

## NMRC AGM AGENDA & MINUTES 02/12/2025

We have brought forwards the AGM due to the proposed changes expected to take place in running the club in 2026. As in previous years we shall set out reports from committee members regarding the last 12 months with the new proposals towards the end of the agenda.

### Membership Report

Helen Goodwill (HG) advised that the 'paper based' numbers were 37 ( at 39 in Jan 2025 2025, 42 in 2024, 47 in 2023, 53 in 2022 down from 73 in 2019). The number of printed magazines were reduced in 2023 with 'friends' of the club moved to online versions whilst past/present committee members were paying £6pa to receive a printed copy instead of the usual £12pa.

The bulk of the membership is now 'free online' with the current list showing 524 subscribers at present (from 493 in Jan 2025, 453 in 2024, 407 in 2023, 368 in 2022, 330 in 2021 & 175 in 2019). All get advised when the new magazine is produced (via Mailchimp) although opening rate of the e mails is usually only 60%. This may be due to some e mails being treated as 'spam' even though delivered via Mailchimp – there is a complicated process to 'tweak' settings to reduce the risk of 'spam' rejections although it is too technical for me (Phil Evans)!

Around 6 names were removed from the mailing list during the past year where either their e mails 'bounced' or they 'unsubscribed' or in some cases we were notified that members had died.

Our Facebook followers currently stand at 648 (was 583 in Jan 2025, 506 in 2024, 456 in 2023, 404 in 2022, 367 in 2021 & 275 in 2020) although some of these are fully registered members (possibly about a third) albeit unclear why some join Facebook but then do not register as free members.

Thankfully the number of 'dodgy' members on Facebook has reduced further in 2025 and if anyone joins merely to advertise their own websites etc then we should restrict their ability to post messages in future. This has been done more strictly in 2025 – basically if you never post/comment but just advertise your own website you will be removed from the group.

As a general rule we should only allow FB members to share details of their own websites etc if there is a reciprocal arrangement or they are sharing a 'not for profit' event such as a charity fundraiser.

If committee members using Facebook can visit the club page as often as they can and leave comments etc (not just likes) I am sure this will help stimulate further growth of this membership platform.

For UK racing followers the Twitter (X) platform has never really boosted interest in the club but followers of racing in Meydan etc may still find it interesting.

In summary, whilst further growth in free members and other 'followers' is pleasing, the actual involvement in club activities is generally not increasing very much. See later comments.

### Magazine Report

Ken has estimated that the next two issues of 'Racin' will cost around £125 in print/postage costs (including a gift for the printer after the last printed issue).

See later agenda points – plan is to keep printed magazine until Feb/Mar 2026 then online only until issue 400.

## **Treasurers Report**

Richard Mattison will be asked to compile the club's accounts for 2025 in the new year.

For the year ending 30/11/23 these show a surplus of £146 but for the year ending 30/11/24 a loss of £109.

However, since the last AGM the club's main bank balance has fallen by just under £20 (Nov 2025).

We have moved a substantial chunk of reserves (£5,000) onto a 95-day deposit account (in Sept 2023) which is currently paying interest of around £160pa although this is starting to reduce as interest rates fall.

In terms of future income, the club has the bank interest, paper magazine subs in 2025 with proposed changes in 2026 (see below).

As expenses in 2025 the club will have paid website related costs (inc. domain names), stationery & some prizes.

## **Membership Fees**

See other agenda items re new proposals.

## **Stable Visits**

Sadly we cancelled the only proposed stable visit this year due to lack of numbers.

As Dave Bates was also indisposed for much of the year no additional visits were arranged.

See other agenda items for new proposals.

## **Competition News**

Whilst Mark Banks has worked really hard to get 'Alex Bird' entries up again in 2025 and the two other main competitions have seen some smaller increases. Notwithstanding the growing membership numbers the 'new faces' entering Satnaps/Heritage Handicaps have been fairly small in recent years. 'Wooden Spoon' winners now get a free entry to Satnaps/Alex Bird/Heritage the following year.

Andy White has taken over the 2025/26 Satnaps Challenge (thank you so much) and by allowing dual entries as per the Alex Bird competition has seen a good increase (+12) to 69 entries this winter.

Mark also managed to get the Racing Post to sponsor the 'Alex Bird' this year with a winner's prize being an 'Ultimate RP Membership' worth nearly £500.

The 'Alex Bird' competition will have the 3-day Chester Festival as the third leg in 2026 with the others made up of Cheltenham, Aintree and Royal Ascot.

Andy White has also agreed to take over the Grand National Sweepstake in 2026 and has a 'free rein' if he wants to tweak the nature of this. It may, however, be better to reduce entry fee to £5 a ticket to fit in better with the 'e-voucher' scheme in 2026?

Helen Goodwill will again run the HH competition in 2026 and reports that entries in 2025 were up slightly at 43 (from 40).

59's Draw: Due to a few non-renewals and some member's deaths we currently have some numbers available for the 59's draw if anyone would like to take a number? Costs £1pm with £50 monthly prize.

ITV 7 Leagues – Launched in Sept 2025 as a 'free to enter' competition. We currently have 42 members in the league and would like to grow this further. Essentially this is a 'feeder competition' with the monthly winners getting a 'golden ticket' to enter one of the other competitions with cash prizes. In 2026 the yearly winner will get a trophy. Whilst I (Phil Evans) thought that numbers would be greater and that a fee-paying competition could run alongside the free version, this has been shelved for now. The first two monthly winners have joined the Satnaps Challenge for the first time which confirms its value to enhancing other club competitions.

Super 6 League – thanks to Brendan O'Meara for donating the £25 prize this year. Whilst the league shows 37 members only 34 are active this season. Dave Bates is leading the pack as I type this note! It is the plan to offer a prize fund next season – does a fiver entry seem fair? Prizes can then only be won by those paying the entry fee.

### **NMRC WhatsApp Group – Update & Review (November 2025)**

The NMRC WhatsApp group was created in January 2025 mainly to give members who are not on Facebook an easy way to stay involved with club updates and discussions, though of course those on Facebook are more than welcome to join the WhatsApp group.

The intention has always been to make sure everyone can access information, regardless of their preferred platform.

At the moment, the content posted in the group is not fixed and is fully open to ideas and suggestions. Messages have been shared previously asking members what they would like to see included, but unfortunately no feedback has been received so far.

Current posts mainly cover:

- Updates to the Super 6 competition
- Updates to the ITV7 competition
- Notices for the latest Irish Point-to-Point 4yo Maiden races

As very little feedback has been received, it is difficult to judge whether these updates are useful, interesting, or valued by members.

That said, the WhatsApp group remains a potentially important way of keeping everyone informed about all things NMRC. It is still finding its place within the club, and with time – and hopefully more input from members – it can develop into a really helpful and interactive channel for everyone.

Keith Dodd

## **Cheltenham Preview Event 2026**

As last year I hope to arrange something similar (virtual) as an IJF fundraiser in 2026. We raised around £200 last year.

The plan would be to again share selections of a small panel on the eve of each days racing via a 'hidden website' that only those making donations will have access to.

Paul Fergusson kindly arranged a members discount code for the Weatherbys Cheltenham Guide last year and we will ask if he will do the same for 2026.

I shall also share details of a few live preview events in our region from 'friends' of the club and hope to get a few of their 'top tips' in return.

## **Other Events in 2026**

Any other ideas welcome plus volunteers to arrange events.

## **Deputising Cover for Key Roles**

Andy White (AW) can now access the website builder & Judith Bradley (JB) is now acting as a Facebook supervisor. Charles Rear has confirmed that he is still available to act as Deputy Treasurer should Richard no longer want to continue in that role in the future.

## **Proposed Changes in 2026**

The club committee has recently approved changes to the membership structure in 2026. The key changes are as follows:

1. The paper magazine option will cease after 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026 with the online bi-monthly magazine ceasing after issue 400 in late summer 2026. After that 'articles' will be published directly on the club website 'when available' rather than holding back for the next magazine date.
2. There will be two classes of membership in 2026. (a) FULL MEMBERS – an annual fee of £12pa will apply which will include one £10 'e voucher' to use on a club competition/event. This effectively means that full members are paying only £2 for membership. Other family members at same address can join at no extra cost but will not receive an 'e-voucher'. Full members will also receive a password for the club website. (b) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS – this will be the existing 'free online members' that do not pay the new membership fee. These members will still have limited access to parts of the club website and can join free monthly ITV7 leagues etc but cannot join any fee-paying competitions (except the 59's Draw) or most other activities without upgrading to full membership.
3. The funds raised by the membership fees will be ear-marked towards the additional website costs (password protection) and also the extra club prizes (ITV7, Wooden Spoon etc).
4. New membership forms and record sheets have been designed and shared across the committee for use in 2026 which will also record how/when e-vouchers are used.
5. With the enhanced membership records available in 2026 it will give us scope to organise local club events if there is sufficient demand in local areas.

6. Whilst standing orders for subs remain unchanged at £12pa (payable 1<sup>st</sup> March) other members who are sending one off payments as cheques or bank transfers will be encouraged to do so from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 so that e-vouchers can be issued in good time for the Alex Bird competition (if required).

### **Any Other Business**

Nothing received to date

### **Election of 2026 Committee**

If anyone wishes to step down from the committee please contact PE. That aside all existing committee members will be re-elected 'en bloc'.

No new volunteers have been forthcoming at the time of writing.

Besides being sent to all committee members the agenda was also shared with Frank Donohoe. No other members asked to become involved in the AGM process.

Phil Evans (NMRC Chairman)

2/12/2025.