



NATIONAL CONVENTION HANDBOOK 2025

Your guide to the Party

Written by Volunteers for Volunteers

The Rt Hon. the Baroness Thatcher LG OM
1925-2013



Marking 100 years since the birth of this transformational Prime Minister

YOUR LEGACY – THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE

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Every gift, no matter how small, helps us win. Every gift is ring-fenced, so you can rest assured that your money will always be used solely for the benefit of the Party.

The money helps provide Conservative Foundation Bursaries for candidates in need of assistance.

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TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this Handbook, 'National Conservative Convention' is also abbreviated to 'NCC' and 'National Convention'.

In general, the term 'Association' in this Handbook also covers Federations.



Julian Ellacott
Chairman of the National Convention

We volunteers are vital to the renewal of our Party, working hard day in, day out campaigning on the doorsteps, raising funds, selecting our candidates, and undertaking all of the other tasks which keep the Party alive on the ground. The National Convention is the body which represents all of us, through which we share best practice, work jointly at local/Area/Regional levels, and focus the views of members to the Board, Parliamentary Party and CCHQ.

Creating this Handbook has been one small but important element in strengthening the Convention, and the first edition has gone down well over the past year. Knowing how you fit into the wider structure of the Party, and the expectations upon you, enables you to be more effective. Thank you to everyone who has provided feedback, which we have incorporated into this edition.

The responsibility of your role – and the support available to help you

When taking on an officer role at any level, it is essential that you carry out the duties of the role in an active, enthusiastic and effective manner. This Handbook outlines the key activities and responsibilities of Association, Area and Regional Officers, and should be essential reading for anyone in those roles (as well as anyone wishing to stand for them in future).

There is no excuse for not knowing what is expected of you. But equally, it should be clear to you that whatever role you are in, you are not an island - you are part of a structure in which others will support you, at Association/Federation, Area, Region and national levels, so please reach out

INTRODUCTION

and make yourself known to those around you in the Party's structure. If you have a problem or issue that you cannot resolve, escalate it upwards, and if need be contact the National Convention Link Officer for your region, who can help.

Convention members should automatically receive by email the weekly Member Services bulletin and monthly National Convention update, both of which contain important updates on various topics. If you aren't receiving them please contact one of the Officers and we will ensure you are signed up. There are also various national WhatsApp groups which share updates and good practice – if you wish to sign up please contact me.

My experience

My fellow Convention Officers introduce themselves in the following pages, and we work as a team on your behalf. In terms of my own background, I have been an active volunteer for 25 years, being an Association and Area Chairman in the South East (as well as spending 19 years as a councillor) before moving to the South West and becoming Regional Chairman. I was then elected a Vice President of the National Convention, in particular supporting the North West and West Midlands regions, and was elected Chairman of the Convention in September 2024. It is fair to say that the Voluntary Party is my passion, and it is a privilege to be your Chairman.

Thank you

I would like to thank Marjorie Baylis MBE and Geoff Baylis once again for their instrumental help in updating this Handbook, and the Conservative Foundation and PPC Ltd for their sponsorship. I welcome any and all feedback on it, so that we can improve it again next time around.

Thank you for all you do for the Party – each of us only has a limited time in our roles within the Party, and our aim should be to hand over our respective parts of the Party to our successors in stronger and better shape than we inherited them.



julian.ellacott@conservatives.com

Link Officer for: London, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

<https://www.conservatives.com/nationalconvention>

OFFICERS OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



Stewart Harper **President and Conference Chairman**

Stewart was born in Essex but he has lived in Yorkshire for 20 years. He was Regional Chairman in Yorkshire from 2020 to 2023, supporting the response to the parliamentary boundaries review and in three Westminster by-elections (as well as countless local government by-elections). He was the Party's Parliamentary Candidate for Leeds North West in 2019.

Stewart worked in the Higher Education sector for most of his career, has been a School Governor and is now a non-executive director of a Multi Academy Trust. A major passion of Stewart's is education and its ability to transform lives. He set up his own business in 2019 and now works in education, the NHS and in the private sector - with expertise in governance and compliance.

In his spare time he is a sports fan and enjoys watching his son playing sport of any kind. He also enjoys reading when he has the time!

Link Officer for the following Regions: West Midlands; South West

stewart.harper@conservatives.com



Michael Winstanley OBE **Vice President**

Michael was first elected as Vice President of the Convention in 2022, and last year served as President of the Convention, and Chaired the Party Conference in Birmingham.

He was Chairman of the North West Region from 2018-2021 and also served as Greater Manchester Area Chairman from 2016-2019. He had experience of being a Constituency Officer when he was Chairman of Makerfield Conservative Association from 1997 – 2001 and was also the first Chairman of Wigan Federation (Wigan, Makerfield & Leigh

Constituencies) when it was formed.

Michael has also served in Local Government as a Councillor on Wigan Council for a total of 17 years and he has stood for Parliament on five occasions in the North West, the first election being 1997 and latterly in last year's General Election in the Leigh & Atherton Constituency.

Link Officer for the following Regions: Yorkshire & The Humber; North East

michael.winstanley@conservatives.com

OFFICERS OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



John Belsey Vice President

John is a chartered accountant and after a long career with Deloitte now runs his family's sports insurance business whilst serving the Conservative Party nationally wherever and whenever he can. Currently Chairman of the Associations' Board of Finance, and until last year South East Regional Chairman, John lives in West Sussex where he is also a Mid Sussex District Councillor. In 2023 he bucked the national trend when he was re-elected with an increased majority having won the seat from the Lib Dems in 2015.

Very engaged in his community John is also chair of governors of a local primary school as well as chairman of his local tennis club and bonfire society!

Although John doesn't get much free time, when he does he loves to play tennis and golf as well looking after his springer spaniel Drake who is occasionally allowed to join John on the campaign trail.

Link Officer for the following Regions: North West; Eastern

john.belsey@conservatives.com



Ahmereen Reza OBE Vice President

Ahmereen is a director of a Land Venture Finance initiative, advancing UK growth through private investment in tech, renewables, and infrastructure. Raised in Asia and New York, her global career spans New York, Tokyo, Karachi, and Boston. She now lives in London with her family and their Labrador.

She serves as Vice Chairman of the Conservative Policy Forum (CPF), Chair of CWO-Diversity, and Vice Chairman of Conservative Friends of Pakistan. A committed Conservative for over 20 years, Ahmereen has led both policy and grassroots roles, previously serving as a CPF Area Leadership Champion, GLA London List candidate (2021), and Parliamentary Candidate for Birmingham Hodge Hill (2017).

Alongside her professional work, Ahmereen has led charitable initiatives, serving as a Non-Executive Director at a housing association and co-founding DIL UK, championing social mobility opportunities for the underserved. She was awarded an Order of the British Empire in 2020 for her service to DIL UK, interfaith, political and public service.

Link Officer for the following Regions: East Midlands; South East

ahmereen.reza@conservatives.com

NATIONAL CONVENTION

What is the National Convention and what does it do?

The Convention is the body which represents Associations, and therefore in turn, all members and volunteers. Its roots go back to 1867 (see page 28 for more about its history).

Details of the Convention's formal responsibilities are set out in Part V of the Party Constitution, which you can access directly via this QR code:



In summary, the following comprise the membership of the National Convention, giving a total size of around 850 members:

- Chairmen of Associations
- Chairmen of Federations and their Constituency Officers
- Elected Area Officers (ie not co-opted)
- Regional Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen
- Elected members of the Party Board, Scottish Management Board and Welsh Board
- The three immediate past Presidents of the Convention and two past Chairmen of the Convention
- Representatives of the Conservative Women's Organisation
- Immediate past Regional Chairmen

The members of the Convention elect the five Convention Officers to the Board each year, typically in June/July. The members of the Convention also elect the Voluntary Political Director of the CPF, every 3 years (currently Frances Lasok, elected in March 2025).

The Convention meets each year at the start of Conference, and typically also in person on one other occasion during the year in person, with a number of online meetings throughout the year. This provides members of the Convention the opportunity to raise issues, and hear from and ask questions of the Convention Officers, Leader and Party Chairman directly.

National Convention Officer Roles

- **Vice-Chairman of the CPF** (as per Article 66.6 of the Constitution):
Ahmereen Reza OBE
- **Compliance Officer** (as per Article 77 of the Constitution):
Michael Winstanley OBE
- **Board Safeguarding Lead** (appointed by the Board): Stewart Harper

The National Convention Officers also each look after the following areas of responsibility, and should be used by Convention members as points of contact on these topics:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Campaigning: | John Belsey |
| • Technology & Software: | Stewart Harper |
| • Social media/digital: | John Belsey & Stewart Harper |
| • Fundraising: | Michael Winstanley OBE |
| • Properties/Trusts: | John Belsey |
| • Training: | Stewart Harper |
| • Affiliate groups (inc. Conservatives Abroad): | Ahmereen Reza OBE |
| • Conservative Women's Organisation (CWO): | Ahmereen Reza OBE |
| • Young Conservatives: | Michael Winstanley OBE |
| • Volunteer Recognition: | Michael Winstanley OBE |
| • Association performance/incentive scheme: | Julian Ellacott |

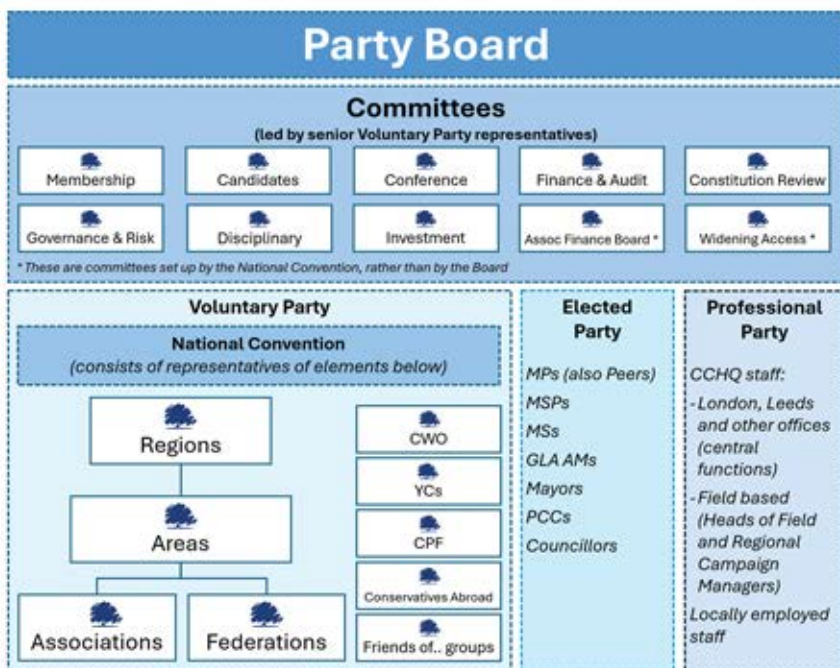
National Convention Link Officers

Each Region has a **National Convention Link Officer** (see current allocations on p4-5 and p22), whose purpose is:

- To attend Regional Board meetings, and other meetings at appropriate intervals (eg Area meetings)
- To be an escalation point for issues from Regional Chairmen (or from Area Chairmen or even Association Chairmen, if they feel they are unable to raise such issues with their own Regional Chairman).
- To scrutinise and sponsor supported status proposals to the Board, and liaising with Board Representatives once Supported Status is in place to ensure progress.
- To support campaigning and fundraising in the Region, as far as practicable.

PARTY STRUCTURE

In simple terms, the Party has three main components - the Voluntary Party, the Elected Party and the Professional Party, all overseen by the Board (on which all components are represented). This is illustrated in the diagram below, and expanded on in the subsequent sections:



The following are some of the more important groups which make up the Voluntary Party, beyond the main party structures:

Conservative Women's Organisation (CWO)

The CWO's aims are to encourage women to join and progress within the Conservative Party to stand for elected roles both within the Party and outside.

Young Conservatives (YCs)

The Young Conservatives are the official youth section of the Conservative Party that has been representing the interests of young people for over 100 years.

Conservative Policy Forum (CPF)

The Conservative Policy Forum aims to find the world-changing, era-defining ideas and shape the policies of tomorrow.

For further information about these and the other groups which make up the Conservative family, such as the "Friends of" groups, visit: www.conservatives.com/organisation



What are the responsibilities and composition of the Party Board?

Part IV of the Constitution sets out the powers and composition of the Board – “There shall be established and maintained a Board of the Conservative Party which shall be the supreme decision-making body in matters of Party organisation and management.”

Clause 17 sets out the (extensive) responsibilities of the Board, and includes the generic power “to do anything which in its opinion relates to the management and administration of the Party.”

The **Composition of the Board**, as set out in clause 12, is as follows:

- Party Chairman
- Deputy Chairman (National Conservative Convention Chairman)
- Deputy Chairman
- Four other Officers of the National Convention
- Chairman of the 1922 Committee
- Chairman of the Association of Conservative Peers
- Chairman of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
- Chairman of the Welsh Conservatives
- Chairman of the Conservative Councillors' Association
- Treasurer of the Party
- Senior member of professional staff
- Three further MPs
- Two further members

The Secretary to the Board, who is also Secretary to the National Convention, is Roger Pratt CBE, who can be contacted via national.convention@conservatives.com

The current list of Board members can be found here:
[www.conservatives.com/organisation/
 party-structure-and-organisation](http://www.conservatives.com/organisation/party-structure-and-organisation)



PARTY COMMITTEES

These Committees undertake detailed work and make proposals to the Board. Given the limited space available this is a high level overview; for more information contact the relevant National Convention Officer(s):

- **Membership** – this recommends the annual subscription level and makes other recommendations relating to membership matters.

Chairman: Michael Winstanley OBE

Other NC Officer member: John Belsey

- **Candidates** – this recommends selection rules, for all levels of elected role, to the Board, and oversees the resulting process.

Chairman: Clare Hambro

NC Officer member: Julian Ellacott

- **Conference** – this oversees the organisation of Party Conference.

Chairman: Stewart Harper

Other NC Officer members: Julian Ellacott, Michael Winstanley OBE

- **Constitution Review** – this oversees the review of the Party's Constitution.

Chairman: Julian Ellacott

Other NC Officer member: Stewart Harper

- **Finance & Audit** – this oversees the Party's financial performance and the annual audit, Electoral Commission reporting, as well as property and legal matters.

Chairman: Julian Ellacott

Other NC Officer members: Stewart Harper, John Belsey

- **Governance & Risk** – this oversees the Party's fulfilment of its obligations on issues such as safeguarding and data protection, as well as protecting against threats such as cyber crime.

Chairman: Andrew Colborne-Baber OBE

NC Officer member: Ahmereen Reza OBE

- **Investment** – this oversees the Party's fund manager, in relation to performance of the investments held on behalf of the Party, centrally and those Associations who invest alongside.

Chairman: Clement Hutton-Mills

NC Officer members: Julian Ellacott, John Belsey

- **Disciplinary** – this comprises a range of experienced, trusted volunteers who form panels to hear individual disciplinary cases, independent of the other Party structures.

Chairman: Dr Richard Williams

- **Association Board of Finance** – this brings together the Regional DCMFs, to share good practice on fundraising, and other finance matters.

Chairman: John Belsey

- **Widening Access** – this is a new Committee, which monitors data on the characteristics of members in leadership roles across the Party, and works with the voluntary party to encourage wider participation.

Chairman: Fleur Butler OBE

NC Officer member: Julian Ellacott

ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

Schedule 7, clause 2 of the Constitution sets out the objects of an Association, which in turn should always guide you as Chairman:

The Objects of the Association shall be to sustain and promote the objects and values of the Party in the Parliamentary constituency of; to provide an effective campaigning organisation in the Constituency; to secure the return of Conservative Candidates at elections; and to raise the necessary funds to achieve these objectives; to contribute to the central funds of the Party.

A detailed role description for the Association Chairman is available, along with similar for DCPs and DCMFs – links to these documents are given on page 15. The information below is less formal, based directly on feedback from successful Association Chairmen.

KEY POINTS:

- The Chairman of an Association or Federation is also the Registered Treasurer with the Electoral Commission, which makes you legally responsible for ensuring that all financial returns required by the Party's Compliance Department are made, that donations made to the Association are permissible, and that annual accounts are filed.
- In terms of Association activity, ultimately you are the one that makes things happen! The initiative in keeping the Association running properly is with you. Use it wisely.

REMEMBER THE THREE Rs:

RULES

- Read and understand your Association rules (they are derived from Schedule 7/7A of the Constitution, but you should have your own local version – contact CCHQ's Member Services to obtain a copy.
- Send them to your Executive Council colleagues – it helps for them to know the rules (don't keep them in the dark)
- You can change the non-mandatory parts of your rules if you need to, at an AGM

ROLES

- Ensure that your officer roles are clear – use the standard ones by default (and make sure you share the role descriptions) but don't be afraid to adjust responsibilities if need be – as long as they are clear
- Find round pegs for round holes – not just for the formal officer roles but also others who can help with ad hoc tasks/projects
- Task management – find a good, shared method for keeping track of who should be doing what (officers and staff), including action lists following meetings. Chase people up firmly and regularly right from the start – after a while people will police themselves and you won't need to chase them

RELATIONSHIPS

- Strong relationships are critical to the success of the Association – politics is a people business

ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

- The Chairman's key stakeholders are the officers, Executive Council members, councillors, branches, staff (local and CCHQ), other volunteers, and Area/Region officers
- You must also invest time in your relationship with your MP/Parliamentary candidate (and any staff they have) – especially to nip any problems in the bud
- Attend Council Group meetings, at least occasionally, for any councils covered by the Association (you are entitled to do so)
- Staff:
 - First and foremost you are their line manager, so the relationship is formal – performance management is vital.
 - Create the right atmosphere around them – for example protect them from poor behaviour by volunteers.
- Always give and take – you cannot give orders to volunteers, so you need to be flexible
- Create and use opportunities to socialise – e.g. before or after Executive meetings, invite people to have dinner or a drink together
- Associations are fundamentally centripetal – you need to be the "glue" that keeps people together
- Don't take sides in disputes – you need to be a neutral arbiter to resolve situations
- If there are hard conversations to be had, it is the officers that have to have them (or at least ensure they are had)
- Succession planning (for your own and other roles) is vital – you don't want all your good work to be wasted

BEYOND THAT:

- Ensure you have a clear Strategy Plan:
 - The Rules require it, but it really does help you as an officer team to prioritise and cut through the fog of the day to day issues that will otherwise take over
 - It should also set out where the officers can act under delegated authority from the Executive
 - It should underpin the staff's objectives
 - Use the "Defining an Association" checklist to find out broadly where you stand compared to the "ideal" Association (check the National Convention website or ask one of the National Convention officers)
- Focus on doing well in the Association Incentive Scheme – it hits all the key buttons in making the Association successful
- Communicate and share good practice with neighbouring Associations – e.g. sign up to each others' mailing lists so you can see what's going on, invite each other to Executive Council meetings to observe
- Use tools to help make life easier – WhatsApp, Toolkit, Google Forms, online banking, task management tool, etc.

ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

The Executive Council

The Executive Council has responsibility for the Association, whereas the Management Team only has the day to day running of it. It is essential that it is properly constituted with its members prepared to challenge at frequent meetings, be fully involved in the direction of travel and scrutinise the use of the Association's funds. The Executive Council represents the members.

Tips for creating a successful Executive Council team:

- Use a round table - involve people - don't treat them like an audience and address them from a top table
- Maintain a clear and up to date Executive membership list, which you also use for signing in to meetings – it saves a lot of potential problems. Also clarify who are voting and non-voting members
- Invite professional staff where possible/necessary, also remember standing invites to your Area Chairman
- Ensure officer reports are short and circulated in advance. Take them as read at the meetings and just take questions (always have a few key ones yourself to keep people on their toes and to get the questions flowing)
- Update on Strategy Plan and performance reporting - both are vital
- Keep good minutes - decisions and actions clear. Appoint a good Secretary
- Socialise before/after the meeting
- Invite outside guests occasionally - guest speakers, neighbouring Association Chairmen, CCHQ staff, to share ideas and show members the bigger picture – it reduces the risk of silo'd thinking
- Update Executive Council members on key points by email between meetings (or nowadays by interspersing formal in-person meetings with short Zoom updates)

Tips for an effective Management Team:

- Meet regularly - put dates in the diary straight after the AGM (monthly is good, even fortnightly during busy periods) and stick to them
- Many of the same points above for the Executive Council also apply to the Management Team - keep notes of action points, hold people to account for them, socialise after meetings, etc.

ASSOCIATION DEPUTY CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

THE ROLE OF THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN POLITICAL

- Co-ordinate all the campaigning activities of the Association.
- Instigate a programme of surveying and canvassing throughout the constituency and throughout the year.
- Work with the Conservative Council Group to implement a campaigning strategy for local elections and by-elections.
- Brief and train members and volunteers in preparation for local and national elections.
- Target the Association's resources to make the maximum political impact.
- Encourage the regular production and distribution of Conservative newsletters.
- Put in place campaigns on local issues throughout the constituency.
- Selection of Local Government Candidates.
- Always be scouting for potential candidates at all levels of representation.

THE ROLE OF THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN MEMBERSHIP & FINANCE

- * Prepare a balanced annual Association budget
- * Provide regularly updated accounts, control of expenditure and payment of invoices on time
- * Present annual verified and certified accounts at the Association AGM
- Be aware of and comply with PPERA (Compliance) Regulations
- Set an annual programme of central Association Fundraising, finding speakers and venues, varying price of events.
- Organise fighting fund appeals for every Election
- Use Vote Source to ensure member records up to date, accept/reject new members, membership recruitment, chase lapsed members, look on Toolkit for updated guidelines.
- Talent spot future officers and have awareness of the skills on offer from the members and how the Associations can deploy them.
- Continuously look for new membership applications and check the social media activities of the prospective new members before approving them.

Those items above marked '*' are potentially Treasurer roles, but if there is no Treasurer then it falls to the DCM&F to undertake them.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS' ESSENTIAL READING

These QR Codes point to documents that are essential reading for all officers in the Party. Further documents can be found on Toolkit, which all elected officers should have access to. Their contact is toolkit@conservatives.com.

From the very start, it is important to bear in mind the purpose of the Association and what defines its success. The Party document "Defining an Association" provides some benchmarks and the officers of an Association should always see their own role in the context of delivering the aims of the Association.

Do remember that you are not alone: your Area officers are always available to provide guidance and a helping hand as you get to grips with your new role.



**The First 100 Days
of being a new
Chairman**



Strategy Plan Template



**How to be a Deputy
Chairman Membership
& Finance/Fundraising**

Defining an Association



**The Successful Association
Chairman**



**How to be a Deputy
Chairman Political**



**Guide to your
Executive Council**



ASSOCIATION OFFICERS' YEAR

Many of the responsibilities of Associations, Areas and Regions fall into a routine cycle through the year – which this table is intended to capture. Note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list and that this is only a guide – many items can happen a month or two either side of that shown here!

THE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS' YEAR	
JAN	<p>Hold an early Management Team (MT) meeting to get the year moving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure the Treasurer is going to have the Annual accounts prepared by the end of the month. b) Ensure any branches have paid across any surplus funds, and also that they have scheduled their AGMs (to happen before the Association AGM). c) Call an Executive Council in February to approve the accounts. d) Ensure all candidates are selected for any elections in May. e) Review events calendar for the whole year, ensuring several events are planned, interweaving Branch & Association events of varying expense, and one big formal dinner. <p>Agree the AGM date (if not already agreed).</p> <p>Put together a 'handover pack' for your successor if you are retiring from office.</p>
FEB	<p>Hold MT meeting to discuss the next AGM.</p> <p>Hold Executive Council meeting to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Approve the accounts. c) Finalise campaign plans, any late selections and budgets for any elections in May.
MAR	Intensive election campaigning.
APR	<p>Intensive election campaigning.</p> <p>Booking for Party Conference should be open, so publicise to your local members and encourage them to attend.</p>
MAY	<p>Local elections (usually).</p> <p>Post-election debrief for candidates and key activists – document lessons learned.</p>
JUNE	<p>AGMs can be held any time from the end of February until the end of June.</p> <p>Immediately after that takes place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Notify Bluebook of any officer changes at the AGM via bluebook@conservatives.com.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS' YEAR

THE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS' YEAR			
JUN cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) MT to work on the Strategy Plan, get it approved by the Executive Council within 28 days of the AGM, and send to the Area Chairman. c) Ensure your Executive is properly constituted and those who failed to turn up to meetings previously are replaced. d) Schedule MT and Executive Council meetings for the year ahead, up to (and even including) the next AGM. e) Elect 2 Association Reps to the local Area Council (who represent the Association in addition to the Chairman) – usually the two Deputy Chairmen. f) Appoint a Voluntary Engagement Officer to work with your members, look for deliverers and scout for candidates. g) Engage with your YCs (those under 26) to appoint an Association YC Chairman. 		
JLY	Engage with your CWO Area Team to look for CWO members to start a branch (if you don't already have one). Engage with your local CPF to arrange regular meetings over the coming year (or if you don't have a local CPF, contact the national CPF team to help you set one up). Ideal time to approve/select candidates for the following May's elections (if not already completed).		
AUG			
SEP	Organise a meet up at Party Conference for those attending from the Association.		
OCT	Start the run-in to the May elections – ensure all candidates are selected and start regular candidate meetings/training sessions, involving CCHO Field staff. Hold an Executive Council.		
NOV			
DEC	Christmas event(s) – good opportunity to raise funds and thank volunteers.		
	Routine Activities: Hold Monthly Management Team Meeting. Hold Executive Meetings at least quarterly.		

CCHO	REGION	AREA	ASSOCIATION	BOARD/CONVENTION
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AREAS AND THE AREA CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

REGIONS AND THEIR AREAS

SCOTLAND (Regional Councils being the closest equivalent to Areas)

- East Regional Council Area
- North Regional Council Area
- West Regional Council Area

NORTHERN IRELAND

NORTH EAST

- Cleveland & Durham
- Northumberland, Tyne & Wear

NORTH WEST

- Greater Manchester
- Merseyside
- Lancashire
- Cumbria
- Cheshire & The Wirral

YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER

- North & East Yorkshire
- West Yorkshire
- South Yorkshire

EAST MIDLANDS

- Nottinghamshire
- Derbyshire
- Lincolnshire
- Leicestershire
- Northamptonshire

WEST MIDLANDS

- Shropshire & Herefordshire
- Staffordshire
- Warwickshire & Worcestershire
- Heartlands
- Black Country

WALES

- Mid & West Wales
- North Wales
- South Wales East
- South West Wales

EASTERN

- Bedfordshire & Cambridgeshire
- Hertfordshire
- Essex
- Norfolk & Suffolk

LONDON

- South East
- South West
- South
- North
- North West
- East
- Lea Valley

SOUTH EAST

- Hampshire & The Isle of Wight
- Berkshire
- Oxfordshire
- Buckinghamshire
- Surrey
- East Sussex
- West Sussex
- Kent

SOUTH WEST

- Bristol & Gloucestershire
- Wiltshire & Swindon
- Dorset
- Somerset
- Devon
- Cornwall

AREAS AND THE AREA CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

What are Areas?

In rural parts of the country, Areas tend to correspond to counties, or in some cases they take in two counties. Cities may be covered by one Area, or a number of Areas, depending on size. See previous page for a list of all the current Areas.

The Area Management Executive ("AME") comprises the elected Area Officers, and is responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Area.

The Area Council comprises the AME members plus the Chairman and two other representatives from each Association.

What are the functions of Areas?

Part VI (clause 26 onwards) of the Party Constitution sets out the roles and responsibilities of Areas, and Schedule 5 sets out how the respective officers at this levels are elected.

The formal responsibilities of the Area Management Executive are outlined in clause 32 of the Constitution.

The roles of the Area Deputy Chairmen

- To support the Area Chairman.
- To support Association Deputies in their roles, in your speciality – DCM&F to DCM&F and DCP to DCP.
- To be aware that an Area Role means travelling across the Area to meet Association Officers face-to-face, attend their meetings and to support Association events.
- To understand it is supporting the entirety of the Area with your experience and not just to replicate at Area what is done at Association level.

DCP to support selection of candidates by Associations in the proper manner and ensure selections start well into the year before they are held. To support campaigning across the Area. To be aware of GDPR Compliance. To encourage year round campaigning to ensure Voting Intentions are always being updated.

DCM&F to support Associations with fundraising, by helping with finding speakers and providing advice on 'how to'. To ensure that all Associations are aware that their accounts are to be in by the deadline and not after. To know about guidance on Financial Compliance. To encourage Associations with chasing lapsed members and growing membership.

AREAS AND THE AREA CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

The best Area teams do the following:

- Set an annual Strategy Plan (just like Associations are required to do).
- Hold regular Area Management Executive meetings (typically monthly).
- Hold regular Area Council meetings in addition to the Area AGM, including the Area CWO Chairman, Area YC Chairman, local CPF Ambassador and relevant CCHQ staff (for at least some of the meetings).
- Allocate each Association to one of the Area officers, to build a close relationship with (but not their home Association, to avoid conflicts).
- Attend (between them) all Executive Council meetings of Associations in their Area.
- Regularly (at least once per month) contact their counterparts in their Associations, one on one or as a group (i.e. Area Chairman with Association Chairmen, Area DCP with Association DCPs, Area DCMF with Association DCMFs) – to foster good relations, share good ideas and pick up on emerging problems early.
- Arrange annual Area dinners and/or Area Conferences.
- Attend (between them) a good number of Association events across the Area, demonstrating visibility and support.
- Proactively monitor and chase up selection of local government candidates.
- Monitor key statistics on their Associations – e.g. membership numbers, VI collection.

Safeguarding: a responsibility of everyone

If you have any concerns about a child or adult at risk of harm, or wish to report an incident, please contact the Safeguarding Team by emailing: safeguarding@conservatives.com or calling: 020 7984 8040.

If there is an immediate risk of harm, this should be reported to the police by calling 999 and then reported to the Safeguarding Team.

AREA CHAIRMAN'S YEAR

THE AREA CHAIRMAN'S YEAR			
JAN	Hold an early AME meeting (and/or meetings of Association DCPs and Association DCMFs). Start completing Area accounts (if the Area has its own funds). Plan for and co-ordinate any potential campaign support for the May elections – those Associations without their own elections supporting those with elections. Ensure an Area Officer attends each Association AGM within the Area. Press Associations to set dates for their AGM. Hold a full area council meeting for election/year planning. Prepare a 'handover pack' for your successor if you are retiring from office.		Handbook. Ensure the new teams are aware of Toolkit to find supporting documents.
FEB	Ensure an Area Officer attends each Association Executive Council within the Area. Approve and submit the Area accounts (if applicable).	APR	
MAR	Monitor and chase up any Associations yet to submit accounts. During Association AGM season, contact new teams, send job descriptions, first 100 days, strategy plans, links to Constitution, Code of Contact and electronic version of Convention	MAY	Hold full area council meeting for post-election debrief. After local elections, start pressing those Associations with elections the following year to start approving and selecting candidates.
		JUN	Schedule the Area AGM (to happen between June and end of September). Immediately after that takes place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Bluebook of officer changes at the AGM. • AME to work on the Strategy Plan within 28 days of the AGM, and send to the Regional Chairman. • Open nominations for and appoint an Area YC Chairman.
		JULY-SEP	
		OCT	Ensure an Area Officer attends each Association Executive Council within the Area.
		NOV-DEC	
			Routine Activities: Monthly AME Meeting.

BOARD/CONVENTION

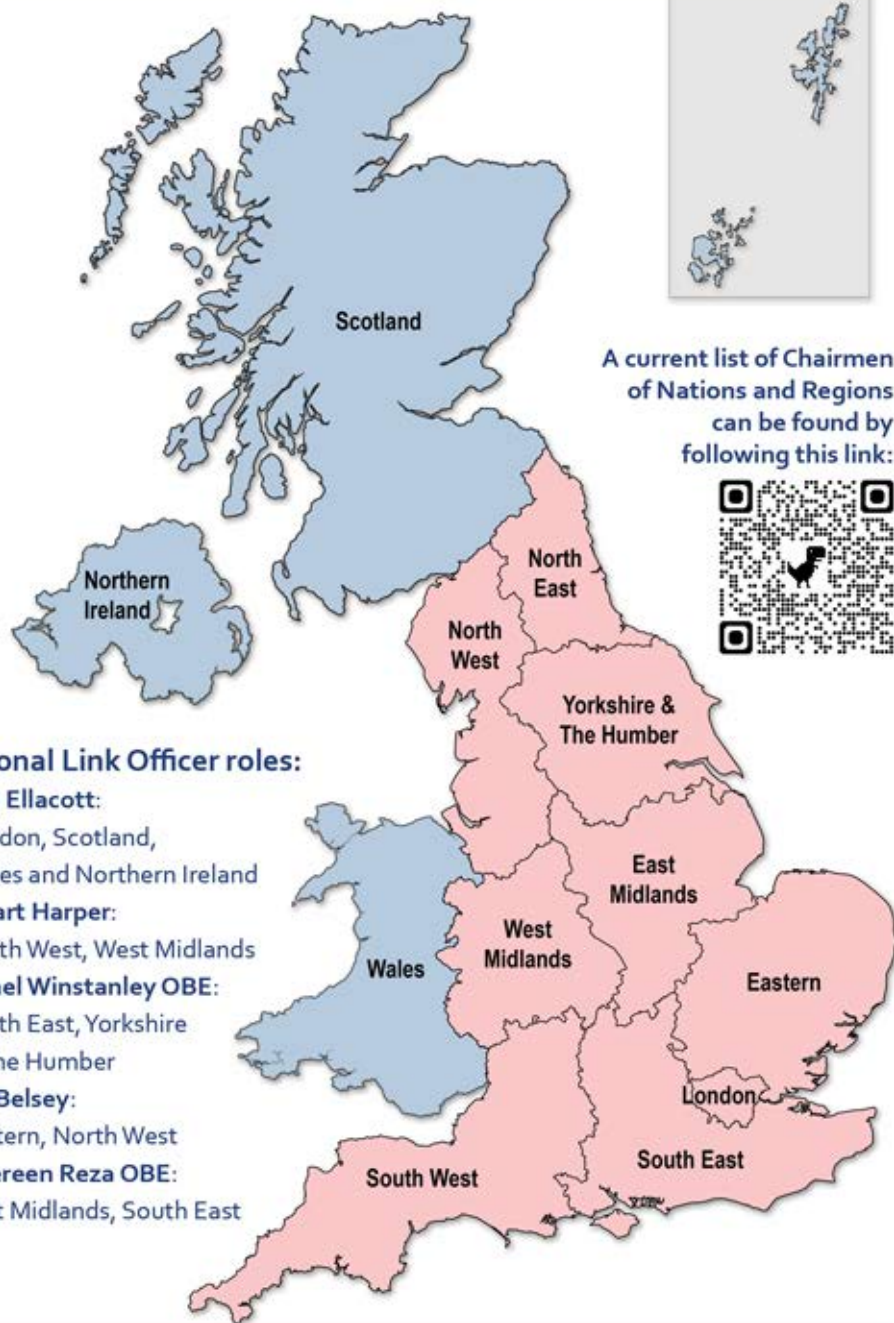
ASSOCIATION

AREA

REGION

CCHO

REGIONS AND THE REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S ROLE



Regional Link Officer roles:

Julian Ellacott:

London, Scotland,
Wales and Northern Ireland

Stewart Harper:

South West, West Midlands

Michael Winstanley OBE:

North East, Yorkshire
& The Humber

John Belsey:

Eastern, North West

Ahmereen Reza OBE:

East Midlands, South East

REGIONS AND THE REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

What are Regions?

In England the Regions are the same as UK government regions and they vary in terms of the numbers of Areas and Associations they each cover. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not formally part of the Regional structure, having their own arrangements instead, but in many respects the same principles/functions apply.

What are the functions of Regions?

Part VI (clause 26 onwards) of the Party Constitution sets out the roles and responsibilities of Regions, and Schedule 5 sets out how the respective officers at this levels are elected.

The formal responsibilities are outlined in clause 39 of the Constitution:

The Regional Officers shall be responsible for:

- 39.1 co-ordinating campaigning and political activities which cross Area boundaries;
- 39.2 assisting Area Management Executives in the organisation of activities which cross Area boundaries;
- 39.3 co-ordinating campaign activity for Local Government elections where local authority boundaries cross Area boundaries;
- 39.4 ensuring the strategy of the Board in relation to Parliamentary boundary changes is implemented;
- 39.5 when so requested by the Board, providing assistance in the event of performance failings by Area Management Executives.
- 39.6 when so requested by the Board, providing assistance in the establishment of fair disciplinary processes and dispute resolution within the Region.
- 39.7 promoting liaison between the Area Officers within the Region.
- 39.8 introducing and promoting initiatives across the Region in any matters as requested by the Board from time to time.

The Code of Conduct

The Party expects basic standards of behaviour from its members, regardless of the positions they hold, and the Code of Conduct is the document that sets out these standards and the process for making and dealing with complaints.



REGIONS AND THE REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S ROLE

Regional Boards

These have been established for all English Regions (other nations already have the equivalent) as the primary forum within which all parts of the voluntary party within the Region, along with senior CCHQ staff, coordinate with each other.

Membership consists of the Regional Officers, the Area Chairmen, the CWO Regional Chairman, the YC Regional Chairman, and the CPF Regional Ambassador. Other attendees comprise the CCHQ Head of Field for the Region, the National Convention Link Officer, and others co-opted for their specific skills.

The Regional Boards meet at least quarterly, reviewing KPIs for the Region and receiving reports from the Areas. Notes/actions/updates from the Regional Board should be sent to all Area and Association Officers on a regular basis (at least quarterly), and potentially also to all members in the Region.

The best Regional teams do the following:

- Set an annual Strategy Plan (just like Associations are required to do).
- Hold regular Regional Management Team (MT) meetings (typically monthly).
- Hold regular Regional Board meetings
- Allocate each Area to one of the Regional officers, to build a close relationship with (but not their home Area, to avoid conflicts).
- Attend (between them) all monthly Area Management Executive meetings in the region.
- Regularly (at least once per month) contact their counterparts in their Areas, one on one or as a group (i.e. Regional Chairman with Area Chairmen, Regional DCP with Area DCPs, Regional DCMF with Area DCMFs) – to foster good relations, share good ideas and pick up on emerging problems early.
- Arrange annual Regional dinners and/or Regional Conferences.
- Hold occasional meetings of all Convention members in the Region (usually online), with key speakers/updates and an open forum for Convention members to air issues.
- Attend (between them) a good spread of Association and Area events across the Region, demonstrating visibility and support.
- Monitor key statistics on their Areas – e.g. membership numbers, VI collection.
- Ensure co-ordination in advance of cross border elections, e.g. PCCs and Mayoral elections.

REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S YEAR

THE REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S YEAR			
JAN	Hold an early Regional Management Team meeting. Plan to hold Regional Board meetings and Convention meetings throughout the year Start completing Region accounts (if the Region has its own funds). Plan for and co-ordinate any potential campaign support for the May elections – those Associations/Areas without their own elections supporting those with elections. Remind Area Teams to press for Association AGM dates to be held between 1st March and 30th June. Press for Conference dates if Area led. Prepare a 'handover pack' for your successor if you are retiring from office.		End June - remind Area Teams for dates of their AGMs from July to September.
FEB	Approve and submit the Region accounts (if applicable).	JLY	
MAR	Monitor and chase up any Associations/Areas yet to submit accounts.	AUG	Liaise with Link Officer to discuss Regional AGM date for October/November.
APR	Region-wide post-election debrief.	SEP	Ensure a Regional Officer attends and oversees each Area AGM within the Region.
MAY	Regional DCP to remind Areas to press ahead with selection of candidates for next round of local elections in the following year.	OCT	
JUN		NOV	Hold Regional elections. Immediately after they take place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Bluebook of any officer changes at the AGM. • Regional Team to work on the Strategy Plan within 28 days of the AGM, and send to the National Convention Officers. • Open nominations for and appoint a Regional YC Chairman.
		DEC	Routine Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Regional Team meeting • Hold at last quarterly meetings with Full Board (including Area Deps, CWO Area Chairmen, CPF Reps and Area YC Chairmen) plus staff. Have more regular meets with the Area Chairmen and Regional Team.

BOARD/CONVENTION

ASSOCIATION

AREA

REGION

CCHO

CONSERVATIVE CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS (CCHQ)

CCHQ (formerly Conservative Central Office) is the central, professional body within the Party. As shown in the structure diagram earlier, it is distinct from the Board (which appoints CCHQ's senior staff), and from the Convention. Its main functions and internal structure are, broadly speaking:

Mark McInnes CEO and National Campaign Director				
Executive <i>Chairman's Office</i> <i>International</i> <i>Conference/Events</i> <i>Senior Advisers</i>	Political Josh Grimstone - Media - Conservative Research Department - Political advisers - Policy Commissions	Campaigning Brian Jarvis - Field Team (see next page) TBC - Insights - Digital, social media & advertising TBC Candidates	Conservative Movement Luke Gardiner - Party growth - Business engagement - Volunteer engagement (incl CWO, CPF, YCs, Alumni) - Speakers' Bureau	Operations Aimee Henderson (COO) - Member Services - Finance - Training/HR - Compliance - IT <i>Mike Chattey</i> - Treasurers team
Leader of the Opposition's Office (LOTO) <i>Support for LOTO and Shadow Cabinet</i>				
Party Imprint: Sheridan Westlake OBE	Registered Treasurer: Catherine Latham			
Data Protection Officer: Megan Tucker	Nominating Officer: Megan Tucker			

Individual members of CCHQ and Field staff can be contacted via:
firstname.lastname@conservatives.com

The primary contact email addresses for the main CCHQ teams are:

Party Chairman: chairman@conservatives.com

Campaign activity: Opposition.Watch@conservatives.com
(for sending opposition literature to)
toolkit@conservatives.com (Campaign Toolkit)

Member Services (membership enquiries, VoteSource Helpdesk):
memberservices@conservatives.com

Signing up for Conservative Research Department briefings:
briefing@conservatives.com

Media enquiries: press@conservatives.com

Candidates' Team: candidates@conservatives.com

CONSERVATIVE CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS (CCHQ)

Field Team Zones

CCHQ campaign staff are allocated to zones within England (Scotland and Wales have their own teams under their respective Directors, James Tweedie and Kate Vaughan), as set out in the map below. The Head of Field is the lead member of CCHQ staff in their zone, and they are supported by a number of Regional Campaign Managers (RCMs) who each look after one or more Areas, liaising with local staff and volunteers.

ZONE NORTH

North West, North East and Yorkshire & Humber

Head of Field

Mike Nicholls

Michael.Nicholls@

Conservatives.com

ZONE MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

East Midlands, West Midlands, and East Anglia (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk)

Head of Field

Simon Jevon

Simon.Jevon@Conservatives.com

ZONE SOUTH

South West, Hampshire, Sussex, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire

Head of Field

Hayward Burt

Hayward.Burt@

Conservatives.com

ZONE LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES

London, Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Surrey and Kent

Head of Field

Max Hopfl

Max.Hopfl@Conservatives.com

Training: training@conservatives.com

Organisation of Conferences: conference@conservatives.com

Advice on compliance matters:

Election.Law@conservatives.com

DataProtection@conservatives.com

FinancialCompliance@conservatives.com

Complaints under the Code of Conduct

(full details at <https://www.conservatives.com/code-of-conduct>):

complaints@conservatives.com

Safeguarding: safeguarding@conservatives.com

A HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



A brief history of the NCC by Lord Sharpe of Epsom OBE, Chairman, National Conservative Convention 2018-2021

Since 1867 the Conservative Party has been built on solid national foundations. The National Union of Conservative & Constitutionalist Associations held its first meeting on the 12th November of that year. Its foundation pre-dated that of Central Office by three years.

The name 'Conservative Party' was commonly used by a variety of local associations and registration societies from the time of Sir Robert Peel's 'Tamworth Manifesto' of 1834, but the party had no national organisation. That changed in the space of three years under reforms approved by Disraeli. The passing of the Second Reform Act of 1867 increased the size of the electorate by almost 90% as large numbers of working-class men were given the vote for the first time. The purpose of the National Union was to persuade the newly enfranchised to vote Conservative and its foundation marked the first time that the party had a coherent national structure. It was remarkably successful and by 1874 over 400 local associations had affiliated. Conservative Central Office was established in 1870 and this basic model of the Conservative Party has endured, more or less intact, to the present day.

In keeping with Peel's original manifesto the party has, of course, had to reform to survive over the years but the present National Conservative Convention, established under William Hague's leadership in 1998, does not differ very much in spirit or intent from the 1867 original. The Associations group within Areas, the Areas within Regions and the officers of all those structures, plus the 106-year-old Conservative Women's Organisation, elect the National Officers – three Vice-Presidents, a President and a Chairman – all of whom sit on the governing board of the party and populate the various sub-committees. The Chairman of the NCC chairs the board in the party Chairman's absence.

The party's constituent parts were designed with one aim, to convince people across our United Kingdom to vote Conservative. The Convention still exists to ensure that the members, grassroots, volunteers, activists – whatever we are called given the fashion of the day – retain a significant voice in how our country is run, how we are represented in parliament and how our national narrative develops.

The principles behind the National Convention remain much the same as when the National Union was founded back in 1867 – Conservative Associations across

A HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

the country have their autonomy recognised and preserved and all have an equal voice at the Convention and therefore the top of the party. That is entirely consistent with Peel's manifesto – he opposed unnecessary change, fearing a “vortex of perpetual agitation.” I am confident that the National Convention will survive current and future vortices and thrive for many more years to come.

However as vortices go there is no doubt that 2024's was severe. Whilst the leadership election which followed our defeat enabled a degree of debate over the future direction of the party, including measures to reform various structures, I would caution about blaming process too much for our travails. The more important debate, which is now happening under Kemi as part of our Policy Renewal, is the conversation about Conservative principles and policies. Get that right and I am confident that we will win again.

Presidents and Chairmen of the National Convention

Presidents

1998-1999:	Graham Park CBE	2012-2013:	Paul Swaddle OBE
1999-2000:	Brian Hanson CBE	2013-2014:	Charles Heslop OBE
2000-2001:	Raymond Monbiot CBE	2014-2015:	Robert Semple CBE
2001-2002:	Jean Searle OBE	2015-2016:	Steve Bell CBE
2002-2003:	Caroline Abel-Smith OBE	2016-2017:	Gerry Yates OBE
2003-2004:	Don Porter CBE	2017-2018:	Lord Sharpe of Epsom OBE (Andrew Sharpe)
2004-2005:	Richard Stephenson OBE	2018-2019:	Thomas Spiller OBE
2005-2006:	Paul Marland	2019-2020:	Pamela Hall OBE
2006-2007:	Stephen Castle	2020-2021:	Andrew Colborne-Baber OBE
2007-2008:	Simon Mort OBE	2021-2022:	Debbie Toon MBE
2008-2009:	Jeremy Middleton CBE	2022-2023:	Fleur Butler OBE
2009-2010:	Baroness Pidding CBE (Emma Pidding)	2023-2024:	Peter Smallwood OBE
2010-2011:	Charles Barwell OBE	2024-2025:	Michael Winstanley OBE
2011-2012:	Fiona, Lady Hodgson CBE	2025-2026:	Stewart Harper

Chairmen

1998-2000:	Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts CBE (Robin Hodgson)	2012-2015:	Baroness Pidding CBE (Emma Pidding)
2000-2003:	Lord Taylor of Holbeach (John Taylor)	2015-2018:	Robert Semple CBE
2003-2006:	Raymond Monbiot CBE	2018-2021:	Lord Sharpe of Epsom OBE (Andrew Sharpe)
2006-2009:	Don Porter CBE	2021-2024:	Lord Booth (Peter Booth)
2009-2012:	Jeremy Middleton CBE	2024- :	Julian Ellacott



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