

CHESHIRE CRICKET CLUBS COMMITTEE

Executive Committee Meeting – 30th July 2026 Moss Hartford CC
7.00 p.m. - Meeting Minutes

Meeting Opened 7.10 p.m.

Present:

David Humpage (Chairman), Brian Horrocks (Secretary), Martin Roberts (Officials) Brian Boys (Cheshire County League Representative), Gareth Moorhouse (Cheshire Cricket Board), Selwyn Stephenson (Cheshire Cricket League Representative), Caroline Sheridan (Women's Cricket Representative), Andy Horsfield (CAG Representative), Julie Rafferty (Safeguarding), Joe Hocter (D&C Secreatry)

Apologies for Absence

David Atkinson (Grants) Barry Harwood, Duncan Anderson (Facilities) David Gane (Cheshire Cup John Petch (Cheshire County Cricket Club)

Previous Minutes:

The previous minutes were accepted as a true record with a review of the outstanding actions as follows:

- Action – Include a reminder in all formal club correspondence and meetings about Cheshire Cricket Board affiliation – Brian B and Selwyn**
- Action – Ensure merger workstreams are aware of this topic (ECB clubmark to accreditation with) in their deliberations – Brian B and Selwyn**
- Action –Share Groundsmens details with CAG – Brian B and Brian H**

All confirmed to have been done at the time in February

Chairman (David Humpage)

David welcomed everyone, in particular a representative from Derbyshire/Cheshire – Joe Hocter for his first visit. Joe is Secretary of the league.

Treasurer (Barry Harwood)

- Affiliation notices have been sent out to all 24 non-Cheshire league clubs with county representation. 13 received to date
- It was confirmed that 4Cs budget would be used again to carry out the PitchPower ground inspections.
- Gareth is continuing to support Barry, where required, with the collection of affiliation fees.
- Year-end payments will be due for umpire training subsidies and County Pitch Advisor (CPA) visits, in line with existing agreements.
- Recommend a contribution to WPCC in recognition of the use of Hartford CC. The club remains committed to developing the ground in partnership with Hartford Parish Council.

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Secretary (Brian Horrocks)

- The Correspondence file was reviewed and included:

An application had been received from Flixton CC to join the Cheshire pyramid. This is something that we have experienced before without allowing admission. It was felt that the league merger situation in the county currently underway was too involved to complicate with additional entries. We are dealing with re-homing all CCCL and CCL clubs into a new league with an Open Structure. There are already two clubs who may leave that structure before the season starts (one confirmed) which adds complexity. It was decided to decline the application from this non-Cheshire club at this stage (outside the Cheshire boundary by a short distance).

Action – Inform Flixton of the 4Cs decision – Brian H

Further correspondence was covered in relation to the Cheshire cup (covered below) and the change of meeting venue to Hartford CC (for which 4Cs are most appreciative of helping us out in the absence of Moss Farm availability)

Safeguarding (Julie Rafferty)

- Julie brought us up to speed with her current workload including:
 - Since the last meeting, CCB has been recognised as a '**Leading County**' for safeguarding, reflecting the excellent work led by Julie, supported by clubs and leagues across Cheshire.
 - Julie delivered Safe Hands courses and Safeguarding Network meetings, focusing on key safeguarding themes and updates has.
 - Every club – bar one has now got a CSO in place which is a great achievement. Julie is assisting the remaining club to fill the post.
 - CCB also participated in the **Safe and Effective Practice Pilot**, delivered in partnership with Active Cheshire and Mind UK. [LINK](#). This has been delivered to 64 attendees from 39 clubs. Cheshire Cricket Club Trust fund may help out with further events.
 - We had a major spring clean for clubs' Safeguarding Management Systems.
 - DBS processes have benefitted from additional verifiers. June news updates included a mandatory obligation to report child abuse from the Crime and Policing act.
 - Extreme weather guidelines have been reinforced
 - 54 incidents have been recorded, 10 of which are threshold cases to send up to higher authorities.
 - Player ambassadors are now being appointed and are working well. Recently they participated in an event at Old Trafford as a thank you.

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Facilities and Grants (Duncan Anderson, Dave Atkinson)

Dave had circulated his report beforehand, it is included here additionally

County Grant Fund

CGF new criteria and funding revision for 2026

Womens and Girls central to fund. Minimum of 3 games on PC to qualify.

Disability DPL or Champion club to qualify

Cheshire allocation up to £193,000 (increase from £113,000 in 2025) awarded to 22 affiliated clubs.

Maximum award increased from £10,000 to £15,000

3 streams of funding have also changed.

- Welcoming Environments - unchanged
- Enhanced Facilities – now split into two streams
 - Enhanced Playing Facilities – Fixed net systems, NTP's
 - Enhanced Changing Facilities – individual shower facilities, improved toilet provision changing spaces, gender neutral.
- Tackling Climate Change – now has its own separate fund launched this week. New grants of up to £15,000 now available

2026 County Grant Fund

29 submitted Expressions of Interests – over £380,000 worth bids.

23 clubs received grant offers from the CCB Panel, 22 went forward.

1 club has subsequently withdrew.

Funding Workshops: 36 club representatives attended workshops in March, with all but one attendee being new to the programme.

Building Belonging Fund (The Hundred funding): Funding is available via County Boards rather than directly to clubs, with bids aligned to the County Facility Strategy.

Current Position

3 clubs have completed projects

Timperley – new kitchen fit out as part of wider pavilion project.

Port Sunlight & Wistaston Village – new fixed practise net systems

5 clubs have completed the application process with projects underway or ready to start post season.

Toft, Bowdon Vale, Mobberley, Appleton, Cheadle

Remaining clubs are being supported through the application process with regular updates and reminders that deadlines are approaching in September for ECB scrutiny.

In terms of the streams

- Welcoming Environments - 8 projects totaling £63,000 investment – Kitchens, social spaces, patios
- Enhanced Playing Facilities - 9 projects totaling £87,000 investment – 5 new net installs, 2 base refurbishments, 1 new NTP install, 1 indoor net refurb.
- Enhanced Changing Facilities - 4 projects totaling £37,500 investment – update to changing rooms, update to social spaces and toilet facilities, 2 new changing blocks.

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Note: 1 project withdrawal has £5,500 remaining to be allocated.

Club Tenure: Security of tenure remains a challenge for several clubs. Knutsford Sports Club and Rectory Fields (Wilmslow) have both been lost from the adult cricket programme. CCB is continuing discussions with landlords regarding their reinstatement. There are several clubs with concerns over security of tenure currently. We continue to work with them to find a way through. Various discussions are taking place with council authorities and land owners. The new league Tier criteria documents suggest a minimum 10 year tenure which may be impractical currently.

Action – Consult with the Merger development group to see if the criteria documents need to be refined based on actual position - Duncan

Interest Free Loans

The IFS scheme has been extended from 2026. The maximum loan amount has been extended from £50,000 to £75,000, repayable over a maximum of 5 years. This is open all year round for affiliated clubs with junior sections. Non junior section clubs can loan a maximum of £30,000.

Funding Workshops

These were run again in 2026 as follows

11th March – Upton

19th March – Moss Farm

24th March – Bredbury St Marks

Attendance was around similar numbers as previous years but BSM was particularly well attended with around 25 attending.

County Facilities Strategy

Created and approved by CCB and ECB in 2024 and is now viewable via the CCB website.

A refresh of the strategy is underway and looking to be published before end of the year

Senior Open Leagues - Cheshire County Cricket League and Cheshire Cricket League (Brian Boys and Selwyn Stephenson)

- Both leagues are mid-season and going well in both league and cup activities. Recent years have been targeted at alignment of rules and competitions. This is bearing fruit in the merger discussions.
- Sadly CCL have had to suspend 3 clubs for differing reasons. Knutsford failed to locate to a satisfactory ground and thus could not fulfil home fixtures, Wirral 3rds were unable to fulfil fixtures due to a lack of players, and, Maritime 3s have failed to provide a satisfactory pitch at Leverhulme where Wirral council have the authority. The ground is deemed not suitable after numerous letters of complaint from opponents.
- General discussion led to an agreement that Non-Turf pitches were indeed welcomed in situations like these.
- Joe updated us on Derbyshire and Cheshire events. They will be accepting Hawk Green back next year. Other than that they have a stable position with represented clubs. They are developing Sunday cricket for the league, and a burgeoning Ladies cricket set up is emerging. Sadly Joe had to report the passing of Mary Smith, known to many in Cheshire cricket circles.

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- The ECB's **Two Circles** dashboard, which normally provides live participation data using Play-Cricket, has not yet been available during 2026 but is expected to go live in August. In the meantime, ECB has continued to provide monthly participation reports, with the latest covering the end of June.
- The June figures indicated around **70 fewer active teams** in Cheshire (all cricket combined) compared to the end of 2025. However, the 2026 data does not yet include festival teams, cup fixtures and summer competitions, so a clearer picture is expected by late August. Gareth and the team are analysing ECB data for the number of clubs/teams operating. There are some discrepancies in the data which we are looking at.
- CCB is using the available data to provide year-on-year comparisons for every club, enabling us to identify any clubs showing significant declines and offer targeted support where required.

Senior Leagues – Women (Caroline Sheridan)

- Caroline explained the 3 year plan being considered by the Women's cricket management team. This involves taking each division and developing milestones for achievement in growth and ability. League and cup competitions are included. This season's innovations are working well including the appointment of independent umpires through WTU.
- Relations with Lancashire are difficult. The team continue to ensure that Cheshire cricket thrives and that any Lancashire connection does not unduly interfere with our efforts.

Clubs Development Manager (Gareth Moorhouse)

- Gareth and Brian H had updated the 4Cs development plan with July figures. These were not discussed in the meeting as they are interim situations. More meaningful discussion of the development plan will be possible next time.
- Three ECB-led reviews are underway: What is the purpose of the Premier Leagues, Women's League development and League affiliation (in addition to club affiliation)
- The affiliation process moved onto Play-Cricket for the first time this season and has been highly successful. By mid-April, all **109 affiliated clubs** had completed the online process, making Cheshire the first county to achieve 100% affiliation through the new system.
- Four clubs also took part in the ECB Accreditation Pilot. Congratulations to **Styal, Mellor, Trafford Metrovics and Pott Shrigley**, all of whom successfully achieved **Level 1 Accreditation**, valid for three years. Thanks to the volunteers involved and the CCB staff who supported the process.
- Current indications are that all existing Clubmark-accredited clubs will transition to the new ECB Accreditation framework. Subject to successful assessment, clubs will achieve an accreditation level based on the breadth of their playing offer, for example:
 - **Level 1:** Single playing offer.
 - **Level 2:** Junior and senior cricket.
 - **Level 3:** Three or more playing offers (e.g. senior open, juniors, women's and girls').
- County Boards have asked ECB for as much notice as possible to allow sufficient time to brief clubs and leagues ahead of their AGMs. Minor constitutional changes may also be required to reflect updated national policies.
- Once confirmed, the new framework will also influence which league tiers clubs are eligible to enter. With accreditation now open to all clubs—not just those with junior sections—the CCCL Executive will need to determine the minimum accreditation level required for each division. A grace period during Year 1 may be appropriate to allow clubs sufficient time to

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achieve the required level. I would be happy to support the league steering groups in developing this approach.

Officials (Martin Roberts)

- Umpire numbers are declining. We have 97 active umpires in the county, however, weekly availability would suggest this number is too high to describe as active. We did reiterate that CACO policy is to deploy umpires in pairs as standing alone has proved conclusively to be too demanding.
- The declining numbers lead CACO to believe that leagues must consider some firm action to mandate clubs to send players on ECB training courses and deploy them in Saturday matches. This may mean players officiating some home club games rather than playing, in partnership with a panel umpire.
- Discipline in non-umpired matches has been poorer this year. Several instances of matches suffering through lack of captain's control have led to discipline cases being processed by Derek and Chris.

CCB support (AJ)

- CCB continues to work closely with CACO, including a recent mid-season review with the ECB. They continue to promote both online and face-to-face umpiring and scoring courses to increase the number of grassroots officials. This has included a well-attended women-only ECB Umpire Course at Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge.
- The next course takes place at Holmes Chapel in early August, with a further course planned in October aimed at members of diverse communities. A promotional video featuring Debyan Dey has also recently been published on the CCB website and social media channels.
- During the autumn we intend to refresh the CACO Development Plan. Greater engagement from the CCCL would be welcomed, particularly as the league is required to produce an Officiating Plan and could utilise the jointly developed document.
- The 4Cs continues to subsidise official education by offering 50% course fee reimbursement after completion of five fixtures. Additional bursaries for women and members of diverse communities, funded through the ECB EDI Fund

Cheshire Cup (David Gane)

- We have reached the Quarter Final stage, but there is still one outstanding Last 16 game which is not being played till Aug 9 so Final provisionally scheduled for Aug 30 may have to be put back a week to Sept 6.
- The success of Cheshire in reaching 50 over Cup Final has caused problems in fixture scheduling as clubs with Cheshire players have requested postponements which have been allowed.
- However, it is clear Cheshire have far too many fixtures as apart from the 'important' later rounds of their Cups player availability has been poor, even when there has not been a Cheshire or National KO game (only about 4 free Sundays from end of April to end of August). This rather devalues the National County concept as Cheshire and no doubt other Counties have been significantly weakened. A fundamental review of National County fixtures is required as players are being asked to play too much without even factoring in Club Cup competitions. (An example the ECB National T20 Area final on Aug 9 which

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Lindow will compete in as CCCL T20 winners clashes with National Counties Super 12 T20 fixtures on that day which Cheshire are taking part in!)

- The competition was promoted through all the usual channels, but entries reduced slightly in 2026:
 - **2026:** 37 teams
 - **2025:** 42 teams
- The 2025 figure may have been inflated due to a number of post-entry withdrawals, but the overall trend suggests participation is declining.
- The Shield competition was removed in an attempt to increase Cup entries, while David also introduced rule changes to support lower-ranked clubs, including guaranteed home draws. Nevertheless, the long-term future and format of the competition may warrant further discussion.
- T20 cricket remains extremely popular, although asking clubs to play twice in one weekend—combined with limited ground availability—continues to present challenges.

Grounds (Andy Horsfield)

- CCB continues to support CAG through the County Pitch Advisor programme.
- Following Stan Aspinall's retirement earlier this year, Andy Horsfield and Mike Cook have carried an increased workload, supported by Andy Welsby from the Grounds Management Association.
- CCB is also working with Stockport Council to explore funding opportunities for William Scholes, with the aim of returning Saturday league cricket to the site. Discussions are ongoing with SMBC, ECB and the FA regarding a joint funding approach, including the Grass Pitch Improvement Fund (GPIF).
- Various workshops are planned including End of Season and Young Grounds people which are attracting good numbers of delegates.
- Recent experiences lead to the question – could Cheshire have a formal panel of ‘rain umpires’ – individuals who offer to visit rain threatened grounds on the morning of the fixture to determine their fitness prior to players arriving. Rain umpires would officiate in other fixtures later (weather dependent). The issue remains whether Groundsmen have the official right to cancel a fixture prior to formal umpire involvement. Both leagues allow away teams to travel if they question a home team decision. The proposal would be that ‘Rain Umpires’ would have an official right to cancel the fixture with no away team involvement. This remains a question for league executives to consider. We noted that Derbyshire and Cheshire do have this facility which seems to work well.

Action – Consult with the current league Ground representatives and CAG whether this could be built into league rules – Brian B and Selwyn

Cheshire County Cricket Club (John Petch)

- John had provided a report beforehand, repeated here:

Martin Dawson takes over as NCCA Chair

The NCCA welcomed a new chair at the 2026 AGM at Banbury. Martin Dawson succeeds Nick Archer with Geoff Ellis as vice chair. Dawson brings an abundance of experience having previously held a director post with the ECB.

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Preparation

An extended pre-season net programme has led to a well-focused 1st XI squad hitting the ground running in the KO Trophy.

Nick Brook seamlessly assumed the role of 1st Team Manager (as well as leading the 2s) working closely with coach, Gavin Colebourn and white ball skippers Sam Perry and Harry Dearden. They've introduced slick pre-match administration procedures enhancing our preparation, communication and performance.

Players have also embraced our revised governance and safeguarding procedures.

New NCCA back-office procedures have been (somewhat painfully!) implemented and whilst not totally effective, Cheshire are leading the way in 'adherence'.

The Cheshire County League remains supportive in bringing forward Saturday start times for us when there is considerable overnight travel for away games. We're hugely grateful for this. Discussions are underway re some Cheshire Cup fixtures too.

Communications

New NCCA regulations require dual-camera coverage at all white ball games and where possible, home match commentary.

This is a challenge for all counties, but Cheshire have led the way, assisting other counties too with our commentator travelling where possible. It's early days but Luke Edward's commentary, enlisting support from officials, players and even spectators, has been well received and applauded by the NCCA. Catch it if you can on Play-cricket and YouTube.

Performance

Cheshire has completed four KO Trophy fixtures, finishing as runners-up to Cumbria.

Convincing wins over Cambridgeshire at Peterborough and Suffolk at Toft were followed by a tight win over Shropshire at Oxton. The deciding 'shoot-out' with Cumbria at a cold and wet Keswick saw us fall the wrong side of a close DLS result, meaning an away quarter final at Norwich on 7 June. We're talking with the County League about potential Cheshire Cup date changes to avoid player clashes.

Two young players who have particularly caught the eye are Toft's Henry Murray with a hundred under his belt in our first game, and Lindow's Isaac Brooks with nine wickets to date.

This Sunday (24 May) we switch our attention to T20 cricket with a 'double header' against Shropshire at Didsbury with games to follow against Staffordshire (Burslem), Northumberland (Newcastle) and Cumbria (Nantwich).

Nick and Gavin announced a promising, young 2nd XI side to take on Cumbria at Macclesfield on Tuesday, led by Andy Dufty. Sadly, the weather intervened but it's hoped the game will be rearranged later in the season.

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Cheshire's 2nd XI fixture list is as full and varied as any other national county and includes home games at Macclesfield, Neston, Marple and Chester Boughton Hall. There is also a match against the MCC at New Brighton on 1 July.

Showcase

Our hastily arranged 'Showcase' game sees us face Derbyshire at Nantwich on Wednesday 20 May as part of their Metro Bank warm-up programme. This may have been completed by the time you read this – Andy Newton's post-match John Morris meal and Q&A should make it an enjoyable afternoon/evening.

Finance

Cheshire CCC's 2025 accounts were posted in March. Available [here](#)

An expensive season ahead sees long distance trips to Norwich, Wimborne and Redruth. A little different to last year's 'local' jaunts

AOB

- Gareth reminded everyone of the Cricket Collective even at Old Trafford next Friday at which many of our youngsters will be present.
- Gareth reminded us that a National playing survey was live at the moment
- There was brief discussion concerning 'Martyn's Law' which legislates special measures when a crowd of over 799 is present. Whilst it may be remotely feasible that an external cricket event may achieve these numbers, Martyn's law is more concerned with indoor events covering ingress/egress, safety, accessibility and other criteria for large crowds in internal spaces (such as arenas).
- There was a question about why a red rose Lancashire logo appeared on some web sites within Cheshire. No instances were quoted, however, if it is a concern we can take it up with the Play-Cricket administrators.

Action – Report any instances noted at the next meeting - All

Meeting closed 9.10pm