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NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM LABRADOR RETRIEVER CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Held Wednesday 7pm on 26th April 2017 at Bowburn Community Centre

Those Present:

I. Davison, L. Heron, A. Beckley, K. Jenkins, L. Hartis, S. McDermott, F. Maclean, W. Wilson, D. Fisher, K. Leith-Ross, J. McDonald, L. Thompson, B. Davison, F. Smith, A-M. Coates, S. Shankar, J. Wilson, J. Lees, I. Palmer, A. Burke.

- 1 Apologies received and accepted from: Mr and Mrs Gardner, Mr and Mrs Bates, P. Williams, J and S Roberts, D and Z. Mallin, C. Mitchell, J. Christon, S. Whyte, C and B Donald, T. Mullett, Mr and Mrs Hay, G. White, D. Tulip, N. Bujnoch, M. Lonsdale, J. Smart, S. Thatcher, C. Maddison, J. Douglas, and J. Castle.
- 2 Minutes of previous AGM for approval and adoption.
Copies of 2016 draft minutes had been available on the website from April 2016 and were available at the meeting. Acceptance proposed: J. McDonald, Seconded: L. Thompson.
2016 Minutes were approved and adopted unanimously.
- 3 Matters arising from the Minutes
No matters were arising.
- 4 Chairperson's Address: Lynda Heron, Chair
"Good evening Ladies and Gentleman I would like to welcome you all to the N & D LRC 2017 AGM.

I would first like to take this opportunity to say thank you to you all for taking the time to attend. I know that none of us find these events particularly inviting and many of us have things we would rather do, but it is important for the democratic running of all clubs that these meetings are used as they should be; to express thanks to those who take on demanding roles within the organisation, express any concerns and offer to help to make things better.

I would like to offer my thanks to the four sub secretaries Lee, Steve, Kay and Fiona, who all do a great job on behalf of the members and this sharing of roles is what I think gives this club its current strength.

At this meeting last year we had a new Treasurer elected. Whilst I am sure Anne has had moments of wondering why she accepted the role, I have to say it's been one of the smoothest transitions on record and I am so very happy and confident that in Anne, the Club has secured a very very good treasurer who has made an excellent job and produced a great set of accounts. Thank you Anne.

The club has gone from strength to strength over the last few years and none of that would be possible without our wonderful Secretary Irene who works daily, nightly and sometimes all day and all night on club business.

I can think of no other Labrador Club in the country who has such a hardworking and dedicated Secretary. My thanks go to you Irene for all you do which goes above and beyond the call of duty!

My thanks also go to all committee members, land owners, keepers, sponsors and anyone else I have forgotten!

At the end of last year the club lost a long standing member Dave Wilson; and to Wendy I offer our sincere condolences.

The members of the general committee asked me on their behalf, to offer Fred Smith (who has been a member for 50 years this year), if he would accept honorary life membership - which I am delighted to say he has accepted. Please will you show your appreciation to him for all has done for the Club.

*Which just leaves me to hand over to Irene as Secretary to deliver her report.
(Lynda was thanked for her report).*

5 Secretary's Report: Irene Davison, Hon. Secretary

*"Good evening everyone. The familiar reminder comes first. Membership subscriptions are due on the 1st of January each year. We have spent a lot of time sending full membership **and** personal reminders, which have seen incorrect payments reduce – but not stop altogether. It is your responsibility to ensure subscriptions are paid at the correct rate, at the correct time. **If your membership is not up to date by the end of March; you will not receive the benefits afforded to fully paid up members – including; reduced costs of events and most importantly for our trialers; you will not get preference in that years trial draws if you are not fully paid up by the end of March.***

As Club secretary, I look after the general Club administration including ensuring our Annual returns and other paperwork is provided to the Kennel Club in good time. This also includes building up the central records which allows officers to access Club paperwork easily.

Our main method of contact with members and outside organisations is email; and the Club email account takes a lot of monitoring, receiving thousands of emails each year. It is very popular and a vital part of applying and paying for working events and membership as well as general enquiries. I put great emphasis on messages being answered promptly or being passed to relevant officers for their action. As always, we will of course continue to post information to those that request it.

As the website administrator; I try to keep our site as up to date as possible with events, health matters and archive information. The steady stream of new visitors viewing the website, show they explore the content in detail; hopefully due to it being informative and up to date.

Part of updating the website includes the Puppy Register in liaison with Linda Thompson and Jo McDonald, our Co-ordinators. This is a free service to members and we would still like to see more member breeders making use of it as demand always seems to outweigh litters available.

Our Facebook page is also a popular place and most events/updates are posted on there too and I compile a Christmas Newsletter each year giving people a roundup of annual events.

Most will know that as well as Club secretary duties, I chose (for my sins), to help the working secretaries with the admin. of our tests and trials, as the rules and paperwork involved nowadays can be daunting and we do hold a lot of events in comparison to some clubs.

We may not have the most automated entry procedures around, but our systems work well, with many appreciating the 'personal touch – complete with mistakes!

During 2016 we hosted 2 successful Shows, 5 Working Tests, 4 Field Trials, and an eye testing clinic; all of which were well attended and will be reported on by the individual secretaries. In addition we try to hold an 'educational event' and last year we ran the J. Regs Seminar and had an excellent turnout (more than Phil Wagland, our presenter expected). It was a successful day which we have already been asked to repeat in the future.

We have approximately 20 committee members who volunteer to manage the activities and direction of our Club. They have committed some of their spare time so others can enjoy their hobby and sport. You are greatly appreciated by the Club, and I would hope, the wider membership.

We are lucky that we never struggle to fill committee posts. If we do have vacancies and you can bring enhancement but most importantly are willing to get stuck in helping at events, please let us know.

At the end of December 2016 we had over 400 fully paid up members, who are provided with comprehensive activities, support and a friendly atmosphere. We are not complacent and will embrace new ideas for the benefit of our membership wherever possible.

Sincere thanks also go to members (and non-members) who come along to events to help out. We could do with more help, if we want our activities to flourish. Our event sponsors have been very generous again this year as have our working events hosts – without whom our events could not take place. We are very grateful to them all.

Anne Beckley took over from Jill Dickson who retired last year as Treasurer. Anne has put in place a few new systems which are working well and she seems to be settling back into the role she held some years ago. Of course Anne has been repaid with a few more obligatory grey hairs that are given free to those taking on club roles.

I hope I have continued to fulfil the Secretary and website administrator roles well on behalf of the membership. I'll continue to do my very best for the good of the Club but am always open to ideas on where we can further improve. I wish everyone a very happy and productive 2017."

6 Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Annual Accounts: Anne Beckley, Hon. Treasurer.

"It was with some trepidation that I agreed to take on the role of Treasurer for the Club again. The advancement in technology and online banking systems, since I last held the position, was initially daunting but with the good practices set up by Jill and Wendy over the years and the help of my fellow officers I am pleased to say the Club is maintaining a healthy balance, as the Accounts will confirm. We are not here to make massive profits from our events, but to try and have most events as self-financing as possible – which overall has been the case for the last few years.

I introduced the use of a new accounting program (Club Treasurer) which was invaluable in managing the many events which the Club offers. However, on speaking to our Auditor Mr Glaholm he suggested we move to the system he uses and he will provide us with any support needed.

As this new system is a one off payment compared to Club Treasurer which has an annual subscription; on discussion with committee it was decided to adopt Mr Glaholm's system from 2017. The cost of the new system is being subsidised with a refund from Santander for errors they made in managing the administration of our account during 2016 and will only cost the Club £75.

Paul Glaholm also advised by changing to the system he uses, he would be happy to audit the accounts free of charge, saving us £210 per year. We will (on receipt) provide Paul with an advert on our website and some stationery.

I feel I must make mention of a few things that will help, not only myself, but my fellow officers who run these events on your behalf.

If you pay using a standing order for membership please ensure you have updated it to the correct fees. If you send a cheque please indicate on the back what it is for e.g. which test/trial, membership etc. If you pay using PayPal please remember the administrative fee. If you pay with cash please put it in an envelope with some indication what it is for and from whom. Most importantly of all please double check you are paying the correct fees for whichever event you are participating in.

A big thank you to those of you who do the aforementioned and these may seem trivial points to some but they will aid our officers immensely as time is precious to us all.

The Accounts for the year from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016 have been examined, as usual, by Mr Paul Glaholm F.C.P.A. and copies of these Accounts are available for you tonight. If you have any questions regarding these then please ask and I will try to help.

Anne further advised that she had instigated an audit of equipment belonging to the Club and asked if anyone had any equipment, they contact her with information.
(Anne was thanked for her report.)

No issues or questions were raised regarding the 2016 accounts and **acceptance was proposed by W. Wilson and seconded by K. Leith-Ross – Unanimously agreed.**

7. Field Trial Secretary's Report: Lee Hartis, F.T. Secretary **See Appendix 1**
8. Working Test Secretary's Report: Steven McDermott, W.T. Secretary **See Appendix 2**
9. Show Secretary's Report: Kay Jenkins, Show Secretary **See Appendix 3**
10. Club Representative Annual Reports for 2016
 - a) Breed Council/Breed Health – Lynda Heron **See Appendix 4**
 - b) Field Trial Liaison Representative's Report: Samantha Whyte **See Appendix 5.**

11. Educational/Programme

Every year the club likes to provide an additional event for members, which alternates annually if possible between Show, Working and Labrador owners in general. The event in 2016 was a J. Regs Judge Seminar where Phil Wagland presented an excellent course and we had maximum attendance. In 2017 the programme is being run for a Pet/General Labrador owners and at General Committee, a small working party of N. Bujnoch, J. McDonald and K. Leith-Ross were looking at providing a taster session day to introduce Labrador owners to show and working events. This is hoped to take place in July 2017 and plans are ongoing. The Club does provide a bursary of £300 for these educational events but to-date, all have been self-financing.

12. Honoraria

The honoraria of all officers was reviewed and agreed by all AGM members present.

13. Election of Officers of the Club as listed (with consideration for others)

As per the agenda, nominations had been received, suitably proposed and seconded for all existing officers. **It was unanimously agreed to re-elect officers and sub-committee Secretaries plus associated roles as listed on Agenda.**

Election of Committees and Breed Council Representative

Nominations had been received from existing committee members seeking re-election. Lynda Heron had also requested re-election as Breed Council representative. There had been two nominations received for one vacancy on the Working Committee and the two nominees were asked to provide a brief statement outlining how they felt they could enhance the committee. After the candidates left the room a show of hands indicated a clear majority in favour of Alex Burke who was duly appointed to the working sub-committee for a period of three years. All nominations had been correctly proposed and seconded and were voted on en bloc and **unanimously accepted.**

Samantha Whyte was not requiring re-election as K.C. F.T. Liaison Representative. This was done by the Kennel Club in May 2015. She had been put forward as club representative by us and remains our Club rep for the next two years. Similarly Lynda Heron had been appointed to Breed Health Sub-Committee for a period of 5 years from 2016 and did not require re-election.

14. Election of Auditors

Members had been very happy with the work of Mr Glaholm and agreed unanimously to retain his services for 2017.

15. Rules and Regulations Review - No rules were amended.

16. Proposals by members received by 12th April 2017. - None received.

17. Any Other Business

Steve McDermott asked whether in the case of running Junior Handler events (Show and Working), the adults involved were required to have police checking? This was something Steve had mentioned in the past. The meeting felt that the fact all minors have to be accompanied by an adult or guardian to events and be their responsibility; this should not be an issue.

Lynda asked for any help with regard looking into the possibility of setting up a Breed Health Fund/Charity Status. Other breed had these health funds which could help with funding for research and for individual owners coming forward once breed problems had been identified and deemed more research. She had planned to be personally involved with this project for up to 5 years and would then pass over to another individual.

Anne was happy to report that in 2016 donations to Labrador Welfare had increased over three fold from kind individual donations etc. A sum of £159 had been donated and Anne advised she would be making donations several times a year as this was preferred to one larger donation.

Jo McDonald wished to thank all the officers for their input to the running of the Club, especially to Lynda Heron. ***Lynda was thanked for chairing the meeting which closed at 8.54pm (Proposed: L. Thompson, Seconded: S. Shankar)***

“In 2016 we had increased entries to our four field trials compared to 2015.

We ran three novice trials at Wemmergill, Ford Estate and Eggleston Fell; and a two day open qualifier at Whitfield. The trials all ran very well and we secured very good judges. Unfortunately we didn't have winners at two of the novice trials but we did have very fair judging on grounds that provided excellent game, guns and organisation.

In my third year as field trial secretary, I have tried hard to keep costs down but the trials still did not break even. Thankfully the successful working test season; means the working events overall made a small profit - which Steve, myself and the supporting working sub-committee will work hard to keep going.

Our landowners all receive a letter of sincere thanks and a gift and we are also very thankful to our working event sponsors Skinners and Gundog Gear for their continuing support.

I would like to thank the people who came to help out at the trials; with special mention to Jeff Smart from the committee who attended every trial day and carried game as well as ensuring the Club defibrillator was in place (luckily we didn't need it). Also to my fiancé Sam who attended 3 of the 4 trials and even game carried – until she was stopped from doing so – as she was heavily pregnant.

Things would be much easier if more people volunteered to help at trials and I cannot stress enough how much it gives people the chance to learn; by seeing the judging and competitors up close.

Our teams of guns at Wemmergill and Whitfield shot very well and I'd like to thank Ian Palmer for helping secure those. Both estates were very happy with the standard of guns.

Thanks to Irene Davison for her support and hard work with the trials throughout the year, Steve McDermott for his support and the Field Trial Committee who all helped make our 2016 season a success. Also congratulations to Steve for recently being appointed to the B Panel of Judges.

I'm happy to report that we already have most of the judges in place for 2017 trials. We also have our confirmed field trial licences from the Kennel Club.

One change in 2017 will see our Eggleston Fell trial change from a Novice to an All Aged Stake in 2017 as we feel the ground lends itself to this perfectly; and our hosts agree.

Thank you.

“Good evening everyone. The club held 5 working tests on the schedule throughout 2016, operating the four-judge system per test, Venues were Leadhills House, Wemmergill Estate, Streatlam Park, Eggleston Fell. We did have to cancel the event at Scotchcoulthard due to adverse weather conditions, but thankfully Wemmergill Estate agreed to us bringing forward our date for their working test to ensure the test day went ahead. With only a few days' notice, we managed to contact every entrant and advise them of the venue change. Luckily we quickly found a new venue to replace the loss of Scotchcoulthard as a test ground. Sporting Reiver, by kind permission of The Gamekeeper (John Hedley Robson) came on board so we could still offer 5 test events for the year. Our thanks to the landowners for giving the club and members the opportunity to run their dogs on fantastic grounds.

On reflection of the events throughout 2016, the only two categories which I think could have been better attended was the young handlers and to some extent the NDNH. These two categories will feature in the 2017 schedule. The young handlers integrated with a puppy test and the NDNH to be a stand-alone training test event at Leadhills house. Ideas from members are welcomed as to how we may maximise attendance on these two categories in future. (Discussion ensued on various possibilities which will be taken to sub-committee for further discussion).

Introduction of a gift for dummy throwers was received well from the volunteers, but overall it was the same individuals who helped throughout the year. I think this is still an ever-increasing problem area within our sport where the old-ways of learning before taking part and helping out to ensure we all can enjoy our sport on the day are sadly lacking.

We operated with four judges on each of the events, the club gave appreciation through refreshment, gifts and thanks for giving up their time to attend, The feedback from the judges was positive towards the clubs efforts throughout their day judging.

I received some feedback from alternative judges that some handlers had left during and after the events without giving thanks. Reassurance was given to the judges that this would be addressed within further working tests throughout the year and within the Working Test Secretary AGM report in 2017.

*Inter club Team was picked by Working Test Secretary. The team was Kevin Butler, Dave Tulip, Mike Nelson and Colin Maddison, all of which had gained awards throughout the year in Open standard events. Don't think it is worth discussing further. **We do host the inter-club in 2017 (8th July) and I would like to ask members and committee personnel to try and attend to help out as we will need between 6 and 8 dummy throwers for the day to ensure we can put on appropriate tests.***

The N & D Chatsworth Team was picked by Lee Hartis. The team consisted of Lee Hartis, Andy Latham and Mark Demaine. Finishing 3rd within the event, the Club received automatic qualification to run a three-man team in the Chatsworth team event for 2017. I would also like to congratulate Lee on achieving selection to the England Retriever Team again in 2017.

I would like to thank all individuals who supported the club's events, (members and none members). I would like to thank on behalf of its members, the club's committee within 2017. I would like to thank the field trial committee for the help within our working events, a special personal thanks to Irene Davison, Joanne Wilson, Geordie Atkinson and Olive Maddison for being ever present within the events. The club would like to thank our Sponsors, Skinners Dog foods and Gundog Gear. Overall the test events were healthy financially and well attended. “

“Hello and welcome

Another year has passed and I'm pleased to report 2016/17 has been busy, but we have a great committee who are always around to lend a hand. Also the many helpers who assist on the day.

The year started with the annual eye test. Again this is always well attended and our vet Mr Stuart Ellis always does his best as we get through about 70 dogs.

We move on to the February 2016 Open Show held in Bowburn Community centre, our judge was Mr Chris Rose (Leospring). Chris attracted an entry of 89 dogs. The show went very well with thankfully no accidents or incidents to report. Thanks to our sponsors James Wellbeloved for their continuing support.

The next event in the show calendar was the 2016 Championship Show held at Kirkley Hall, Ponteland. As usual this show was well attended. Our judges were Mrs P Parrot (Lougin) dogs and Mrs L McGillivray (Antonine) judging bitches and with a total of 168 to go over.

In their show reports both judges expressed what a great day they'd had. They thanked the club and committee for our hospitality. The day ran very smoothly with a lot of hard work from all on the committee. As usual, the bacon sandwiches went down very well with the exhibitors.

Our thanks also go to our sponsors Royal Canin for the support of our show.

ALL IN ALL A HUGE SUCCESS.

So far this year we have held the annual eye test and 2017 Open Show and we look forward to a successful Champ Show in October.

All that's left for me to say is, thank you everyone for your continued support because without this support from our great team, we would not be able to hold these events.

Kay”

Unfortunately the Breed Council dates are out of sync for our AGM timing, therefore I will provide information on the 2017 meetings.

Lynda wished to point out that the expenses incurred on attending these meetings comes from the subscription paid by all the Breed Clubs. This is then divided between the clubs to cover travel expenses incurred in attending.

Breed Health Sub-Committee meeting commenced at 10am and I was accompanied by Joanne McDonald from General/Show committee.

Matters discussed in summary included erroneous results on health results. There had been a case where a dog of 10 yrs old was blind with PRA/PRCD1 despite both parents being tested clear. There were more cases of similar instances and Animal Health Trust currently had 15 cases which tested clear for PRCD1 but had clinical symptoms of PRA. These were being investigated to see whether this was due to a different genetic variant or other reasons and this was being looked at by Breed Health Sub-Committee.

Lynda advised all members that if they felt any test result was 'not right' to have a re-test done as mistakes have happened.

In instances such as this Lynda expressed concern that BHSC did not hold a health fund to plough into research on behalf of the breed (as other breeds have done) and it was hoped this could be implemented in future.

The Breed Health Facebook Page had been launched and was being regularly visited which was good news and it would continue to be updated with relevant information throughout the year.

Following a research by Vet Compass, during which a comparison study had been undertaken including Cross Breeds. The results indicated that of the 3 million unique dogs compared, from the high numbered breeds including Labradors, it was felt the most common problems were ear, feet problems, obesity and skin masses. Labradors came out highest for ear problems, obesity and degenerative joint disease. For longevity, cross breeds were found to live longer but only on average one year longer. The biggest challenge for our breed was in reality, seen as a people problem and not a dog one.

A discussion took place on dog insurance. The KC Insurance Company (Agría) which may be of interest to breeders/owners. If you indicate that a puppy has visited the vet the reported condition (i.e. upset tummy) there are cases where new owners have had exclusions put on future insurance policies (even if no longer an issue). Something to bear in mind.

Hereditary Cataract research is ongoing with AHT with the target for affected subjects met and only 20 odd clear over 8 yr old dogs needed before they reach their target of subjects for controls.

Breed Specific Genome. 75 breeds are signed up for this. Labradors will not be in the first wave but are included in the second. Unfortunately the breed missed out on KC matched funding and a cost of approx. £2000 may be incurred from each breed.

N&D had proposed a Puppy Buyers Quality Assurance scheme, to look at how to promote basic health criteria; whereby the logo could be used by breeders who meet scheme criteria (possibly with several grades being achievable). All breed clubs were asked for their feedback as it was hoped the scheme could be used to target issues over – dilutes, the ABS and BVA.

Hip Dysplasia DNA Marker Test. This newish test and another service being offered by 'Pup Scan' who offered to scan puppies at 6-8 weeks to provide evidence of HD. It was felt there was insufficient evidence in place to show whether either system was reliable and more investigation was needed.

The Annual Breed Health Report was needed at the KC by August and to include 3 conditions CURRENTLY seen as most important in the breed. The Breed clubs will be contacted in this respect.

Laura Owers (Cambridge) who is currently working with Golden Retrievers on the subject of Ectopic Ureter, was contacted with regard the progression and possible hereditary factors. She is happy to include Labradors into the study. It is thought to occur in the main (at present) in show lines and members present of the working side were asked if they had come across this themselves. Those present indicated they had not. Information would be fed back to committee on any progress.

The subject of the Dilute DNA Test was raised and the question asked why KC registered known dilute gene carriers. Holland has banned registration of these. LRC of Wales has included on their entry forms that it will not accept entries to working tests or field trials for non-recognised colours. This was to be raised with the KC as there is now a DNA test available for the dilute gene to be identified.

(Delivered in Samantha's absence by Lynda Heron)

“The 2016 meeting on the 4th May had an item from the Field Trial Sub-committee, 2 proposals and a total of 16 discussion items. The high number of discussion items was due to some clubs/societies not being aware of the agenda deadline and so had to submit their items as discussion items under ‘any other business’. 40 representatives attended the meeting.

The matter of Open stake preferences placed on the council's agenda by the Field Trial Sub-committee was complex in possible solutions so the creation of a working party, appointed by the FT sub-committee was deemed the correct course of action. The idea was they would carry out research and provide a report at the next council meeting. However the sub-committee were not of the same opinion. Fortunately the council's retriever representatives on the FT sub-committee, Phil Highfield and Diana Harrison offered to form an informal group which could collect and collate the necessary info on behalf of the council and report their findings to the FT sub-committee at its February meeting 2017. Which I will point out at this stage I find strange, as I would have thought the findings would have been reported back to the council first.

One of the proposals on the agenda was strongly supported and recommended for approval by the council. This was to amend J Reg J7.c thus stopping clubs/societies charging members extra, £5 etc., for entering trials via post. Unfortunately the FT sub-committee were not in support of the amendment. 5 council representatives who sit on the 18 member FT sub-committee were classed as part of the ‘strongly supported’ council decision, as they were at the council meeting, yet seem to have allowed the other 13 sub-committee members to ignore the overwhelming support of this amendment. Don't forget you can receive a club's FT Schedules by post but woe betide if you send the entry form back the same way!

Of the 16 discussion items the council were in support of 7 suggestions and requested the FT subcommittee to consider them further. These were points 42, 48, 64, 72, 75, 92 and 94 in the Councils minutes. However only points 48 and 75 were supported by the FT sub-committee. These related to the amendment of J Reg 7, for full details please see the December Field Trial Newsletter and/or the 2017 FT Regulations booklet. The other point related to the timing of nominations for judges for the English Springer and Cocker Spaniel Championships.

Disappointingly point 64 the suggestion of a review of all the Regulations relating to Working Tests with particular reference to scoring was not supported but a document did appear in the December 2016 Field Trial newsletter.

Points 96 and 101 should also be duly noted.

Point 96 - Field trial schedules need to be sent to all members either by email (if supplied) or by post rather than purely making them available on a club's website or Facebook page.

Point 101 – Referred to the “excellent article about social media in the Spring 2016 FT Newsletter”. With regards to social media I would always urge caution on what you post but sometimes it is the only way to raise controversial issues, we are all allowed freedom of speech. The Kennel Club (KC) will take action where they can. However as in the recent case with spaniel judge Andy Platt if the KC had been seen to be investigating the problem instead of possibly trying to punish, it may not have resulted in ‘sprockergate’ with photographs and articles in of the Queen, her sprocker, sorry Cocker, and Ian Openshaw featuring in several national newspapers. The moral of the story is be reasonable but not afraid!

*If anyone would like to discuss my report or wants to know more about the Field Trial Liaison Council and how it works please get in touch. **Samantha Whyte** samantha_jim21@yahoo.co.uk”*