



HOYLAK GOLF CLUB

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HOYLAK GOLF CLUB HELD AT 7.30PM ON THURSDAY, 26th FEBRUARY 2026 AT BRACKENWOOD GOLF CLUB

Present

Dave Denton - President
Simon Talbot - Captain 2025
Ken Bruffell - Captain 2026

Rich O'Neill - Club Secretary Simon Nardo - Club Treasurer

Cliff Boulton, Derek Cowley, George Edwards, Frank Gilmore, Rob Goodall, Tom Hallam, Ron Hancock, Ken Hanrahan, Geoff Hicks, Jimmy Humphreys, Tony Kearney, Tony Kerkhofs, John Lally, John Lawrence, Mick McCabe, Tom McNamara, Ken O'Neill and Phil Qualtrough.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted in writing from the following fifty-three Members: -

D. Armitage, S. Ashford, S. Bagley, M.A. Baker, P. Bond, I. Chantler, S. Clark, T. Coleman, G. Crane, J. Crofts, K. Culligan, P. G. Davies, N. Down, R.L. Evans, D. Farley, D. Francis, A. Gardner, L. Glasman, M. Godwin, R. Gravener, W. Greene, A. Greenland, J. Griffin, G. Handley, K. Hayhurst, M. Higgins, W. Incontro, S. Jenkinson, D. Jerome, Mn Jones, Mike Jones, G. Jordan, H. Large, J. Lau, C. Lloyd, D. Lloyd, P. Martin, A. Mee, R.J. Murray, J. Nolan, C. Pugh, M. Reid, W. Rogers, M. Rylands, D. Smith, I.D. Thompson, W. Tripp, R. Wakefield, , D. Watson, P. Watson, J.R. Wiles, R. Winstanley and J. Woodhouse.

2. Status of Meeting

The Council Secretary informed Members that the disappointing turnout meant the meeting was inquorate and, in strict adherence of the Club's Constitution, should not proceed. However, the Club needed to elect a Council to ensure that there was a full programme of competitions and events for the new season and those Members who had put themselves forward for election should know that they have the confidence and support of the majority of Members, not just the small number that had attended the Annual General Meeting. Additionally, given that the Club's status as an unincorporated association placed an equal legal responsibility on all Members for any debts or contractual obligations, it was important that Members had an opportunity to contribute to the decisions made on their behalf at the Annual General Meeting.

Accordingly, those Members who were unable to attend had been asked in advance of the meeting to give their support to the election of the President, the Officers and the Members of the Council, and to those other matters on the agenda which constitutionally or traditionally required a vote. The following fifty-one Members had signified their support in absentia: -

D. Armitage, S. Bagley, M.A. Baker, P. Bond, I. Chantler, T. Coleman, G. Crane, J. Crofts, J. Davies, P.G. Davies, N. Down, R.L. Evans, D. Farley, A. Fowler, D. Francis, A. Gardner, R. Gravener, A. Greenland, G. Handley, K. Hayhurst, M. Higgins, W. Incontro, S. Issa, S. Jenkinson, D. Jerome, Martin Jones, Michael Jones, Mike Jones, G. Jordan, L. Kelley, H. Large, P. Martin, A. Mee, R.J. Murray, J. Nolan, D.W. Owens, C. Pugh, F. Reid, M. Reid, A. Rowland, M. Rylands, D. Salisbury, S. Skinner, D. Smith, J. Smith, S. Smith, I.D. Thompson, D. Watson, P. Watson, R. Winstanley J. and Woodhouse.

Members noted that the Council would consider proposals to amend the Club Constitution to address the continuing problem of the levels of attendance at annual general meetings.

3. Members in Hospital

Members were sorry to learn that Mike Baker and Tony Mee remained in hospital and wished to send them their best wishes for a return home in the near future.

4. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2025

Members noted that the minutes for the Annual General Meeting held on 24th February 2025 had been posted on the notice board immediately after their approval at the next following Council meeting. It was resolved unanimously, by those Members present and by those voting via Club media, that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings without discussion.

5. Club Secretary's Report (Rich O'Neill)

The Club Secretary opened his report by thanking Members for the support they had given to the changes he had introduced at the start of 2025 which were aimed at improving communications with the Membership. The regular bulletins ensured Members were made aware of all events and developments within the Club and complemented the weekly competition results published by the Handicap Secretary, Mike Jones. The online Suggestion Box had received a number of constructive ideas that were put before the Council; and the online application form and speedier acceptance process had seen the Club welcome seventeen new Members. The new Code of Conduct had received favourable comments and the results of the Member Survey would be published in the near future.

The Club Secretary next reported on preparations for the new season. Wirral Borough Council had been asked to provide twelve tee times for the new season, eight early and four late morning ones and this allocation would more than accommodate the average competition entry. Special arrangements would again be in place for the signature events, including the Captain's and President's Charity Days. The Winter League Presentation would take place

before the Captain's Drive-In on 21st March and the second Mick Down Memorial event with the Ladies Section on 11th July. The Club Championship would return to a two day scratch event but there would also be an alternative two day nett event for members not entering the Club Championship and this would be known as the James Braid Medal. The Municipal Championships would this year be held on Sunday, 28th June: and in 2027 would be hosted by Hoylake Golf Club. The full fixture list for the Summer Season would be published in the near future.

The Club Secretary was pleased to announce that the Club Website was to be refreshed in the near future with the aim of preserving the historical data while making it more useful for existing Members and more attractive and appealing to potential applicants. Members thanked the Club's Webmaster and Photographer, Graham Handley and Ian Chantler, for their continuing work and support in this area. The Club Secretary felt that the Club would build successfully on these developments to secure its longer term future and he was warmly congratulated by the Membership for the industry he had shown during his first year in office. The Club Secretary responded by thanking the Captain, Club Council and Members for their support.

6. Club Treasurer's Report (Simon Nardo)

The Club Treasurer circulated copies of his Annual Financial Statement for the year ending 31st December 2025 and explained that due to certain circumstances the financial records and supporting documentation had only recently been passed to the Club's auditors. The statement showed a surplus over the year of some £290 which was consistent with the previous year's balance and which increased the overall reserves to some £3,700. There was a welcome increase in both of the Club's major income streams: annual subscriptions up by £1,100 and competition entry fees by some £1,800; and these contributed to an overall increase in income over 2024 of over £1,800. The Club Treasurer was pleased to report that he had been able to access a \$500 contribution from his employer, the Bank of America, towards the Mick Down Memorial donations to Maggie's Charity and the St. John's Hospice. Overall expenditure had increased by some £1,800 although most of this could be accounted for by a rise of £1,500 in competition prizes. The Club Treasurer reminded Members that the Club relied heavily on income from membership subscription and competition entry fees and congratulated the Club Secretary on his efforts to bring in new Members.

Acceptance of the Annual Financial Statement and the Club Treasurer's recommendation that the level of the annual subscription should remain at £45 was proposed by Frank Gilmore, seconded by Ron Hancock and agreed unanimously by those Members present and by those voting via Club media.

7. Captain's Report (Simon Talbot)

The Captain was very happy to report that he had enjoyed a memorable year in office and, especially from August onwards, an enjoyable one on the course. Indeed, it ended with silverware with his doubles partner, John Woodhouse. The Captain was grateful that so many Members had attended the Drive-In and the Captain's Charity Day and given very generous support to his charities, Myeloma UK and the Alder Hey Children's Hospital at these events

and throughout the year. The Captain shared some amusing anecdotes about events that occurred during his year, both on and off the golf course. He also made particular mention of the inaugural Mick Down Memorial which he believed was a tremendous event made extra special by Nick Down's victory; and of the performance of George Edwards in recording a nett 58 to win the QEII Trophy.

The Captain had greatly enjoyed the Club Day Out at the Vale Royal Golf Club and also the Annual Dinner and Prizegiving at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club. He had been able to join many fourballs during the season and appreciated the reception he received on each occasion. The Captain had been greatly assisted by the Club Secretary and Council Members and he was sure that his successor, Ken Bruffell, would receive the same magnificent support from the Council and the Club Members as he had; and he wished him and his Vice-Captain, John Lally, an enjoyable and successful year. The Members applauded the Captain for his sterling efforts during his period of office.

8. Captain of Captains

The Senior Past Captain Frank Gilmore, on behalf of the Membership, congratulated Derek Cowley on the successful completion of his year as Captain of the Association of Merseyside Municipal Golf Club Captains. Members showed their appreciation of his efforts with warm applause.

9. Welcome to the Captain for 2025 (Ken Bruffell)

The new Captain was welcomed in the traditional manner and took the Chair. He thanked Members for their reception and said he felt both honoured and privileged by his appointment and he relished the challenges of representing the Club and Members at home and further afield. He then thanked the committee and members of Brackenwood Golf Club for offering the Club the free use of its facilities for this meeting. The Captain was grateful to be nominated by Ron Hancock and the Past Captains and would do all he could to ensure the new season was a memorable one; and he hoped he could follow the example set by his predecessor, Simon Talbot, who had proven to be an excellent Captain. The Captain described how he was invited to join the Club in 2012 by the legendary Norman Ellis and how he had been welcomed by the Members. He had always found the Club Membership to be warm and friendly and respectful of its tradition and past Members, as the inaugural Mick Down Memorial event had demonstrated, and he congratulated the Club Secretary and those who had contributed to that wonderful day.

The Captain thanked the Club Secretary and his Council for their unstinting efforts to make sure that there was a full and varied fixture list of competitions to be played, weather permitting, during his year in office; and he asked that Members not use the WhatsApp Chat Page to criticise the decisions of the Council or its Officers but instead to engage positively through the Club's Suggestion Box. Responding to a recent theme, the Captain stressed that Hoylake was a Club through the camaraderie of its Members and its legal status as recognised by England Golf and he trusted that there would be no further unnecessary comments in this regard. He also asked Members to show consideration to others by playing 'ready golf' and

avoiding so play, and by removing their names when they could not play so that their places could be reallocated.

Looking forward to the season's main events the Captain hoped as many Members as possible would attend the Captain's Drive-In on 21st March to observe the traditional start to the season. The Captain had canvassed the views of Members about the major events away from the Club and his choice of venues would recognise the predominant view that travelling distance and cost restricted attendance. Therefore, he had decided that the Club Day Out would be at the Wirral Golf Club on Friday, 19th June and the Annual Dinner and Prizegiving at the Leasowe Golf Club on Friday, 6th November. The cost including golf and meals for these important events would be £65 and £75 respectively. The Captain had chosen the Alzheimer's Society for his Charity and hoped that Members would afford this deserving organisation the very generous support that others had enjoyed in recent years.

The Captain finished his first address by saying that he was looking forward to working with his Vice-Captain, John Lally, and the Council and he wished all Members a very healthy, enjoyable and successful season.

10. Brackenwood Community Golf Club

Members were disappointed that Keith Marsh, Secretary of Brackenwood Golf Club, was unable to attend and address the meeting. However, he had shared an update with the Club Secretary on the progress being made by Link Golf UK following the decision of Wirral Borough Council in December 2025 to allow it to develop a golf offer on the Brackenwood site, subject to agreement on the detail of the lease. Link Golf UK already managed seven golf courses from London to Middlesbrough and was committed to making public golf affordable, accessible to all and enjoyable. The intention was to redesign the golf course and to introduce new greens. There was also a possibility that planning permission would be granted for a driving range but the Club did not envisage a reopening before the 2027 season.

11. Election of President

It was resolved unanimously, by those Members present and by those voting via Club media, that Dave Denton be re-elected to serve as President. The President thanked Members for supporting his charities, the Stroke Association and the Alzheimer's Society, at his President's Charity Day and throughout the year.

12. Election of Officers

It was resolved unanimously, by those Members present and by those voting via Club media, that the following members be elected to serve the Club in the positions indicated – Rich O'Neill (Club Secretary); Simon Nardo (Club Treasurer); Mike Jones (Handicap Secretary); Mike Higgins (Assistant Club Secretary); Tom McNamara (Council Secretary) and Ron Hancock, Jimmy Humphreys, Tonny Kerkhofs, Martin Jones and Phil Qualtrough (Ordinary Members). The Members present showed their appreciation of the efforts of Jamie Griffin and Dave Smith who had stepped down from the Club Council.

13. Appointment of Auditors

It was resolved unanimously, by those Members present and by those voting via Club media, that Dave Francis and Dom Jerome be appointed to serve as the Club's auditors for the ensuing year. Members present thanked Dave Francis and the retiring Andy Gardner for their valuable support to the Club Treasurer.

14. Changes to the Constitution

It was resolved unanimously, by those Members present and by those voting via Club media, that the Club Constitution and Rules be varied by the deletion of Rule 5 and the changes to Rules 14, 17 and 36 indicated below in italics: -

Management of the Club:

5..... The Club Secretary, Club Treasurer, Assistant Club Secretary, Handicap Secretary and Council Secretary will not be required to pay an annual subscription, in recognition of their work for the Club throughout the year.

Club Subscription:

14.....The annual subscription will be determined at the Annual General Meeting of the Club or at an Extraordinary General Meeting. Subscriptions will be due and payable by *the day before the Captain's Drive-In*.

Membership:

17.....Applications for membership may be made to the Club Secretary on the official application form or via the Club website. Applicants may be proposed by members although this is not essential. All applicants will be interviewed by the Club Secretary and the Captain who will *decide whether to recommend their appointment to the Council*.

Comments or Complaints by Members

36.....Members may bring any matter of concern to the attention of the Council by writing to the Club Secretary, *directly or through the Club Suggestion Box*, who will arrange for such correspondence to be shared at the Council meeting following its receipt.

15. Concessions for Members

Members present noted that concessions had been granted in 2025, as in previous years, to the Club's Webmaster and Photographer in recognition of their significant and on-going contribution to the management of the Club.