sound and practical advice he gave those who promoted them.

Latterly, owing to the ever-increasing volume of work with which the A.C.C. Advisory Department has to deal, Mr. Trott as its Chief, has been largely tied to Headquarters. There, in his unassuming and quietly efficient manner, he continues to render unflinching service to the Party through its Clubs. In addition, he fulfils responsible duties as a Public Auditor which he was appointed by the Treasury in 1902.

Behind the scenes the Party and Conservative Club Movement owe much to Mr. Trott. That an official at the Headquarters of the A.C.C. should, for the first time in its long history, have received recognition at the hands of the Sovereign, affords the greatest satisfaction. It gave me unfeigned delight to be the channel through which Mr. Trott's splendid record of service was brought to the notice of the Prime Minister, on whose recommendation the King was graciously pleased to bestow the honour. May the recipient live long to enjoy it.

E. J. M.

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