West Somerset Bowls League

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was held at **North Petherton Bowling Club** on Thursday 17th September 2026 **at 7.00pm**

In attendance-
Don Bridges (DB), Chair - Burnham on Sea BC
John Swayne (JS), Vice Chair - North Petherton BC
Mark Reeve (MR), Treasurer - Taunton BC
Jay Merrell (JM), Secretary - Wellington BC

Evelyn French (EF) and Adrian Kunc (AK), - Eastover Park BC
Graham Lewis (GL), - Bridgwater BC
Graham Brown (GB) - Wellington BC
John Swayne (JS) - North Petherton BC
Paul Frost (PF) - Taunton Deane BC
Nick Gardner (NG) - Minehead BC
Alvin Affleck (AA) - Taunton BC
Chris Mead (CM) - Victoria Park BC
Paul Newton (PN) - Ilminster BC
Anthoney Donnelly (AD)- Burnham-on-Sea
Callum Harrod (CH)- Williton

The chair, Don Bridges, opened the meeting at 7.05pm

1. **Apologies for Absence-** No apologies were received. All member clubs were in attendance.

2.1 Minutes of AGM Thursday 25th September 2025- Acceptance of the 2025 AGM minutes were proposed by NG, seconded by AA, and approved unanimously.
2.2 Minutes of the SGM Thursday 26th March 2026- Acceptance of the 2026 SGM minutes were proposed by CH, seconded by GB, and approved unanimously.

3. **Matters arising-** Nil

4. **Secretary's report** (JM)

WSBL AGM 2026 – Secretary's Report

I would like to begin by congratulating our champions for the 2026 season **Williton A** who secured the Division One title for the first time since 2015, while **Wellington B** claimed the Division Two crown in impressive fashion. My congratulations also go to **North Petherton B** on gaining promotion and

Bridgwater A for their second-place finish in division one. .

At the Special General Meeting in March, members approved the move to **four divisions of seven or eight teams**, playing home and away. This change was driven partly by our wish to accommodate more teams within the league. Although it is disappointing that **Watchet** do not, at present, wish to rejoin, we are very pleased to welcome **North Petherton D** into the competition.

That same meeting saw a lively and constructive debate regarding **after-match hospitality**. I am grateful to Alan and Paul from Ilminster for arranging a light snack after each of their home WSBL matches, and I am delighted to report that, as far as I know, all matches ended with a drink and snack in the club house. The after-match snack does not need to be elaborate, a filled roll with packet of crisps, or perhaps a tiger bread loaf with cheese and/or ham slices will suffice. Later we will vote on whether provision of a light after-match snack should be a condition of league membership.

We continue to experience fixture clashes with county and national competitions, particularly where Thursday play-on dates are involved. Clubs deserve great credit for their flexibility, whether through reversing fixtures or, in several cases, hosting national competitions on neutral greens.

The **results website** has performed well overall and continues to make my role significantly easier. Some clubs reported slow performance during a two-week period mid-season. After speaking with the developer, we learned that the site had been targeted by automated bot attacks, receiving over **one million hits in a single week**. Fortunately, the security systems held firm, and the issue has since subsided.

This season also saw an unusual postponement: all fixtures scheduled for **Thursday 25th June** were moved to **13th August** due to extreme heat. It is a sign of the times that hot weather now causes more disruption than rain.

My thanks go once again to the three other members of the Executive Committee, all of whom are standing for re-election. Their advice, experience, and willingness to assist are invaluable, and I am grateful for their continued support. Our treasurer Mark, and chairman Don, both stated they will be standing down at the 2027 AGM. So, we have 12 months to find a replacement.

Later in the meeting, members will vote on whether the **Assistant Secretary** should become a full Executive Committee role, increasing the Executive to five. This position has been vacant for several years, and we would warmly welcome volunteers willing to take it on.

Finally, feedback on the **weekly website match reports** has been very positive. If anyone has suggestions for guest contributors — whether living, historical, or fictional — please let me know.

5. Treasurer's report

Opening balance 2025 AGM £1,276.85

Income £840 (28 teams)

Expenditure £926.31

Balance as at 2026 AGM £1,190.54

Bank charges £51.00

Website hosting and results website £145.31

Bowls England membership £30

Prize money £600

Donation Taunton BC £100.00

Mark ended by announcing he will be standing down at 2027 AGM. **Action: MR to provide brief job description before the 2027 outdoor season commences.**

6. Chairman's report

I would like to start by thanking other members of the league Executive Committee, especially Secretary Jay, for their efforts in running the league.
Congratulations to our winners and runners-up and commiserations to those clubs relegated.
Many thanks to John and North Petherton BC for allowing the league to hold its annual AGM here and finally this is my 29th year attending league AGMs, next year I will be standing down as Chairman, so we have 12 months to find my replacement. **Action: DB to provide brief job description before the 2027 outdoor season commences.**

7. Presentation of Trophies

Division 1 WINNER	Williton A	£300.00	Runner-up	Bridgwater A	£100.00
Division 2 WINNER	Wellington B	£150.00	Runner-up	North Petherton B	£50.00

8. Election of Officers

The following officers were proposed by PF and seconded by GB.

Executive Officers	**Holder**
Chair	Don Bridges
Vice Chair	John Swayne
Treasurer	Mark Reeve

Secretary	Jay Merrell
Assistant Secretary	Vacant

8.1 Assistant Secretary- There were no volunteers to take on the role of Assistant Secretary. **Action: JM to provide brief job description before the 2027 outdoor season commences.**

9. Proposals to be voted on-

Proposal 1 – Post-Match Hospitality That it becomes a condition of league membership that host clubs provide a light post-match snack for both teams. **(Vote- motion passed 11-0)**
Ilminster acknowledged that their trial across other leagues of not offering post-match food had failed and that food will be offered after all league games next season.

Proposal 2 – Assistant Secretary Role That the Assistant Secretary position be designated a full Executive Committee role, thereby increasing the Executive Committee to five members. **(Vote- motion passed 11-0)**

Proposal 3 – New Prize Money Structure
The following prizes are awarded in addition to the existing shields for winners and runner-up in division one and two.

Division one winner: £250.00
Division one runner-up: £100.00
Division Two winner: £150.00
Division Two runner-up: £50.00
Division Three winner: £75.00
Division Four winner: £50.00
We are not planning to award a shield for the winners of division three and four.
*Nb: The motion was amended by the floor before the vote **to award shields** for the winners of division three and four.*
(Vote- Amendment passed 11-0)
Action: JS to investigate the purchase of two small shields ahead of next year's AGM. Cost to be recovered from the treasurer.

10. **Any Other Business**

10.1 Teams for 2027- North Petherton will be entering a fourth team all others are unchanged.
10.2 Team letters- Where clubs have more than one team within the league structure, their teams will be designated by appropriate alphabet letters, where A shall be the senior team followed by B, C, and D. For the purpose of this rule, a higher team is the team with the earlier letter, even where the team is in the same division. The floor agreed that when situations arise whereby a lower lettered team from the same club is in a higher division then these teams will swap letters so that club's lower lettered teams are always in the higher or same division as lower teams. Next season this affects Taunton B and C teams and Taunton Deane B and C teams.

10.3 Feedback on results website- All present agreed the results website is a useful tool and works well with tables updated soon after the games end. The secretary reminded delegates that on many occasions teams failed to forward a photograph of the cards to the secretary.

10.4 Items for discussion – Nil

The chair, Don Bridges, thanked members once again for their attendance, hoped they wintered well, and wished them good bowling for 2026 and a safe journey home. The meeting closed at 7.56pm.

Jay Merrell
Secretary
WSBL