

Leicestershire & Rutland Chess Association 2016 AGM Minutes

**To be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday June 8th 2016
In room ATT 212 : Attenborough Seminar Block Second Floor SR 212**

In the absence of the LRCA chairman Mike Salisbury, the General Secretary Jim Bingham (JTB) opened the meeting at 7:35, and after establishing that Andy Morley (AJM) was prepared to chair the meeting he sought, and gained, the authorisation from those present for this to be acted on.

AJM then thanked those present for their attendance, and Laurence Livsey for arranging the use of the room at the University.

The General Secretary **JTB** took the minutes.

1. Present and apologies for absence.

	<u>Club</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Apologies</u>
1	Ashby		Richard Vann (RV);
2	Blaby District at Heathcote Arms	Peter Harrison (PHa)	Graham Booley (GB)
3	Braunstone	Jim Bingham (JTB)	Mike Salisbury (MWS); Paul Colburn (PJC)
4	Kirby Castlers	Jim Cowley (JC)	
5	Latimer		Brian Slater (BS)
6	Leicester University	Laurence Livsey (LL)	
7	Loughborough	John Mitchell (JM); Terry Adcock; (TA); Non-delegates :- Peter Hickman (PHi); Stewart Gordon (SG)	
8	Market Harborough		
9	Melton Mowbray	Bob Wallace (BW); Paul Mottram (PM) ; Non-delegates :- Shaun Cope (SC)	
10	Oadby		Mike Thornton (MAT)
11	Red Admiral	Stan Parsons (SP); Mike Slater (MS)	
12	Shepshed Rooks		
13	Syston	Shabir Okhai (SO)	
14	Thurnby	Bob Collins (BC); John Pattinson (JP);	
15	Wigston	Andy Morley (AJM); Iain Dodds (ID);	Neil Beasley (NB);

2. Minutes Of The LRCA Annual General Meeting held on 3rd June 2015

These were taken as read as they had been distributed with the notification of the AGM in the email from the Gen Sec on 4Jun16. An amendment to the minutes was proposed (info please) then PHa proposed that they would then be an accurate reflection of the 2015 AGM. SO seconded the proposal, which was then duly passed.

3. Matters Arising

SO pointed out that the date of the AGM Notification email was clearly wrong. It should have been 12Jun2015.

4. Officer's Reports.

4.1. Chairman [Mike Salisbury]

As Mike had not been able to attend the AGM, and the report that he had provided had been circulated to the club secretaries and LRCA officials with the AGM emails, it was taken as read.

P.S. (JTB) 1. It should be noted that MWS' report made significant reference to Paul Colburn's contribution to the Leics junior chess scene over recent years, and the willingness of Paul Mottram to inherit this vitally important role.

2. MWS also made similar corresponding comments about Mike Fraser's management of the Results Website, and the fact that Stewart Gordon will be stepping into that breach.

3.2. Secretary [Jim Bingham]

Although JTB's written report had also been circulated, he nevertheless gave a verbal presentation of report. In most respects this was similar to the previous year, and he re-emphasised the continued risk of just recycling the same personnel around the LRCA roles. In this respect he highlighted the fact that the gradual erosion of the LRCA organisation is still continuing, as has been typified by Graham Booley's recent announcement that he was intending to stand down as the County Teams Committee chairman at the end of the 2016/7 season.

In his report JTB mentioned about the sad loss of the long-term stalwart of the Leics Chess scene, Cyril Johnson, and identified how his stewardship had been instrumental in bringing the Syston Club the success that it is currently enjoying.

Since JTB had been responsible for the invites to the LRCA members to the AGM, PM took the opportunity to raise the question of who was eligible to actually attend. AJM from the chair explained that the Constitution makes it clear that invitation is extended to all members, the only limitation being that each club can only have two designated delegates.

3.3. Treasurer [Bob Collins]

As BC's detailed reports (appended to these minutes) had been circulated to everyone previously, Bob just gave a summary of the significant aspects of our financial situation, and raised the issues of our future strategies for the meeting to discuss.

BC explained that the drop in league team entries had been responsible for the loss of some income, and that a £213 (?) amount brought forward from 2013 had helped to keep our accounts healthy.

As there was no Atkins Congress this last year the associated account has remained static.

One fairly major issue on the horizon is the intention of the Unity Bank which currently holds the LRCA account to introduce a charge of £72 per annum. So BC mentioned that he will be investigating alternative arrangements. Using either Nationwide or Natwest are possibilities, though JTB expressed concerns about returning to Natwest because of problems with them previously.

BC confirmed that he had had the accounts informally audited by Martin Burrows, and MB just needed to check a couple of receipts before giving a formal decision.

At this point AJM suggested bringing the item about the League subs forward, for immediate discussion. It was agreed by the meeting that this seemed sensible. BC's view was that the finances remain sufficiently healthy for there to be no need for an increase.

MS made a proposal to this effect, which was seconded by JM and was passed unanimously.

1. Committee Chairman's Reports

1.1 County Teams [Graham Booley]

In the absence of GB, it was assumed that the report, which had been previously circulated by the JTB, should be taken as read. A formal proposal to this effect was made by JH and seconded by JP: and was duly passed unanimously.

League Secretary's Report [John Pattinson]

Although JP's report had already been circulated, he opted to make a verbal presentation too.

He expressed disappointment out Hinckley's withdrawal from the league, explaining that although they had sufficient players, there was no-one prepared to take on the organising role.

JP completed his report by thanking Mike Fraser (the retiring Results Webmaster) for all his efforts over the years, and then declared that he would no longer be continuing as the League Secretary, but also said that he had agreed (reluctantly) to take over the General Secretary position from JTB.

(P.S. It was an oversight by the meeting not to give the usual vote of thanks to a retiring League Sec. who has completed, successfully, a term in office. So this is being unofficially noted - JTB)

1.2 Congress

AJM explained that without Sean Hewitt's previous enthusiasm to be half of the driving force for making the Atkins Congress a viable proposition, the event has currently become moribund. He did also mention that as it was too late for an Atkins Congress this year, but if some enthusiasm could be found among sufficient people then he might consider organising an alternative event.

In his capacity as the controller of the individual championships held during the summer, AJM gave a brief optimistic report about these events for 2016.

1.3 Juniors [John Mitchell]

Although JM's report had already been circulated, he opted to make a verbal presentation too. He mentioned that he was handing over the reins to BW (with the AGM's approval) though he would continue on the committee.

He particularly wanted to thank Paul Colburn for his commitment to the Junior Chess scene, and how it was very unfortunate that he was ceasing to be available. But, of course, there are encouraging signs that BW and PM are going to take over Paul's work in a comparable enthusiastic and competent fashion.

John mentioned that there are activities already in progress around the junior scene which JM and PM may be able to become involved in, which will possibly allow good access into schools: and hopefully encourage growth in junior chess.

PM, himself, then explained about the regular junior coaching he was planning to get organised, and how he also intends to take on the junior county activities that Paul Colburn has

been fostering. However, he did identify that to take advantage of the 20 – 25 schools that he is currently aware of who have chess clubs, another person needs to be found who will take on the responsibility for this area.

The meeting then moved on to discuss the uncomfortable subject of Paul Findley's legacy, when there were mixed feelings about PF's positive contribution to junior chess and then the financial chaos resulting from him accepting money for coaching that was never subsequently delivered.

Ultimately the only outcome was that the Red Admiral representatives (SP & MS) registered their wish to be kept informed of any developments regarding PF's status within the chess scene, presumably so they can take this into account in any negotiations that might take place between PF and their (i.e. PF's former club). Note the latter is a personal assessment by the author (JTB).

In the school related discussions LL offered to make use of Facebook to seek advice from Danny (?) who holds some authoritative position in the junior chess network.

The final concerns raised on the issue of junior chess was about additional help. PM identified that a head coach and someone to perform a liasing role, would be desirable, and BW expressed the hope that PJC might stay available in a consultative capacity.

1.4 Publicity Chairman Report [vacant]

Although there has not been a publicity committee for many years now, it was felt that the LRCA website had at least been fulfilling some of such a committee's functions; though it is the area of recruitment that we have no real activity. LL mentioned about how successful the use of social media (e.g. Facebook) had been for finding potential players at the University; and PM mentioned that using tweets on Twitter could be a good way of drawing attention to new posts on the LRCA website.

As a start LL offered to create a Facebook A/C to which those existing LRCA members who are interested could make links to, and at least start some sort of social media network.

2. Report of ECF Delegate

As for last year, we had no ECF delegate (Sean Hewitt?) present at the meeting, and no report had been provided. However since SDH has not given any indication of wishing to discontinue in this role (despite no longer being an ECF official), and without anyone else showing an interest in taking it on, a state of limbo is likely to continue. (JTB note – AJM proposed at the 2015 AGM that SDH should be contacted on this matter)

3. Report from MCCU Delegate (JP & SO)

JP gave a verbal presentation of his report (which had not been previously circulated) and the main points were about :-

- the £860 loss made by the MCCU Congress; which resulted from the prizes not being reduced to reflect the number of entries. And this will be rectified in future.

- The proposed increase in the fine for a defaulted county match board. The meeting endorsed the proposed increase from £5 to £10, so that the LRCA delegate was given the authority to reflect this view at the next MCCU meeting.

Report from Grading Officer [Stewart Gordon]

Stewart made a presentation of his report, which wasn't available early enough for circulation because of some personal problems Stewart has had to face recently.

In the light of this AJM proposed a vote of thanks for SG performing his responsibilities in trying circumstances. This was seconded by PM and MS and duly passed unanimously.

SG's report is appended herewith.

4. Election Of Officers

As for last year, JTB emphasised to the meeting that he had emailed all of the LRCA Officers and Club Secretaries about the precarious situation the LRCA is in again, because of the lack of suitable volunteers to take on the various roles.

After much discussion about how we might re-organise the "willing" people and the various roles the conclusion was as follows:-

- MWS had previously declared his willingness to continue as chairman.
- With JP determined not to take on the League Secretary for another year, he acquiesced to taking over the Gen Sec role instead.
- SO was prepared to continue as ECF Membership Administrator, but did not feel he was ready to take on the League Secretary role.

So this left the overall situation as follows :-

LRCA Policy Committee		
Position	Appointed	Previous incumbent
Chairman	Mike Salisbury	Mike Salisbury
General Secretary	John Pattinson	Jim Bingham
Treasurer	Bob Collins	Bob Collins
League Secretary	vacant	John Pattinson
<u>Committee Chairmen</u>		
Congress	Andy Morley	Andy Morley
League	Mike Thornton	Mike Thornton
County teams	Graham Booley	Graham Booley
Publicity	vacant	vacant

Junior Chess Directors :- - Clubs (& Chairman) - Schools - County - Lead for Safeguarding - Safeguarding Officer - cmtee member	Bob Wallace vacant Paul Mottram Bob Wallace Bob Wallace John Mitchell	John Mitchell Neil Roberts Paul Colburn
Delegates and other officers		
MCCU delegates	Graham Booley; John Mitchell; Sean Hewitt ; John Pattinson	Graham Booley; John Mitchell; Sean Hewitt ; John Pattinson
ECF delegate	Sean Hewitt	Sean Hewitt
County Teams Chairman - U100 Captain Delegates :-	Graham Booley Paul Mottram vacant vacant	Graham Booley Paul Colburn John Pattinson Paul Colburn
Grading Officer	Stewart Gordon	Stewart Gordon
Webmasters	Stewart Gordon – main & results Mike Salisbury - information content	Mike Salisbury - information content Mike Fraser - results
Independent Auditor	Martin Burrows	Martin Burrows
Supporting Roles		
ECF Regns. Administrator	Shabir Okhai (acting Deputy League Sec)	N/A
Fixtures Sec .	Martin Burrows	Martin Burrows
Junior Comms. Administrator	Mike Salisbury?	Mike Salisbury

This allocation of roles was then proposed by AJM from the chair, and then passed unanimously by the meeting.

Several relevant points were raised during the above discussions, as follows :-

- PM indicated that when running the U100's county team it would be best if he didn't restrict the team members to be just juniors.
- In view of JTB ceasing to hold one of the LRCA posts, after several years of doing so, AJM proposed a vote of thanks for his service.
- ID raised the question of whether his role as Summer Cups Administrator ought be included as an LRCA role to be filled at the AGM. In reply AJM convincingly argued that it is best left as a role decided by the league committee, as it didn't impact on the wider domain as other LRCA roles do. (I think! – JTB)

9. Subscriptions for 2015-2016

This item had already been discussed and agreed upon in Agenda Item 3.3. (PS : JTB perhaps this decision should be permanently be relocated to this earlier position on the Agenda?)

10. Revised Constitution (prepared by AJM)

As agreed at the 2015 AGM, AJM had prepared a thoroughly revised Constitution which was then firstly to be commented on by the Policy Committee members, followed by circulation to the club secretaries, and finally brought to the 2016 AGM for consideration/approval.

It seemed from the lack of feedback that the revised Constitution had not generated a lot of interest, so the only comments that were raised were by JTB and SG both in emails and at the meeting.

After some discussion it was agreed that AJM would address some shortcomings that had been identified since he had written his draft version, and he would also give some consideration to the various points raised by JTB and SG and make any appropriate amendments to take account of these points. After this action, AJM would be in a position to release the 'final' version; and this would be published on the LRCA website

Since this arrangement would not preclude amendments being made in future under the democratic control of the AGMs, this was clearly considered to be acceptable by the meeting, so a proposal to this effect was made by BW and seconded by PHa, followed by a unanimous endorsement.

One point made by AJM in these discussions was that a job description document for the LRCA positions ought to be put on the website. JTB undertook to organise this, together with the related action of prompting the clubs for suggestions of people to fill the existing vacancies: with the League Secretary role particularly in mind.

11. Any Other Business

The only significant item under AOB, was Peter Hickman's brief presentation of his unsatisfactory experiences relating to the match start times, as published in the Handbook. His major annoyance was with those clubs which supposedly needed to start matches at 7:15, but then failed to do so after he had gone to a lot of trouble to ensure his team arrived at the away venue early.

TA then mentioned about another unfortunate occurrence affecting the Loughborough club. On this occasion, his team was not directed to the correct room at Leicester University and on arriving late they found that their clocks had all been started.

A useful discussion about these issues then took place, during which JP mentioned about the failure of some clubs to provide up-to-date information about their clubs for the handbook, and LL mentioned how particularly troublesome this was for the University players because of their total dependence on their handbooks.

Ultimately (like at last year's AGM In this year's discussions about time controls and the late starting of matches – author's observation) it was decided that the League Management

Committee needs to be looking at ways of dealing with the length of the playing sessions being specified by the clubs.

11. Date of Next Meeting

T.B.A. in compliance with the new version of the Constitution.

AJM hastily declared the meeting closed at 10:05pm, because of the strict deadline imposed by the University.

LRCA Chairman's Report

I would like to thank all the officers of the LRCA for the hard work over the year, and to Leicester University for hosting this year's AGM at such short notice.

The charity evening held at Latimer in September raised over £100 for McMillan Cancer Research, thanks to all those who entered and who gave generously on the evening, we had the largest number of teams for many years.

The league season has come to a successful finish and congratulations to all the divisional winners, and to last years Summer Cups winners and the individual County Championship winners.

A particular thanks go to Paul Colburn for all the hard work he has put into Junior Chess over the last few years, this has resulted in Leicestershire having the strongest group of juniors playing in tournaments for many many years. My good wishes go to his successor Paul Mottram.

Finally, some issues have come to a head with the LRCA results website. Michael Fraser has decided to step down and I feel it is time for Stewart Gordon to take over the future running of the website. The time is also right for the news website and the results website to be amalgamated into one under the LRCA control. I would recommend that as the current webmaster of the news website I liaise with Stewart to facilitate this transfer, whilst ensuring that news is regularly updated on the website.

LRCA AGM June 8, 2016

Report of the General Secretary : Jim Bingham.

I would have to say that we do again seem to have completed another fairly satisfactory season, despite my pessimistic concerns expressed last year, and in many emails, that unless we can find new recruits to take on the LRCA roles we ultimately face a bleak future.

However, I still do think that it is indisputable that we really do need an influx of new people sometime soon. As AJM mentioned in an email to me recently, just recycling the long-established personnel, (i.e. our old ones) is not exactly a good long-term policy: so I think it is incumbent on us all to do some talent spotting to try to improve this situation.

As far as I currently know the recycling policy will probably allow us to teeter on for another year, but as well as some reluctant heroes that we already have, at the end of this coming season we are going to need a new County Teams Chairman, as Graham Booley has declared his intention to step down then.

I suppose on the unfortunately related note that it is unrealistic to rely on any individual to permanently continue their active contribution to keeping things running, despite their willingness, I would just make mention of the sad loss of Cyril Johnson this year. There can be little doubt that Cyril made a massive contribution to the chess scene in Leicestershire, and the way that the Syston Club has recently grown to be a major force in the Leics League is a lasting legacy to Cyril's management of the club over the years.

Finally, I would also like to mention that I think we should be heartened by Andy Morley's obvious belief that Leicestershire Chess does have a positive future, since as you will have hopefully already realised he has put a lot of serious thought into bringing our Constitution up to date. And I have little doubt that it will be getting our whole-hearted approval when it gets discussed in Agenda item 10.

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND CHESS ASSOCIATION

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2015/16

The Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 (excluding the Congress Accounts, which are prepared by Sean Hewitt) are attached.

My comments on the Accounts are as follows:-

1. League fees were down slightly on the previous year due to a decrease in the number of entries.
2. The Charity Evening in September 2015 produced a lower surplus than in 2014 and this went to Macmillan Cancer Support.
3. A website advertisement fee was received for two years in 2014/15. It is hoped that the advertisement will be renewed in 2016.
4. The insurance cost of £222 has increased expenditure considerably.
5. The cost of trophies, engraving and repairs was substantially lower than in 2014/15 and it is anticipated that this will be the normal level of expenditure in the future. The higher level in 2014/15 was mainly due to (a) Cladish & Co Ltd omitting to invoice us for £275 from the 2013/14 season (and did not notice it was outstanding 9 months' later!), which I discovered and (b) a new Division 4 trophy costing £30.
6. As junior chess activity has expanded considerably in the year and with it the related income and expenditure, I have prepared a separate junior chess income and expenditure statement. From this, you will note that 28% of the income has come from donations, i.e. £250 from Biopolymer Solutions and £150 from Paul Colburn. A £60 refund from English Primary Schools Chess Association relating to 2014/15 did not materialise due to a misunderstanding and this has increased expenditure by £60 for 2015/16. This means the effective surplus is £237, but without the donations a loss of £163 would have arisen.
7. The net result has been a small surplus compared to a large deficit of £488 in 2014/15 but without the junior chess surplus a loss of £105 would have resulted.
8. The Accounts (excluding the Congress Accounts) still show a healthy balance of £2,208.

PROPOSED SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2016/17

In the light of the still healthy financial situation, I propose that the fees should be kept unchanged, as follows:-

League - Top Divisions: 5 player teams: £14.00 per team
League - Lower Divisions: 4 player teams: £11.20 per team
Summer Cup Competitions: £6.00 per team

However, if a further loss arises in the current year, fees may have to rise next year.

Bob Collins
Treasurer

County team report 2015/2016 season

Once again there were no volunteers to run any additional county teams so we were left with just the 1st team and the junior/u100 team, run by Paul Colburn, a separate report on this has been submitted by the Junior committee.

This season the Midlands Championship reverted back to a single division with Derbyshire and Greater Manchester withdrawing and Staffordshire opting to go straight into the National Open stages, thus we were left with 4 matches; Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

We went a little way towards avenging last season's defeats by Nottinghamshire with a hard fought draw at Syston, the featuring 10 draws, Shabir taking the match down to the dying minutes to secure the draw.

This was an excellent draw considering we had our top 3 boards missing and gave us great encouragement for the rest of the season.

Almost back to a full strength team we secured an 8.5-7.5 win against Lincolnshire

We managed the same result in our away match against Worcestershire, again with 3 or 4 regular top half players missing and luckily this year Worcestershire didn't have Keith Arkell playing.

On to Warwickshire, where we needed a win to put pressure on and contest the Midlands title with Nottinghamshire, unfortunately we had 6 of our top 10 players missing and despite putting up stiff resistance we went down to an 8.5-7.5 loss.

This meant we were runners up for the Midlands title and faced a quarter final against Cambridgeshire for the 2nd successive year.

As we had finished all our Midland matches by the beginning of January we had a 4 month wait to play our quarter final.

Unfortunately when we came to play Cambridgeshire in May we once again had a handful of top half players missing and despite Mark Hebden stepping in to help out we went down 9.5-6.5, the match decided with 3 games still in play.

So once again our season came to a premature end.

My thanks to all the players particularly the lower board players who keep turning out at short notice

2 players were ever present this season, Ray Burgess & Constantin Gramaticu and 8 players managed 4 out of 5 matches.

Congratulations to Martin Burrows who scored 4/4, Opponents average grade 200

John Robinson scored his 100th win for the county having first played in May 1959

It was also good to welcome new player Bob Taylor and welcome back players William Bennet, Lewis Turner and Craig Norton.

Graham Booley

Leicestershire and Rutland Chess Association League Report season 2015 – 2016

This season the league consisted of 6 divisions with 47 teams entered.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the team captains and club secretaries for working so hard to make the league run.

Unfortunately this year we lost the Hinkley club from the league. We also had a team pull out late and fortunately the University were able to replace them. We also lost a team halfway through the season due to illnesses and retirements.

Hopefully De Montfort University will be able to enter a team for next season.

There were a number of queries throughout the year about 'barred players'. I'd like to remind everyone that it's the clubs responsibility to keep their barred players up-to-date so please read the rules in the handbook.

Also I had four or five instances of the website not accepting results. This is due to results where the grading difference is more than seven points. Unfortunately I had to apply the penalty of a default of that board. I'd like to remind teams to check on the website for their grades and if in doubt ask the grading officer.

I also looked into replacing the individual trophies with medals but after engraving the difference in price was a few pence so decided to purchase trophies for the 2014-15 season.

My thanks to Michael Fraser for his hard work in running the league results website.

The season went down to the last round of games in many divisions so Congratulations to the divisional winners and commiserations if you just missed out.

- Division 1 – Wigston 1
- Division 2 – Melton Mowbray 1
- Division 3 – Leicester University 1
- Division 4 – Heathcote Arms 2
- Division 5 – Melton Mowbray 3
- Division 6 – Braunstone 5

It is my intention to stand down as league secretary as the role took up more time than I had expected.

*John Pattinson
League Secretary*

LRCA AGM June 8, 2016

Report of the Congress Committee chairman
Andy Morley.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP & Individual events 2015

The County individual events were held during the summer, each tournament having a round every 4 weeks on Thursday evenings at the Wigston Chess Club. There were 4 events:

Championship (open to all - FIDE rated)	20 entries (2014: 18)
Challengers (open to players graded under 160)	14 entries (2014: 14)
Major (open to players graded under 140)	6 entries (2014: 6)
Minor (Open to players graded under 120)	10 entries (2014: 10)

As there were eventually only 6 entries in the Major it was, as last year, played as an all-play-all event. The others were Swiss tournaments and ran fairly smoothly. The LRCA website was kept up to date with the progress of all the events, - thanks to Mike Salisbury for ensuring all the links worked properly , and games played in the Championship were again published on the website for all to enjoy!.

The winners were:

Championship:	Martin BURROWS
Challengers:	Lewis TURNER
Major:	John MANGER
Minor:	Ben VAUGHAN

Thanks to the Wigston Club for hosting the event. This year's competitions are also held at Wigston, and are now well under way. The number of entries this year is slightly down on last year, mainly due to fall-off of entries in the Challengers, which has usually been the best represented section apart from the Championship itself.

Championship:	18
Challengers	8
Major	8
Minor	12

H.E.ATKINS CONGRESS

There was no Atkins congress held in 2015.

Leicestershire Junior Chess 2015-16

Junior chess activity has continued to increase over the past season. We have started to have some success at national events and are pleased to see more juniors being integrated into local chess clubs.

Junior Chess Coaching

Coaching this season started off well but did fall apart a bit towards the end of the season. This was due to a lack of interest from juniors but also because some of the coaches had other commitments. We started off with weekly coaching sessions at four different venues across the county: Ashby, Braunstone, Loughborough and Melton. We also created a 3 tiered epsca training course to run over 5 full days. It was designed for all under 11s to enable us to improve at the various epsca events. However this was abandoned after 2 sessions due to a lack of interest. Next season we intend to run weekly coaching sessions at a fixed central venue in or just outside Leicester. Leicester Grammar School is one possibility. Paul Mottram has contacted a number of LRCA members and around 12 would be willing to trial being part of the coaching team.

Junior County Teams

We have had a mixture of highs and lows this year competitively in national events. We ended last season (June 2015) by winning the ECF U13 Minor Competition. This was a fantastic achievement for an improving set of youngsters finishing ahead of some strong southern counties such as Sussex. This is the first time we have won any of the ECF events since 2002 when we were Under 18 Girls Minor Champions. In the U18 Minor section our team finished second behind the hosts, Lincolnshire. We entered two teams in the formidable junior 4NCL competitions, which are designed for the strongest juniors across the nation. It is run as three different tournaments held over three weekends each with two divisions. Our first team competed in the very strong top division and held their own finishing: 7th out of 10, 8th out of 8 and finally in the last weekend 7th out of 10. Our second team played in the second division and after some promising signs in the first two weekends finishing 14th out of 18 and then 16th out of 17 (after winning their first two matches). We had a fantastic performance in the final weekend to finish as runners-up and go through the weekend undefeated. Against these encouraging results were poor performances in the NYCA U14 competition where we finished bottom. We also entered the epsca U9 zonals but did struggle to get a strong team with enough match practice available. We finished bottom in our zone, not being helped by our board 1, not turning up. Finally Lincolnshire have established a four counties event with ourselves, Notts and Yorkshire. It is a U130 graded & U18 (age) event over 12 boards. It really plays to our strengths and in the recent event in Sheffield, we finished second being only narrowly defeated by Yorkshire in the final round.

Juniors in Local Clubs

It has been great to see the growth in the number of juniors competing in the adult chess league. Over half of the clubs (8 out of the 15 clubs) have juniors playing for them over the past season. In total there have been 22 juniors playing in the league. We will look for ways to encourage more juniors to compete for their local adult clubs in the coming season.

County U100 team

This season we again entered a county u100 team with the intention of giving juniors more experience. We introduced several new juniors this season into the team as some of the older juniors had improved so that they were no longer graded below 100. Our first game was against Nottinghamshire and our inexperienced team lost to a strong side by 3.5-8.5. Then we played Warwickshire and despite having to default a board and playing some very young juniors we were only narrowly beaten as Warwickshire won the match 7-5. We also lost our final match by 3.5 – 8.5 against Staffordshire. This season there were three qualifiers for the National stage and after Staffordshire declined to take up their place we were invited to play. We played Essex in the Quarter Finals and the contest went down to the last game where we lost and so were narrowly defeated: 5.5 to 6.5.

Despite our team losing all four matches this season it was mostly an inexperienced side and it was good to see our juniors perform well particularly in the game against Essex. The performance of our juniors improved over the season, as demonstrated by their win ratio increasing from 20% to 38%. Special Congratulations to Peter Mottram-Epson on winning three of his four games for the u100 county team. In total we gave games to 16 different juniors and 7 adults.

National representation

This season, our two strongest girls: Anika Khare and Milly Kotecha have both been called up to play for England Girls Under 11 level.

Junior Championship

We ran two Leicestershire Junior Chess Championships: a Southern Championship in July and a Christmas Congress at Fairfield school.

The Champions of the Southern Championship at Dunton Bassett in July 2015 were: U18 Ben Raine, U13 Stephen Matts, U11 George Worrow-Goodin, U9 Daniel Chen & U8 Zak Gillespie (Northants).

The Champions of the Christmas Congress at Fairfield School in January 2016 were: U18 Hambel Willow (Notts), U13 Ben Cox (Bedford), U11 Vidura Mendis & U9 Daniel Chen

This year the main Leicestershire Chess Championship will be held on 3rd July at Leicester Grammar School

Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge

There are four stages in the Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge. Firstly, juniors complete at their school to qualify for the MEGAFinal. Those who perform well in the MEGAFinal then qualify for the GIGAFinal up in Manchester. Each Age winner from each of the sections of the GIGAFinal will then qualify for TERAFinal. Matthew Lo qualified for the TERAFinal after winning his age group, and Anika Khare, after finishing joint first in her section qualified for the Challengers of the TERAFinal. Congratulations to both on these fantastic performances.

Next season it is planned to organise a "last chance saloon" event locally to facilitate entry from competitors who do not have access to current school or club qualifying tournaments

Minor League

There were four teams in the Minor League this season with Red Admiral unable to raise a team as most of their juniors were playing in the sixth division. There were entries from Ashby, Braunstone, Melton and Loughborough. The competition was very tight but the overall league was won comfortably in the end by newcomers Melton. It was good see so many juniors playing and to involve adults who do not have the current ability or time to participate regularly in the normal league.

Chess in Schools

Nottinghamshire has overall been the most successful junior chess county outside the south east. In our view one of the major reasons for this is the extensive chess activities in Nottingham schools. At a recent meeting we were told that 23 Nottinghamshire schools had external coaches and were involved in inter school chess competitions. Recent contact with schools by Paul Mottram and Bob Wallace has revealed that there are at least 18 Leicestershire Schools with chess clubs but much fewer with a high level of coaching. We are still in the process of establishing a complete picture of schools chess activity throughout the county. It is encouraging that this season two of our schools (Sparkenhoe Community Primary School and Arnesby Church of England Primary School) are taking part in the Chess in Schools and Communities (CSC) programme. A one hour chess lesson is taught each week over the school year using the CSC syllabus which has excellent supporting material. The driver for this has been Damilare Akintade a PhD student from deMontfort University. 80 primary school pupils are involved and will take part in a tournament at DeMontfort on July 1. We are optimistic this will be attended by IM Malcolm Pein. It is possible that this could be extended to other schools. CSC is a charity aimed at introducing chess to less privileged children.

Another activity involving Malcolm Pein is Yes2Chess <http://yes2chess.org/uk/>. This is an innovative event with participation of primary / elementary schools from eight countries: UK,

Germany, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Denmark and the USA. Matches are played on-line using software supported by the sponsors BarclayCard though the final is a face to face tournament which in 2015 was held in London. Since its start in Germany 40,000 pupils are participating in this. Assuming sponsorship is renewed this might provide opportunities for our schools since travelling is not involved and the start time is flexible

John Robinson Cup

This trophy will be awarded to the best Junior. The current holder is Thomas Brown, A decision will be made as to the recipient for this year when the July gradings are available.

Financial Issues

Concern was expressed at the last AGM about unfilled commitments as a result of the failure of Paul Findley's coaching business. Partly in response to this a separate account was set up for junior chess activities. This would include the LRCA junior championship and central coaching activities. This year's activities were supported by sponsorship from Biopolymer Solutions Ltd.

The Future

Major progress has been made in Leicestershire Junior chess over the last five years. This has been largely due to the efforts of Paul Colburn. Paul will be stepping down though it is hoped that he will continue to have some involvement in an advisory and coaching capacity. Bob Wallace has indicated his willingness to take over from John as Chairman of the Junior chess committee at least on an interim basis though John still plans to contribute to junior Chess activities. Paul Mottram has already stepped into a co-ordinator role for junior chess to organise our county junior teams and competitions, and to set up and run the weekly central county coaching sessions from September and to act as a publicity officer. We will seek to select national events that we feel will best suit our strengths. A number of other parents have indicated a willingness to contribute and be part of the Junior Chess Committee.

There remains a role to be filled for a Schools Liaison Officer to have responsibility for promoting and coordinating coaching within schools, organising a schools chess league and also taking responsibility for the direction of promising schools players to the county squads. There is also a 'Head Coach of the County Squads' role to be filled.

Paul Colburn
John Mitchell
Paul Mottram

MCCU delegate report

The MCCU AGM was held in Cannock on the 20th June 2015 so was quite a while ago
Myself and Shabir Okhai attended the meeting.

Phil Ehr, the Chief Executive of the ECF addressed the meeting and set out his vision of how to increase participation and to draw in extra sponsorship.

The proposition to move the county championship to earlier in the year and to replace the MCCU stage matches was quickly withdrawn and the current qualifying format will continue.

The MCCU congress lost £860, mainly due to the lack of entries and the prize money not being reduced. It was decided to run the event this year and to reduce the prize monies in line with other congresses to ensure the event made a profit or broke even.

Next meeting Saturday 25th June 2016

John Pattinson

Grading Officer's Report

The following events have been submitted for grading since the 2015 AGM:

- 2014–15 Leicestershire Minor League
- 2015 Summer Cups – Chapman, Birstall, Harrod and Wylie
- 2015 Leicestershire County Championships – Open, Major, Challengers and Minor sections
- 2015 Charity Quickplay
- 2015 Leicestershire Junior Christmas Congress
- 2015 Braunstone Club Championship
- 2015 Loughborough Club Championship
- 2015–16 Leicestershire Minor League (up to December)
- 2015–16 Leicestershire Chess League (up to December)

I will be submitting the remainder of the League and Minor League results over the next few days.

Richard Haddrell, ECF grading administrator, has asked me to try to obtain dates of birth for all new Leicestershire players, not only juniors. This is because a DOB is a piece of identifying information that will help to distinguish between people with the same name as they may move between clubs and even counties. As such, I would like to ask clubs to at least request this information when signing up members, and pass it on to me.

The last few months have been a stressful time for me, not only because of long-standing issues but also because of personal problems including the loss of a close family member. I am optimistic that the coming season will be less stressful, and would be happy to continue as Grading Officer for the 2016–17 season.

Stewart Gordon 8 June 2016