**WRITING MINUTES**

Minutes are usually written by the Secretary and are a written record of what happened at the meeting.

The minutes should make complete sense when being read many years after the meeting took place. It should give a clear picture of when and where it took place, who was present, their status at the meeting, the range of the discussion, and the decisions taken.

The style of the minutes should be consistent and should satisfy the requirements of the committee. Minutes should record a short statement of what has been discussed (the facts), a summary of the discussion (people’s views), any formal proposals, (who made and seconded them) and the decision taken, including any vote result.

The minutes should be numbered and written following the order of the agenda.

Whoever is recording the minutes should do so in a clear, unbiased and completely objective manner. Minutes should be written in a past tense.

If action is to be taken by members before the next meeting it is useful to have an action column showing who is to take action and by when.

Any formal motions or resolutions should be recorded in full with the name of the proposer and seconder. The result of any vote should be recorded as announced by the Chairman.

It is better for the Secretary to record as many notes as possible during the meeting and later to summarise discussions and record the important points.

**The Minutes should include:-**

* Name of the Club and committee title
* The date, including the year
* The place where the meeting took place
* If it was an AGM or committee meeting
* Members present, who entered or left during the meeting
* Others present, guests, observers
* Who acted as Chairman, who took minutes
* Apologies for absence
* Corrections, if any, to the previous minutes
* Who proposed and seconded the adoption of the previous minutes
* Matters arising from the previous minutes. This should consist of very brief update remarks and should not involve going over every item from the last meeting
* A separate record of all other items discussed at the meeting
* Date, time and venue of next meeting

Minutes should be impartial and factual. Initials, first names, or jargon should not be used unless it is certain that everyone who reads the minutes will understand them.

The Chairman of the meeting has the final say on what is recorded in the minutes.

**Preparing to take Minutes**

Write in advance on a sheet of paper any reports or facts which you will be expected to give, e.g. apologies.

Any papers or correspondence should be arranged in the order in which they will be required, corresponding to the agenda items.

**At the Meeting**

During the meeting if you are unsure about what was decided or what to record in the minutes, ask the Chairman to clarify the decision taken.

**After the Meeting**

Minutes should be written up as soon as possible after the meeting when recollections are still fresh in the memory.

It is the Chairman who has to approve the minutes before they are released or circulated. Committee members have the opportunity to amend the minutes at the next meeting.

**Some useful phrases**

* It was reported that ….
* It was agreed that ….
* The report was noted
* The matter was deferred until ….
* Mrs …. proposed that ….
* This was seconded by Mrs …. and agreed unanimously
* The motion was carried by six votes to four, with one abstention.
* The Chairman asked members for their views on ….
* After a lengthy discussion in which everyone aired their views the Chairman summed up by saying ….
* In reply to a question from Mrs …. the Secretary intimated that ….
* The Chairman referred to the previously circulated report on ….
* Recommendations from the Treasurer were approved in full.
* There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and concluded the meeting at …