

National Association of City and Town Sheriffs of England and Wales Cymdeithas Cenedlaethol Siryfion Dinas a Thref Lloegr a Cymru



Honorary Life President
Andrew Gravells
Email: andrew.gravells@gloucestershire.gov.uk



Chair Andy Swinburne (Berwick) Andyswinburne322@btinternet.com	Vice Chair Colin Greateorex (Lichfield) colin.greatorex@btinternet.com	Treasurer Suzie Mercer (York) nactsewtreasurer@gmail.com	Secretary Xena Dion (Poole) nactsewsecretary@gmail.com
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Minutes of the 40th Annual General Meeting of the National Association of City and Town Sheriffs of England and Wales Lichfield District Council Chambers, Frog Lane, Lichfield, WS13 6YY 27th September 2025 10.00 am

The meeting commenced at 10.00am

1. Welcome from the Chair

Chair Andrew Swinburne welcomed Members and current Sheriffs to the AGM 2025.

2. President's Opening Remarks

Honorary President Andrew Gravells highlighted the 40th anniversary of NACTSEW and expressed his delight that it had lasted as long as this. He thanked everyone who had supported the Association, especially fellow original members who were present; Nick Sedgwick and Kathryn Duncan-Brown from Lichfield and added, with some humour, apologies to anyone he may have upset over the past 40 years.

3. Welcome from the Sheriff of Lichfield Sheriff the Rev Ian Hayter addressed the meeting and welcomed members to Lichfield. He highlighted some of the ancient ceremonies the city celebrated including the Sheriff's Ride and Court of Arraye.

4. Obituaries followed by one-minute silence

Members were saddened to hear of the deaths of the following past Sheriffs: Alan Bowlas, Berwick, Jim Smith, Berwick, Eurig Thomas, York and Randolph Meech, Poole (who passed away 2 years ago but, as Andrew Gravells pointed out, had been missed). The Chair gave a tribute to Jim Smith, Andrew Gravells paid tribute to Randolph Meech and Ashley Mason paid tribute to Eurig Thomas.

5. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: **Berwick:** Henry Thompson, David Gordon. **Chester:** Bob Rudd, Angela Claydon (as was travelling with Bob Rudd who was unable to attend), Liz Bolton. **Lincoln:** Patrick Vaughan, Hillary Willerton **Poole:** Karen Rampton (current sheriff) but will hopefully be able to join the weekend later **York:** Barrie Ferguson, Jonathan Tyler, Fiona Fitzpatrick

6. Introduction of New Sheriffs

Current Sheriffs introduced themselves. Present were: Jo Lang, Berwick; Simon Eardley, Chester, Linda Castle, Gloucester, Dani Thomas-Turner, Haverfordwest, Gary Daley, Lincoln, Stuart Wright, Norwich, Pat Every, Southampton.

7. Minutes of last meeting (Haverfordwest 2024)

The Minutes of the meeting of the NACTSEW AGM, Haverfordwest 2024 were approved by Members subject to the correction raised by Jeanne Storrar that in item 15 the request was read out by Andrew Storrar, not the Chair.

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8. Report from Chair (report attached and will be available on the website)

(Please note: The Secretary apologises for omitting a response from Canterbury to the AGM Report. This has now been included in the Chair's report)

The Chair explained that this was one of the busiest years he could remember since becoming Treasurer in 2011, starting with a considerable change in Chair and Officers in one year. He was happy to see the wider representation across the UK.

His report covered: Internal housekeeping, new initiatives and forging external partnerships.

Communication between officers is improved through a whatsapp group, teams meetings and the half-yearly meeting.

The timeline of communication for NACTSEW has been fully restored and followed and the Chair was happy to say that all members present had now completed the membership and GDPR consent forms which meant the Association was now GDPR compliant. A new membership and GDPR database has been created to allow the association to work effectively and efficiently.

The AGM report recommendations had been implemented. New sheriffs were invited to an inaugural online meeting with the Committee in July and five participated. All Leaders of Councils and CEOs had been contacted across all shrieval towns and cities and responses came back from eight:

- Berwick upon Tweed Town Council
- Carmarthen Town Council
- Canterbury (**Added post-AGM**)
- Cheshire West & Chester Council
- Gloucester City Council
- Poole BCP Council
- Southampton City Council
- York City Council

Training for new sheriffs will be addressed in item 14.

He read a statement from John Butler, Nottingham, who had proposed the original motion to the AGM last year:

As the member of the Association who put forward the motion at the AGM; I could not have imagined a more successful and comprehensive result. I am delighted at the seriousness and depth of interest that has been taken over the perceived threats to the Office of Sheriff. I have rarely seen such an in-depth analysis of a motion that has been put forward. Thank you all very much.

The 40th Anniversary booklet has been given to each member present. This was updated from the version issued last year and includes photographs of past conference weekends and a new foreword.

External partnerships: the National Association Civic Officers (NACO) is an organization committed to supporting their Members in their Civic role and promoting the role within the community. The Chair was invited to an event held by them earlier in the year (the details are in the attached Chair's report and featured in the Chair's Spring newsletter). He was

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pleased to say that the chair of NACO, Tracy Frisby, would be joining the AGM weekend from lunchtime and as the Chair's guest at the AGM Dinner.

Invitations were received to attend the York Sheriff's dinner and the Berwick Sheriff's dinner which the Chair attended but he was unable to accept the invitation from Chester to their Sheriff's dinner as it was on the same date as York's.

Newcastle 2027 is on the Chair's agenda and he has written to the Leader of the Council to ask to meet regarding the event but has not received a reply and will follow up with a recorded letter. It may be that NACTSEW will need to organize the AGM weekend as happened in Oxford.

The Chair concluded his report by thanking the outgoing Vice-Chair Bob Rudd and the rest of the Executive Committee for their work over the year and congratulating the President and members of the Association on celebrating 40 years.

9. Report from Treasurer

Treasurer Suzie Mercer confirmed that the accounts from 2021 to 2025 have now been examined. She talked through the Summary of Accounts for 2025 which is available on the website via the link on the AGM Lichfield page and were circulated to all members with the Agenda.

10. Election of Officers

I. Vice Chair

Bob Rudd had stepped down due to family ill-health. Two nominations were received: Ashley Mason (York); nominated by Suzie Mercer (York) and seconded by Sue Hunter (York) and Colin Greatorrex (Lichfield) nominated by Kathryn Duncan-Brown (Lichfield) and seconded by Peter Hitchman (Lichfield)

Working alphabetically Ashley Mason left the room whilst Colin Greatorrex was invited to speak for a minute or two to put his reason forward for standing. He then left the room whilst Ashley Mason returned and addressed the members. Both then left the room whilst a ballot was handed out and then collected after members voted for the person of their choice.

Ballots were counted and Colin Greatorrex was declared the new Vice Chair. Both were thanked for coming forward to take the position.

II. Honorary Treasurer

Suzie Mercer (York), was nominated as Honorary Treasurer by Melanie Tointon (Lincoln) and seconded by Ian Malcolm (Nottingham). No other nominations were received and Suzie Mercer was elected as Honorary Treasurer

III. Honorary Secretary

Xena Dion (Poole) was nominated as Secretary by Jan Lugg (Gloucester) and seconded by Derek Burke (Southampton). No other nominations were received and Xena Dion was elected as Honorary Secretary.

11. Election of Committee Members

Two members from each of the upcoming AGM Conference weekends towns or cities were elected on to the Committee.

I. Lincoln

Jo Rimmer and Melanie Tointon were re-elected

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As no-one was present from Newcastle, the Chair explained that, with the lack of engagement by Newcastle, it was likely that the Association would have to work to organise the event.

12. Appointment of auditor (examiner)

The Chair asked if the current 'examiner' of accounts, Robbie Dalgliesh (Berwick) was willing to continue in this role. As no other members expressed an interest, he agreed and was supported unanimously.

13. Future Venues

The following venues are planned for the next three years.

2026 Lincoln (25th – 27th September)

2027 Newcastle (24th – 26th September - tbc)

2028 Gloucester (tbc)

14. Training

The Chair explained his proposal to provide a formal training package for new sheriffs. He had met a company (Link Support Services Ltd) at the National Association of Civic Officers event that he attended earlier in the year that provided tailored training. This would be at considerable cost of 3-4 thousand pounds. He said that outgoing sheriffs, as per the recommendations from the AGM report, had been asked for any suggestions for training that they would have found helpful on their taking up Office. There was no response. He had looked at the cost vs interest and concluded that a formal tailored package could not be justified. He suggested that councils may be asked to contribute to any training costs but would be unlikely in current economic climate. Other suggestions were 'in house' training on line or in person. He invited members to comment or make suggestions.

Daryl Brown (Lichfield) asked if the cost was a 'one off' or would be repeated. The training package provided professionally would be a continuing cost for each new year was the Chair's response which made the option unaffordable.

Dani Thomas-Turner (Haverfordwest) suggested that as the civic roles left members very busy, learning from predecessors may be more or equally useful for new sheriffs than a powerpoint (or similar) online presentation

Derek Burke (Southampton) pointed out that online learning loses the benefit that learning together in a room has and he explained that in Southampton the new sheriff has an informal conversation/hand-over with the outgoing sheriff which provided some degree of training

John Butler, Chester expressed opposition of any online learning and said value of face-to-face learning far outweighs it

Jan Lugg, (Gloucester) asked if Councils, where the Sheriff is not a councillor, included the sheriff in any formal training, such as safeguarding training, which is and should be essential for new sheriffs.

Chris Higgins (Norwich) highlighted that all councils work differently. He suggested that amongst the NACTSEW members there was enough experience and ability to provide in-house training if needed

Stuart Wright (Norwich) reiterated the importance and value of the outgoing sheriff handing over to the incoming one

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Joe Lang (Berwick) explained that new sheriffs were likely to be concentrating their time and energy on 'getting it right' rather than how they could do things or interpret the role of sheriff differently in order to make a positive difference to the local community. Learning from predecessors was important.

Pat Every (Southampton) pointed out that the Local Government Association provides a wealth of resources and training material that may be useful

The Chair concluded that he believed it would be useful to ask all the city and town 'points of contact' used previously in the AGM survey to ask their members what they thought regarding training via a questionnaire format he would draw up

15. Agenda Item Request

a) Andrew Swinburne (Chair) amendment to the Constitution as follows:

'Taking into consideration at the AGM in Haverfordwest, the advice given by Robbie Dalgleish of Berwick and his appointment as the examiner of the NACTSEW Accounts, that the term Audit / Auditor should be changed to Examine / Examiner and furthermore the constitution amended to one examiner as opposed to two auditors'

E (v) Line 6 - replace "duly audited" with "duly examined"

E (vi) Line 1 - replace "Two members of the association not being members" with
"A member of the association not being a member"

E (vi) Line 2 - replace "auditors" with "examiner".

This was unanimously agreed.

b) Jan Lugg (Gloucester) as follows:

'to consider the future storage of 40 years of NACTSEW archives, including the possibility of electronic storage which could be made available electronically to all members'.

The Chair explained that there were a few boxes of old NACTSEW records and suggested that he take custody of them, look through them and decide what should be kept. It was suggested that they could be digitally stored but would take considerable work to translate them from hard copy to digitally and

16. Any Other Business (AOB) as requested by prior notice

The Chair proposed that David Brown be made honorary Vice President in view of his work as Chair of NACTSEW for the preceding three years and, in particular, his work on the updated NACTSEW booklet, now the 40th Anniversary booklet. This was seconded by Xena Dion and unanimously agreed.

The meeting concluded at 11.40