

**Minutes of the 1280th meeting of the Manchester
Pickwick Club held at the Moorside Social Club on
19th May 2026**

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

Apologies: Dodson, Mr Pott, Dr Slammer, Solomon Pell, Rev Stiggins

The meeting opened at 8.00 on the dot according to Mr Pickwick. The clock on the wall showed 8.02. As Mr Pickwick can do no wrong, his watch must also be correct. Ben Allen a little slow with the gavel. Maybe he will grow into this onerous role.

Mr Pickwick said that this was now a new season, as this was to be the start of our meetings over the summer. He reminded everyone of the new rules and fines. Unfortunately, he was the first member to be fined under these rules for calling Ben Allen "Terry".

Fogg as our new treasurer showed his mettle. Very quick to collect tonight's fees, and decide that there would be no free night tonight. Dodson would be proud.

Jem Wardle wished to offer his "profuse apologies" for missing last month's AGM. He recognised the inevitability of picking up a number of jobs because of this. A list of new roles for this year was passed to him to update the website.

The toast to Mr Pickwick was described by him as "not bad". Praise indeed.

The minutes were read by Tom Roker. They were quite long as much was covered at our AGM in April. Proposed by Ben Allen, seconded by Job Trotter. They will be emailed to Jem Wardle for the website.

Rule 8, and Mr Pickwick discussed his knee operation. Still in some pain, but he was most impressed with the Oaklands hospital. He managed to bag an extra night there claiming he was nervous on the stairs. The physio smiled and said "OK stay over".

Ben Allen a little slow again on the gavel, this time preferring to use his glasses case to call order.

Correspondence. Jem Wardle as new secretary was pleased to declare that there was none.

Reading and Inquisition. Jem Wardle attempted to raise our motivation to do better. He described our last two performances as "pitiful". He then read a very long detailed account from Chapter XXVII (or 27 for the philistines!!). We feared the worst, however there had been some improvement. Fogg and Roker got their questions correct, Jingle said he was close, and would that do? (No). Ben Allen, Job Trotter and Captain Boldwig all wrong. So, fines from everyone, either for getting it wrong, or for showing off.

Another Rule 8. (Jingle) and Ben Allen went to the Chinese for chip butties. Mr Pickwick in some discomfort with his knee but he would "soldier on". Very nice chips. Fogg had to ask for the change, as £20 seemed somewhat excessive. Ben Allen handed over around £13. Fogg is on the ball.

Ben Allen managed to find his gavel, and was almost in time with Mr Pickwick.

Any other business

As Dodson was missing (sunning himself in Anglesey) there were no raffle tickets available. Fogg very keen to “make our own”, fearing for the potential lack of income if no raffle was held.

We noted the sad news that Doctor Slammer’s wife had died the previous week. The intention is that 1 or 2 of us will attend her funeral next week (work and health matters permitting). Mr Pickwick will ask Slammer if he would prefer a donation or flowers on the day. Ben Allen will sort a card. The hope is that Dr Slammer may return to our meetings, hopefully without his accordion.

Jem Wardle asked about why we have so much in the way of reserves. Much discussion about this, and several suggestions for subsidised (or free) outings. Haydock races and a meal out mentioned for summer. More suggestions needed.

Mr Pickwick noted that Job Trotter had merely draped his tie around his shoulders, and not fastened it at all. He felt that this was disrespectful to the spirit of the club. Job gave a sterling defence, but recognised that he didn’t have the support of the meeting. Mr Pickwick duly fined him.

A toast to Mr Pickwick started well (we got to the 120), however we had all forgotten how it ends. We need Dodson to guide us. Fines all round for this. Ben Allen asked “can anyone change a note” and once again Fogg rose to the challenge.

Ben Allen says he will look at getting the toast printed so we don’t forget it again.

At this point the fines master (Job Trotter) discovered a foreign coin in the box. Despite him saying he had checked everything somehow a 20 cent euro coin appeared. No one could explain it. We were described by him as a “pile of bandits”.

The raffle

First out of the hat was Fogg again (cries of “fix” cheered him up immensely). Last out of the hat was Captain Boldwig. Ben Allen suggested that in future we should have a booby prize for last. We were most impressed with this suggestion and will implement it at the next meeting.

The vote of thanks

Job Trotter said it had been an evening of ill behaviour. He noted that fines were up despite the alien coin, and pointed out that the tie incident was an innocent misinterpretation of the rules.

Jem Wardle felt it had been a wonderful evening, with almost everyone properly attired. It was good to see Jingle back as Mr Pickwick, and that Fogg had definitely settled into his role as Treasurer. Tom Roker was an inspired choice to follow in Mivins’ footsteps as minute writer.

As Jem was not standing for this vote he was promptly fined 50p.

Good neet owd friends was sung poorly, prompting Ben Allen to comment that he hadn’t realised the tune had changed.

Despite the agenda still listing point 17 as “The Queen” we decided to settle on “The King”, and did a pretty good job of it.

Raffle raised £7.00

Fines £10.10 and a foreign coin.

A good night for all.

A reminder that the new website is now live. It’s to be found at **manchesterpickwickclub.uk**