



Minutes of the Country Link Annual General Meeting

Sunday 11th May 2025

The Fountain Suite, The Inn on the Lake, Shorne, Kent

Dick Stephens welcomed everyone to the meeting; the National Committee introduced themselves: Dick Stephens, Nigel Swain, Lesley Sheaf, Liz Goodwin, Lorraine Clark, Sarah Thompson. Vice President Maria Guest introduced herself.

Nigel remembered Tony Paul, and reminded members of all the hard work Tony had put into Country Link as a member of Essex and Suffolk Country Link and as Chairman of the National Committee.

Apologies

Apologies were received from National Committee members Vicky Hutton, Richard Rymer, Andrew Smith, President Peter Hurt and Vice Presidents Phil Charles, Charles Humby and Jerry White.

The Minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 12th May 2024

The Minutes were proposed by Barbara Carey, seconded by David Pilkington, and were signed as a true record of the Meeting.

Chairman's Report - Dick Stephens

Dick has visited a number of groups, and is planning to visit others. He commented that there are casual members who come along to meetings who have not paid their membership - these people need to be asked for their subscription because National has regular expenses to pay e.g. insurance, website. Dick thanked Joanne and Robert for bringing along someone new to the weekend, and encouraged everyone to bring someone to a meeting. There had been an article about Staffordshire Country Link in Farmart. Dick concluded by thanking Nigel, Wendy and Lynda for all their hard work in planning and organising the Weekend.

Treasurer's Report - Lesley Sheaf

Lesley reviewed the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024. We have received subs for 321 members in 2024, plus an additional ten for 2023, making a total of 330 for that year. Over 60% of the members live in the south west and the West Midlands.

Advertising - Country Link are continuing to advertise in the Farmers Guardian. A number of groups have advertised locally, and Lesley had refunded almost £1,400. A local radio advert and a wall planner have been two new ideas in 2024.

Other costs are as listed in the accounts.

Shropshire Country Link raised £583 with their fundraising activities at their weekend in May. This was made up to £1,000 from the surplus for their charity.

Overall deficit for year is £1,505 and net assets are £19,020.

The accounts had been audited by Kate Greaves. Lesley asked Liz to thank Kate. Kate is happy to audit the accounts next year.

Lesley proposed the adoption of the accounts, seconded by Dick. Carried.

Lesley proposed the subs for 2025 remain at £10.00, seconded by Dick. Carried.

Lesley proposed the advertising refund remain at £500 per club for 2025, seconded by Dick. Carried.

Secretary's Report - Liz Goodwin

Liz thanked Nigel, Wendy, and Lynda for photocopying the paperwork, and for putting it in the welcome packs. She also thanked them for organising the weather! Liz asked members to let her know if there had been any change in group organisers, and she asked members to sign the attendance sheet.

President's comments - Maria on behalf of Peter Hurt

Peter thanked the top table, the Committee members, and those who take on the various roles. He thanked anyone who had organised a weekend and those who help in the background.

Election of Officers to the National Committee

Position	Nominee	Nominated by	Carried
Chairman	Dick Stephens	Kirsteen Henry (Ayrshire)/ Jimmy Young (Ayrshire)	Yes
Vice-Chairman	Nigel Swain	Barbara Carey (Somerset)/ Charles Humby (South Wilts)	Yes
Treasurer	Lesley Sheaf	Andy Elvin (Somerset)/ Barry Knaption (Somerset)	Yes
Secretary	Liz Goodwin	Rob Napper (Somerset)/ Dave Bennett (Somerset)	Yes

President/Vice Presidents

Lesley explained the President - Peter Hurt - and the Vice Presidents - Phil Charles, Maria Guest, Charles Humby, and Jerry White - had been asked by the National Committee to stand for the next twelve months, all had agreed. Lesley thanked them for their support during the last year.

Forthcoming weekends

Nigel thanked everyone for coming to the Weekend and hoped everyone was enjoying themselves. He thanked everyone for donating money to the Kent Air Ambulance.

Maria told everyone about the 40th Anniversary Weekend which will be held at the Crowne Plaza Yew Lodge Hotel, Kegworth on the weekend of Friday 3rd - Monday 6th October 2025. There will be one payment. She asked members to think about past members to invite. Nigel passed the key to Maria.

Jerry White Cup

The Jerry White Cup was presented to Nottinghamshire Country Link for the biggest percentage increase in membership during 2024.

Any other business

There are no weekends booked for 2026.

Date of the next AGM

At the Spring 2025 weekend; Dick and Lesley asked people to think about organising a National Weekend, and said that there is plenty of advice available.