

**Minutes of the 1278th Meeting of the Manchester
Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on
20th January 2026**

Present: Jingle, Ben Allen, Dodson, Job Trotter, Captain Boldwig, Fogg, Jem Wardle, Tom Roker

Apologies: Dr Slammer, Mivins, Solomon Pell, Rev Stiggins

Prior to the meeting opening, Dodson attempted to short change Mr Pickwick. He thought that £5 change from a £20 note was sufficient to cover the £5 meeting cost. Character will out.

The meeting opened at 8.00 according to Jingle's watch (the clock in the room showed 8.02). It was hailed as a good start to the year by Mr Pickwick. The rest of the room looked unconvinced. Job Trotter kept up with his gavel duties.

As Mivins was absent the minute writing duties fell once again on Mr Pickwick. He was keen to point out that he could not be responsible for any inaccuracies.

Mivins is still unwell. He is visited by several ladies from the U3A, and also daily by Dodson, providing tea, company and generally keeping an eye on things. He also supplied Mivins with Sudocrem as he had a sore bottom. We drew a veil over who applied it. Is this a side of the unscrupulous Dodson that we were unaware of. Will Fogg join him in random acts of goodwill. Time will tell. The empty seat Mivins usually occupies looks forlorn.

Solomon Pell has now had eye operation. Jingle will contact him to see if he is able to return soon.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read by Mr Pickwick. The minutes were agreed by Jingle, and seconded by Ben Allen. Jem Wardle asked if he could have an electronic copy to upload to the new website.

Matters arising. We will now meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. There is now a quiz in the other room on a Wednesday. The noise and steady stream of ladies parading through our room (on the way to the toilet) proved just too distracting to some. The Thursday possibility was also off, as there is a bingo session, which is even noisier, and has many more ladies. Discussion was had about using the upstairs room, but it was discounted on several grounds, access for older members, and, given the steepness of the stairs, the observation that "you would go up with a pint, and end up with a half"

During this discussion several fines were incurred. Jingle, for calling Dodson "Bill", and Dodson for calling Jingle "John". Dodson managed to wriggle out of several more fines for similar offences by saying that the people he referred to were not in the room at the time, and he had used air drawn inverted commas. Typical lawyer trick.

Also Dodson as Treasurer has been trying to remove Daniel Grummer as a signatory to our account at Barclays, and to add Fogg. It's fair to say that what would have been a simple matter in a branch turned into a protracted affair with many letters and phone calls. Happily it is now resolved.

The meeting went into rule 8 to allow Jingle and Ben Allen time to go to the Chinese chippy for some curry and chips. Sadly the Chinese was closed, but they returned from another chippy, albeit with no curry.

The new website is now live. Its to be found at manchesterpickwickclub.uk

The site is a vast improvement on the 20 year old previous one. Jem was congratulated on it, and asked for any photos that members may have that would increase the sites interest. Jingle and Dodson say they will bring them to the next meeting

The reading and Inquisition was done by Jem Wardle. It was a passage from chapter 6 of the Pickwick Papers. 6 members were fined for not knowing the answer, with the remaining 1 (Fogg) also fined for being a smart arse. Its fair to say that almost all of us knew the answer to Dodsons question (Crimson), with poor Dodson missing out. Pickwick was only half wrong, but was fined the full amount anyway. An incredulous Jem Wardle said that it was the worst performance he had ever witnessed.

The toast to Charles Dickens was slow to start off, but finished almost together. It occurred to the minute writer that as we are now in 2026, should the count now go to 120?

The toast to absent members was poorly sung (with the exception of Job Trotter). We fear for the future of Jingles alter ego Johnny Diamond, the “singing sensation”

The raffle was drawn. Mr Pickwick was drawn first (cries of “fix”), and Fogg was last (cries of “justice”)

The vote of thanks was from Captain Bolwig, who said it was “his pleasure to congratulate the work done”. He then sat down. Underwhelming or what?

Jingle, on the other hand declared that the chair and vice chair had let the meeting run away with itself. Not enough gavel activity from either end, There had been a poor amount of fines, and that Mr Pickwick had won the raffle. He was most aggrieved. He also said that he had brought his ironing as agreed, but Ben Allen hadn’t brought the iron!

Ben Allen then added that the best bit had been the chips.

Good Neet Owd Friends was badly sung, whilst the National Anthem was an improvement on previous attempts. It seems that all of us now recognise that we have a King.

Fines amounted to £5.10

Raffle £4.00

Note that Jingle suspected someone of short changing the fines by 10p, although conceded that they may have put an extra 10p out of charity.