

INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF ESTEPONA (I.C.E)

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON: THURSDAY 20 MARCH 2025 AT THE CLUBHOUSE

Membership was represented by 45 members present and 18 postal votes

Management Committee Present: Fran Horwood (President), John Barr-Richardson (Vice President/Facilities Manager), Dan Hackston (Acting Treasurer), Ian Horwood (Bar Manager/Catering Manager), Jennifer Davies (Trips & Events Organiser), Diane Hackett (Member), Renee Hackston (Co-Opted Member), Rachel Lucas (Co-Opted Member)

Apologies: Received from Brenda Taylor (House Manager)

There are currently 330 members of the Club, of which 18 are honorary, and includes 83 new members so far this year.

AGENDA

- President's Welcome
- Minutes of the last AGM
- Matters Arising from Minutes
- President's Report
- Auditor's Report
- Financial Report
- Bar & Catering Report
- Facilities Report
- House Manager's Report
- Elections for Nominated Committee Positions (6 nominees for 6 positions).
- Committee Members Standing Down – Brenda Taylor
- Proposal – None Received
- AOB

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

- Fran Horwood welcomed and thanked the members present and asked for all mobile phones to be switched off.
- She pointed out the fire exits.
- She asked us to remember those members we had to say our final goodbyes to during the past year during a minute's silence.
- Fran also requested that attendees hold off any questions until after the relevant reports have been presented by owners.

MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM – The minutes were posted in the Club premises and on the Club website for the required 90 days during which time members were requested to read same.

MATTERS ARISING

- None

There being no other matters arising the Minutes were proposed by Sue Potter (2003012) and seconded by David Lines (2019028)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Fran Horwood (2018049) is attached

AUDITOR'S REPORT – Sheila Fox (2014074) is attached

FINANCIAL REPORT – Acting Treasurer's Report – Dan Hackston (2021006) is attached.

The following points were raised:

- Sue Potter (2003012) – Sue Potter thanked Dan for stepping in as Treasurer. Sue also thanked Jenny for all her efforts as she felt that events accounted for most of the profits!! Sue then raise the Italy trip and her perceived issue of the club making an unreasonable amount of profit from the members (4000€). Sue requested clarification of what is a 'reasonable profit'. Dan responded that there was a large amount of profit but this was discussed by the previous committee at the time. Dan re-stated the club statutes refer to 10%, however we are looking at putting a limit on a case by case basis.
- Sue Potter (2003012) also raised a query on having the Treasurer report available prior to the AGM but acknowledged that it was a challenging year. Dan agreed to discuss with the new committee to see what can/should be done for next year.
- Ryan Horwood (2024031) pointed out that on the Balance Sheet under current liabilities there was a -895€ entry for deferred expenses however, there was no corresponding entry in 'Deferred Expenses' section further down the page. He accepted that this does not affect the balance sheet but should be corrected. Dan acknowledged the mistake and stated that he would rectify and re-issue the Balance Sheet.

As this was a genuine mistake it felt it best not to seek approval for the Accounts at this AGM but to defer until the next AGM.

BAR & CATERING MANAGER'S REPORT – Ian Horwood (2019039) is attached

Magaret Whittley (201040) would like to re-iterate thanks to the Bar & Kitchen volunteers. Obviously over the years we have lovely meals cooked over the years especially on Thursdays, but as things has diminished due to various reasons, the replacement bar food is very good. Thank you.

FACILITIES REPORT – John Barr-Richardson (2018000) is attached.

Fran Horwood (2018049) – thanked John as a driving force behind the changes although he and Ian were like a pair of 'old women'.

HOUSE MANAGER'S REPORT – Brenda Taylor (2009047) is attached.

Fran Horwood (2018049) read out the report on behalf of Brenda.

NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Fran Horwood starts the nominations by advising all the attendees that 3 members were co-opted onto the committee since the last AGM. These were, Rachel Lucas whose Marketing efforts contributed significantly to our membership growth, and also one of the main organisers of the successful Burns Night event. Denis Fountain, the Newsletter Editor who never misses a deadline despite no matter what happens at the last moment. And Renee Hackston, who has taken responsibility for Welfare, and collaborating with Ian Horwood to ensure that the Bar Food menu is a success.

It should also be noted that the club will have a nearly full complement of committee members and will have an equal balance of men & women.

John Houlihan (2023036) had completed the appropriate nomination form by the due date and was sponsored by Rachel Lucas (2020012) for the post of Club Secretary

Voting took place with the following results:

For	Against	Abstain
59	1	1

Dan Hackston (2021006) for role of Club Treasurer. No nomination was necessary as Dan was already voted onto the committee when he was voted on as Vice President in 2023.

For	Against	Abstain
60	1	0

Rachel Lucas (2020012) had completed the appropriate nomination form by the due date and was sponsored by David Lines (2019028) for the post of Committee Position 4.

Voting took place with the following results:

For	Against	Abstain
61	1	0

Renee Hackston (2021005) had completed the appropriate nomination form by the due date and was sponsored by Margaret Whittle (2010040) for the post of Committee Position 3.

Voting took place with the following results:

For	Against	Abstain
61	1	0

Denis Fountain (2024011) had completed the appropriate nomination form by the due date and was sponsored by Sheila Fox (2014074). Denis was unable to attend the AGM due to previous commitments. Committee Position 2

For	Against	Abstain
61	1	0

Gary Dutton (2023048) had completed the appropriate nomination form by the due date and was sponsored by John Barr-Richardson (2018055) for the post of Committee Position 1. Sue Potter (2003012) queried why John was talking on behalf of Gary as John is on the committee. The President pointed out that there was nothing in the Statutes or Rules stating that committee members cannot sponsor members.

For	Against	Abstain
61	0	1

- Whilst counting was taking place Fran Horwood (2018049) took the opportunity to talk about Brenda Taylor (2009047) who is stepping down from the committee.
- Fran Horwood (2018049) also advised about the awarding of 'Honorary' memberships.
- Fran Horwood (2018049) thanked all those that helped with the counting of the nominations which were completed in a very timely and professional manner.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS STANDING DOWN – Brenda Taylor

Fran Horwood advised the meeting that Brenda Taylor was standing down from the Committee and, unfortunately, Brenda was unable to attend the AGM and sent her apologies. Fran Horwood made the following statement:

"This year, Brenda Taylor's three-year term as a valued member of our committee came to an end. After much thought and reflection, she made the very difficult decision not to continue in her role, choosing instead to step down and focus on her health and well-being.

I had the opportunity to speak with Brenda a few weeks ago, and it was clear how much she cares about this club and how deeply she considered her decision. Though she was torn about stepping away, she ultimately recognized the importance of prioritizing herself at this time.

Of course! Here's a friendlier and more engaging version of your paragraph:

Brenda became a part of our club back in 2009, which means she's been with us for over 15 years! Throughout that time, she has been a dedicated and hardworking member of our committee, always willing to step up and take on different roles—including serving as our Catering Manager. Her commitment and contributions have never gone unnoticed, and in recognition of all her hard work, she was rightly awarded Honorary Membership.

While we will certainly miss her presence, we fully support her decision and send her our warmest thoughts and best wishes. Brenda, thank you for everything you have done—you will always be a valued part of this club."

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Fran Horwood made the following statement in relation to the awarding of Honorary Memberships.

"Our statutes state that 'Honorary Membership is awarded to individuals whose unwavering dedication and service have brought meaningful benefits to the club'.

This year, however, we are doing something a little different—we are bestowing not just one, but two Honorary Memberships!

For this first one I can think of no one more deserving of this honor than the incredible individual we are recognizing today.

Since the moment I joined the club, I have watched this person work tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring our membership records are always accurate and up to date. And when renewal time rolls around, the workload is immense—but she handles it all with unwavering dedication and efficiency.

Beyond her hard work, she is simply one of the nicest people you could ever meet. No matter how hectic things get, she remains calm, composed, and unfazed—her calming presence is something we all appreciate, especially on busy days like today when everyone arrives at once!

She first joined the Committee in 2016, taking on the important role of Publicity and Membership. Since 2018, she has been our dedicated Membership Secretary, and I can say from personal experience that her commitment to this role has been truly invaluable.

So, it is with great pleasure and deep appreciation that we are awarding Honorary Membership to the wonderful **Sally Holloway!**

Last Monday, the Committee had one of the easiest decisions—because we were all in complete agreement.

This individual has been a dedicated and enthusiastic member of our club since joining in 2010—more than 15 years ago! From day one, she has thrown herself wholeheartedly into club life, always ready to contribute and make a difference.

Over the years, she has worn many hats, serving as Publicity Officer, Housekeeper, and Club Secretary. She has also taken on the role of organizing the Ladies' Monthly Lunches and the Annual Summer Party—just to name a few! And I'm certain she's done even more behind the scenes that we may not even know about.

These days, you'll find her here most Thursdays, managing Ticket Sales and organising the Monthly Quiz, as well creating tickets, doing table plans and sorting out coach seating etc etc. By now, I'm sure you all know exactly who I'm talking about!

As many of you know she stepped down as Club Secretary, a role she has carried out since 2015 with dedication, efficiency, and a great sense of responsibility. In recognition of her hard work and service in this role, we would also like to present her with these flowers from the Club as a small token of our gratitude.

So, with great appreciation and admiration, the Committee is delighted to bestow Honorary Membership to none other than... **Maggie Whittle!**

PROPOSALS – None received

AOB

- Fran Horwood started the AOB session by requesting that if you are going to suggest something that you use the existing suggestion box downstairs, as that is its purpose and would get a quicker response.
- Maggie Whittle (2010040) queried how many were in attendance today. Fran Horwood confirmed that there were 45. Gary Dutton (2023048) also questioned why so few members were in attendance out of a club of over 300 members. Fran Horwood agreed that this was a poor turnout and that maybe the weather did not help and stated that she would discuss this matter with her new committee.

The meeting was closed @ 12:00

Signed

Date

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2025 - Fran Horwood (2018049)

Welcome to this year's AGM. As President, I've put a lot of thought into what I want to say today. I want to reflect on our journey, acknowledge the challenges we've faced, celebrate our successes, and look ahead to the future.

There's a well-known business model called **Storming, Norming, and Performing**, which describes the stages a team goes through when there's a change in leadership or a new team is formed. The **storming** phase can be a little bumpy as people find their footing and learn to work together. Did my committee experience this? Of course we did! Change is never without its challenges, and with myself and John Barr-Richardson being voted in as the newly elected President and Vice-President there was naturally going to be an adjustment period with this change in leadership.

However, we quickly moved into the **norming** stage, working together to set goals, establish a long-term event plan, and implement a schedule of improvements. The pivotal **performing** moment for me came with our Open Day. We had hoped to recruit around 15 new members, so you can imagine our surprise when, on that Sunday, we welcomed 38! By the end of October, that number had grown to 51. This was a clear sign that the changes we were making were having an impact

The past is important though, as it is the foundation on which this club stands. When we were tidying up the office, we found a rolled-up essay, tucked inside what looked like the cardboard center of a toilet roll. This essay, written in 1996 by one of our founders, Ray Oldfield, outlined how the club was formed.

Recognizing its significance, we decided to include it in the welcome packs given to new members at our **New Members' Evening**, a tradition we introduced last year and now hold in April and October.

To help you understand, I didn't take the decision to stand for this Presidency lightly. I had to decide whether I could add value to the I.C.E. legacy. I spent a long time speaking and listening to our members, understanding their concerns, and identifying what they wanted for the club's future. The feedback was clear: the club needed a refresh, and we had to attract a new generation of members to keep it thriving.

In April one of the first things I did was to reach out to those individuals who didn't renew their membership for 2024 to understand why. The majority cited changes in their circumstances or being out of the country and planning to renew upon return. I'll be conducting the same exercise again this year to keep learning and improving.

Despite these challenges, our achievements over the past year are a true reflection of the hard work, commitment, and dedication of our committee. Their efforts have been invaluable in driving the club forward, and I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank each and every one of them for their contributions

- **John Barr-Richardson**, in addition to being Vice-President, has also taken on doing Facilities Management. Not only has he been a driving force but he has been very supportive.
- **Dan Hackston** has stepped in to become Acting Treasurer. I cannot thank him enough for his hard work and dedication.
- **Ian Horwood** increased his role and now manages both the Bar and Catering. He came up with the solution to counteract the fact that Thursday lunches were no longer viable. He has also been pivotal in the major improvements that have taken place this last year.
- **Jenny Davies** continues to organize the very successful coach trips that sell out rapidly. She works tirelessly and tries to ensure each of the trips are also an experience. She truly goes above and beyond.
- In the background **Diane Hackett and Brenda Taylor** have been carrying out the essential tasks that help keep this Club organised on a day to day basis.

We also welcomed three co-opted committee members who have made a real impact:

- **Rachel Lucas**, whose marketing efforts have contributed significantly to our membership growth. She was also one of the main organizers of the very successful Burns Night Supper.
- **Denis Fountain**, our Newsletter Editor, who never misses a deadline— no matter what arrives at the very last minute!
- **Renee Hackston**, who not only handles welfare but also collaborates with Ian Horwood to ensure the Bar Food menu is a success.
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This AGM is also a time to reflect on the challenges we have faced. Change brings hurdles, and we've had our share:

- **Maggie Whittle**, decided to step down as Secretary, but she still remains very involved with the Club through organising Quiz Nights as well as managing ticket sales for our events and more.
- Our Treasurer, **Paul Parrick**, moved away from the area at the end of September, leaving a gap on the Committee that needed to be filled. Thankfully, **Dan Hackston** stepped in to act as Interim Treasurer and manage the Club finances. He will provide you more details on this in his financial report shortly.

- **Vic Loughran**, who maintained our website for a number of years, relocated back to the UK. This raised the question: Is a website still a relevant tool for us? Fortunately, **Sheila Fox** not only had a clear vision but also stepped up to take on the role.

So where are we now. I talked earlier about the past, but Leadership is about making decisions in the here and now ie the present. This means:

- **Holding the regular committee meetings** to keep communication open and ensure smooth operations.
- **Ensuring the newsletter is published on time** with relevant content.
- **Handling unexpected issues** and making swift decisions to keep the club running effectively.

Today, we will also vote in **new committee members**. For the first time in a long time—and I say this taking a leap of faith that you will vote them in—we are close to having a **full complement** of committee members. Not only that, we will also have **an almost equal balance of men and women**, bringing diverse perspectives and ensuring well-rounded decision-making.

One of the first things I did as President was to create an **Events Planning Sub-Committee**. This group, made up of committee members and regular club members, is tasked with planning future activities for the year ahead as it is important to keep our existing members engaged while attracting new members which is essential to our growth.

- As we did last year, we will use July and August for improvement projects, ensuring minimal disruption while making meaningful upgrades to the club.
- Brainstorming is already underway, and once we have a clear vision, costed proposals will be presented to the committee for its approval.

Another priority for the coming year is reviewing the club rules. These rules haven't been updated since 2010, and it's time to modernize them. I am establishing a sub-committee to:

1. Identify any inconsistencies in terminology.
2. Amalgamate the various addendums into the rules.
3. Assess the relevance of each rule as of 2025.
4. Recommend any necessary new rules or clarifications of existing rules.

I have asked **Nick Smith**, a retired barrister, to lead this process. Once complete, the report will be presented to the committee for review and discussion.

Before I wrap up, I'd like to take a moment to properly thank my predecessor **Sheila Fox**. Being voted in last year didn't give me the chance to do so, but today, I want to express my genuine appreciation for everything she has done for the club and support she has given me over this last year.

This past year has been one of growth, change, and collaboration. We've faced challenges, but we've overcome them together. We've seen new members join, events sell out, and a renewed sense of energy within the club. Examples of some of our sold out events this last year have been the Birthday Party, the Yunquerra Coach Trip, and Summer BBQ to name just a few.

As we move forward, I encourage all of you to stay involved, share your ideas, and help shape the club's future. This club isn't just about the committee—it's about all the incredible volunteers who keep things running. People like Sally Holloway, who takes on the unenviable task of keeping the membership database up to date. Those individuals who step up and volunteer for the bar rota. Dave Hackett, who diligently collects the lottery money every Thursday without fail, Sue Potter who is an Administrator for Facebook and our Wakes Manager. And of course, the fantastic team that has helped put together today's AGM: Joanna Mitchell, Helen Rumsay, Sheila Defries, Sheila Fox and Stephanie Monahan.

A special thank you also goes to Judy Lines, who is about to host her second sold-out event—the 60's night—and to Sandra Everleigh, who did a wonderful job decorating downstairs for Christmas and is now hard at work planning the Ascot afternoon tea event. What's especially great is that neither Judy nor Sandra are on the I.C.E. committee, yet they're both happy to get involved and contribute their time and energy.

All these individuals go above and beyond for the club, and I know I will have forgotten someone so I apologise. However, we can't rely on just a few. If you enjoy the benefits of being part of this community, I encourage you to volunteer. This club thrives because of its volunteers—it's what makes us strong.

Thank you for your time, your support, and your commitment. Let's continue to grow, improve, and make this club the best it can be!

AUDITOR'S REPORT – Sheila Fox (2014074)

I have audited the accounts each month for 2024 and the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2024. Based on the information I have, these financial statements are a true and fair view of the state of the Club's accounts at 31 December 2024.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Dan Hackston (2021006)

The Accounts this year were taken over by myself in October due to the Treasurer leaving Estepona. The handover was very brief due to the short notice of Paul's departure. October was also an extremely busy month with over 1,400 entries compared to a norm of 160 to 200 giving rise to many hours of work getting to grips with an unfamiliar system. I must thank Ian for his patience and long hours of assistance in preparing these accounts for 2024. Together we have compiled the various required accounts which have been presented to yourselves at this AGM. There are some significant points which I would like to comment on in detail as well as providing a brief summary of the main points arising from the figures presented to you. I must also thank Sheila Fox for her work in auditing the accounts which have proved somewhat onerous given the circumstances of the change in October. Regarding the figures in general 2024 proved to be an excellent year generating a surplus on the overall activities of the year and providing a healthy bank balance going forward. The introduction of a card payment system and bank transfer facility has provided significant benefits to members allowing for easy payments for trips, events and membership payments in addition to the usual cash ticket purchase process. However this has presented challenges to completing the monthly and annual accounts as there are now numerous entries to be tracked through bank statements and card payment vouchers.

To look in more detail at the figures the club generated a surplus of 8127 euros compared to 6119 euros in 2023 - this is particularly impressive given that almost 14,000 euros was spent on maintaining and improving the clubhouse comprising of a new ceiling fan system, a new audio visual system, a major bar renovation and the long awaited replacement of the coffee machine. These major items were presented to the committee for approval and, in each case, came in under budget which is a credit to the work of Ian, John and the facilities team.

Other items worthy of mention include the savings made by replacing the magazine with a modern newsletter which is now made available to all members via the internet and has been generally well received. The bar income has been particularly impressive with the surplus almost doubling compared to 2023 which reflects on the hard work of Ian and his bar and kitchen team.

The catering income has now been subsumed into the bar with the introduction of the bar menu which is proving popular with members. The trips and events have also been extremely popular with long trips providing a healthy surplus from the Italy trip and the many day trips which have been provided for the enjoyment of members. These items have proved extremely popular giving rise to a major boost to overall income. Particular mention must be given to Jenny Davies for her sterling efforts in organising these trips.

Events have also been particularly well supported with events such as the Birthday party, Christmas lunch and other activities providing an additional boost to club funds. Many thanks must go to the events team for their work in mounting these activities. The other income has also provided increased funds for the club from the many activities which take place on a regular basis including bridge, raffles, theatre and movie sessions, Spanish classes, quizzes and lotteries held during the year. Overall, therefore, this has been a successful year with a positive outlook for the future finances of the ICE club.

One note worthy of consideration from a financial viewpoint is the fact that the membership fees only provide 50% of the funds required to operate the club on an ongoing basis exclusive of improvements. It may be necessary to revisit this matter in the future as it could be argued that membership fees should cover a more substantial percentage of the clubs operating costs - it is also interesting to note that probably one third of the membership support the bar and trips on a regular basis and are, in effect, subsidising the remainder of the membership to a large extent. It is also pleasing to note the steady increase in new members with over one third of the membership being members for less than 2 years. This is a refreshing statistic as new members bring fresh ideas and keep the club topical and up to date and, hopefully these members should be encouraged to join in the activities and volunteer their support for the many activities the club provides

BAR & CATERING REPORT – Ian Horwood - (2019039)

This is my fifth year presenting a report to the membership on behalf of the Bar, and my first ever report regarding Catering. There is a lot of information to cover in this report, so please bear with me!

Before I begin!

I must start with a very BIG Thank you to **ALL** the volunteers who support the bar and kitchen. Without your time, energy and support, we wouldn't have a functioning bar, kitchen, or Club!

Thank You guys! You know who you are!.

OK... Firstly, the Bar...

2024 has been another very good year for the bar, contributing significant revenue to the club. The specific figures are available in the Treasurer's report but I will cover them in a little more detail in a moment..

I am sure that some of you may have noticed that there have been some interesting changes both physically and aesthetically within the bar area. But before I go through some of these, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to John Barr-Richardson for his invaluable assistance and support in making these changes possible. John's perseverance and dedication (and a very big hammer!) were instrumental in achieving everything that you now see. Thank You John!

Additionally, I must also express my thanks to Willie MacIntosh, whose expertise and knowledge in building walls, and concreting floors far exceeded both John's and my own capabilities. Thank you, Willie.

OK, what has changed since my last AGM report?

For the newer members here today, I will begin by discussing the Coffee Machine. The need for a new machine has been known for nearly 10 years, with approval originally granted back in 2014 to replace the old second-hand unit. While there were valid reasons for the delay, it was finally addressed in 2024. This significant expenditure (approximately 3500€), along with the addition of a new coffee grinder has substantially improved the quality and consistency of the coffee available to the members. And has also made the lives of the Bar volunteers so much easier because so much time was spent nursing the old machine, and cleaning up spilled coffee grinds!

Big tick in the box!

What Else!!!

I am sure that John will cover some of this off in his Maintenance report, but it is my bar!

We have remodeled the bar area (rear wall etc.) by removing an old decorative chimney (primarily because John & I kept hitting our heads on it!), fixing the damage done by that by building a new wall and painting the whole back of the bar a more neutral white colour. We also created overhead bar storage using the existing frame which now stores all our excess glassware, as well as other 'stuff'!

We have installed new mirrors, shelving with glass hangers, over-the-bar lighting, extra wall power sockets, and ornamental fixtures (such as the big clock!). We have also increased the variety of glasses behind the bar, including proper gin glasses, and long stem champagne flutes. We now have enough glassware to fully support in-house events without running out (yes! we used to run out of glasses!).

The bar improvements have been completed by deploying proper rubber bar mats across the entire bar, purchasing four new barstools, and installing controllable lighting around and under the bar to support various in-house events, such as St. Patrick's Day and the upcoming 60's Night Party (colour changing!). Must have pretty lights!

Oops, I almost forgot to mention the new BarTv, a great tool for sharing bar-related information such as drink prices, Bar Food Menu, special offers, and upcoming events. If you think there's any relevant or interesting information missing, or something that you think should be added then please let me know. We have the technology....

As you can see, significant time, money and effort has been invested in ensuring that the bar is a comfortable and enjoyable environment for all members. I sincerely hope that you find the bar and the downstairs area to have an appropriate ambiance and to be fit for purpose. We hope that you continue to support the club by using the bar during your visits.

Now I would like to quickly cover the Bar financial performance for 2024.

As covered already by the Treasurer, the bar turnover has increased annually by approximately 30%. This growth is attributed not only to the rise in food sales (20% of total turnover) but also to greater support from members during various in-house activities (selling out of in-house events definitely benefit the bar).

Bar prices were last increased back in June 2023. Despite ongoing price challenges from our suppliers, we do not intend to raise drink prices in the foreseeable future.

One of my primary responsibilities is the weekly, and occasionally bi-weekly, stocking of the bar with beverages etc. from Montisur, or Mercadona. To effectively manage and monitor usage, I meticulously track all purchases down to the exact quantity obtained. This allows me to see what, where and how many. For example, in 2024, our members consumed the following:

- Over 2000 cans of beer (both normal and zero) – which is similar to 2023
- Over 200 cartons of juice (grapefruit being most popular) – which increased by 10% over 2023
- 98 bags of ice – increased by 10%
- Nearly 1500 cans of soft drinks (**778 Coke Zero**) – increased by 10%
- 18 bottles of spirits (8 Gin) – gin increased but overall spirits decreased
- 15 kg of coffee beans – unchanged from 2023!
- 120 litres of milk – increased by 30% due to new grinder being less wasteful.
- Over 2100 bottles of water (still water favoured 2:1) – slightly down on 2023
- Over 900 bottles of wine (Cava, white, red, rosado) – Cava down over 70%!! With White increasing and Rosado reducing compared to 2023.

While I am discussing the types of beer and wines available at the bar, it is important to mention that it is not feasible to stock every variety to cater to all preferences. This limitation is necessary to avoid wastage and ensure that the bar prices remain reasonable while maximizing the surplus to the club. The cheap bar is one of the main benefits to becoming a member of the club!

I am committed to listening to member requests and have accordingly added non-alcoholic beverages (both beer and wine) to our bar offerings. Where cost-effective, I will continue to expand these options. While a minority of members may believe that we provide poor quality, inexpensive wine (CHEAP PLONK as described to me by a member recently!), I assure you this is not true. Our goal is not to purchase the cheapest wines available but rather to provide a quality offering whilst not being overly expensive! I do NOT go for the cheapest, nor the most expensive. I can, if that is what is preferred by the majority of the membership BUT that is not the feedback that I am getting! However, if you have any thoughts regarding the bar's drink offerings, please feel free to speak with me directly, or use the suggestion box located near the bar.

In November 2024, the Bar Food menu replaced the old Tapas menu, and was introduced to support the catering food options addressing the absence of the traditional Thursday lunches. The new Bar Food menu combined popular items from the old Tapas menu with larger meals, sides, and desserts.

An increase in Bar Food orders, especially on Thursdays, has significantly raised the workload for the bar volunteers, as they need to take the orders, handle the payments, and inform the kitchen of the orders promptly. If, and when, you do order Bar Food, please ensure that your order is accurately given to the bar volunteers, and that any requests (time, alteration to options etc.) are clearly understood and written on the order sheet. This will save time and confusion in the Kitchen!

OK. Now I want to address my Catering Manager role & responsibilities....

I was given the responsibility to oversee Catering because the Bar Tapas food was gradually replacing the Thursday lunches and gaining importance among the members as a preferred food option while they enjoyed the club and bar. It became clear that the existing 'Tapas' menu was inadequate as it did not offer sufficient meal choices.

I worked with certain committee members to define the new Bar Food Menu, which features clearly defined meal options and an expanded selection. Once approved by the committee the new menu was officially launched in November 2024 and has been very well received by club members.

Actually, we have become a victim of our own success. The popularity of the Bar Food has far exceeded all expectations, presenting us—the committee and the club—with an interesting challenge. We are currently facing difficulties in coping with getting the food out in a timely manner, and in the right order. This has meant some unacceptable delays to members getting their food, and even some not being delivered at all! This is NOT the level of service that we in the kitchen want to give to you the members.

As the Catering Manager, I would like to formally apologize to those members who regularly use the kitchen services, as we have sometimes struggled to deliver to the highest possible standards, despite our best efforts.

However, there are mitigating circumstances that I would like to make you aware of. These include the current limitations of our kitchen, which is not designed or equipped to facilitate the type of food that is now being offered.

Also, the Bar Food menu items are prepared and cooked to order; we do not pre-cook any items (thereby just re-warming them in a microwave), and consequently, we can only process a limited number of orders simultaneously. Due to the variety of options on the menu, this may cause timing challenges, as some dishes require more time to cook than others. While we strive to accommodate special requests from members, our set menu allows us to efficiently prepare each order. We kindly request that you inform the bar volunteers whether you prefer peas or beans when ordering, as this significantly saves time and avoids the need for additional confirmation, and delays whilst we find out what it is... Peas or Beans!!

The success of our Bar Food service is down to the invaluable contributions of our Kitchen volunteers. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of them for their hard work and dedication. Special recognition is owed to Renee and Dan Hackston for their unwavering support and their willingness to step in and help. They have played a significant role in ensuring the success of the Bar Food Menu and the Kitchen.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the regular volunteer contributions from Rachel Lewis, Judy Lines, and Carole McGregor without whom I would have given up long ago! Your commitment and support are deeply appreciated!

To provide some context for the activities in the kitchen, I will share some figures similar to the examples that I shared about the bar stock. Yes, I also track how many bread rolls, tins of mushy peas, and Jacket Potatoes that we buy and what actual Food options we sell! It is important to note that most of 2024 was under the old Tapas menu. Expectations for 2025 are much higher!

- 106 packs of Bacon in 2024
- 660 Bread Rolls
- 42 Bags of Grated Cheese
- 94 bags of salad leaves
- 117 Baked Potatoes
- 63 Tins of Beans & Mushy Peas
- Tapas & Bar Food brought in over 4000€'s in 2024

Some other interesting stats from the new Bar Food menu are:

- 462 Covers in 2024 (2 months) – 294 all Thursdays – 168 all Sundays
- 437 Covers so far in 2025 (2.5months) - Food revenue is currently over 2000€'s

I will present my concerns and thoughts (and those of the other volunteers) regarding the current performance of the Kitchen, along with any potential solutions, to the new committee next week for their input and guidance. Please be assured that I will endeavor to address the current shortcomings in the Bar Food service to ensure that you, the members, receive the service that you expect and deserve.

However, I kindly request your patience during busy periods, as we are volunteers and not professional restaurateurs; this is not our full-time occupation, and we do not get paid. We are NOT a restaurant, and do not try to be one!

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone that BOTH the Bar and Kitchen rely entirely on the support of its volunteers to operate and serve our members. Volunteering is an excellent opportunity to meet fellow members and integrate into the club. We encourage new members interested in volunteering to either contact me, any other committee member, or speak with one of our current volunteers, who can provide you with an honest perspective on the benefits and challenges of assisting behind the bar or helping in the kitchen.

Finally.. And I don't apologise for saying it again!

THANK YOU to ALL the volunteers for their unwavering support over the past year, as well as their anticipated contributions in the coming year.

FACILITY REPORT – John Barr-Richardson, Interim Facilities Manager (2018055)

AV Installation

We have installed an Audio Visual system downstairs. This Includes a 4.5 square metre dropdown electric remote control screen, a sound bar and a surround sound system.

This system is used as a stand alone for screening such things as films, plays, sporting events etc. Also as a support for events such Burns night, St Patrick's day etc. Even as just a background for various occasions.

Lights and Fans

We replaced the fluorescent tube lighting in the outer todos area with multi purpose fans and lights. We also upgraded the fans and lights in the bar area. These fans and lights allow us to adjust the type of light, the six levels of brightness of the light on an individual basis throughout the ground floor. The introduction of the fans allows us to moderate the temperature throughout the ground floor. Each fan is individually controlled and has six speeds. This means that the cooling can be adjusted to suit each localised area as required. The cooling can be achieved without the need to open the todos, so that being blasted by the breeze or becoming overheated will be a thing of the past.

Fire Extinguishers and Contract

The Clubs insurance policy requires that an annual contract for servicing in-house fire extinguishers be in place. This has now been purchased. As part of this we had a survey of our fire extinguishers as this appears to have not been done since Jan 2017 and therefore ran out in Jan 2018. Two of the five extinguishers had to be replaced. The remaining three were serviced so that we are now compliant with clause in the insurance policy.

General Maintenance

The general maintenance of the club premises continues with numerous and various tasks being completed, too many to be listed individually. Thanks go to Ian and Dan for their contributions. Special thanks to Willie MacIntosh for giving freely of both his time and materials to aid the completion of a number of tasks in and on the club's property. Also thanks to Gary Dutton for his assistance in the construction of the under stairs cupboards, which needed to be constructed in situ due to access restrictions.

The 'To Do' list doesn't seem to be getting any shorter. However, many members have been very complimentary about the ongoing improvements to the club's premises, which are completed for the benefit of all the members.

HOUSEKEEPER 'S REPORT - Brenda Taylor (2009047)

This year has been a fairly low spending year, but I still maintained levels of all essential cleaning materials, toilet rolls, paper towels, fresh air sprays. The table cloths in the bar area were replaced the final decision being made by the manager. Once again during the year, I have been incapacitated and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people for covering my duties