

THE MARLOW SOCIETY
Registered Charity 262803
Minutes of 64th Annual General Meeting

Present: Mr Mike Overall (Vice President), Mr Richard Parker (Co-Chairman and acting Treasurer), Mr Andrew Wood (Co-Chairman), Mr George Lawrence (Hon Secretary) and around another sixty-five Members of the Society who met at Liston Hall, Marlow, at 8:00pm on Tuesday 6th May 2025.

1 - Co-Chairman's Opening Remarks

Richard Parker welcomed Members to AGM. He drew attention to the available refreshments kindly organised by Enid Briggs and Su Jones. There would be an opportunity to hear from the evening's speaker Naomi Riches after the formal meeting.

Mr Overall as Vice President of the Society was invited by Mr Parker to take the meeting's chair for the formal business of AGM.

2 - Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from ten Members. This included apology from the Society's President Sir Keith Stuart who was indisposed. Marlow's MP Joy Morrissey noted that unfortunately the AGM had coincided with the regular Tuesday sitting of the House of Commons.

3 - Minutes of 63rd AGM

Su Jones proposed and Bob Savidge seconded that the Minutes of the 2024 AGM, which had been emailed to Members, be adopted. The motion was carried by show of hands.

4 - Trustees' Report

Richard Parker, one of the Society's four Trustees, was asked by the Vice President to present the Report which had been printed in the recent *Newsletter*. He noted that the Co-Chairmen had provided reports on behalf of the Executive Committee in each of the three *Newsletter* magazines since the last AGM. The Vice President's request for questions went unanswered and the Trustees' Report was adopted by show of hands.

5 - Annual Statement of Accounts

Richard Parker, as Acting Treasurer, thanked Raymond Gale, who had resigned in March, for his work with the accounts and for his handover. Richard spoke briefly to the summary of the Society's financial position that had been published in *Newsletter*. He highlighted for the year ended 31st December 2024 significant sums of income, including £1000 received from Wetherspoons for use of several of the Society's local photographs in their new pub; and expenditure, including after the generous £500 grant from the Town Council, the remaining £2000 cost of the new gazebo. He noted that £1004 continued to be ringfenced for restart of Budavar twinning. During the year membership had grown, for which particular thanks were due to Ray Isted, and consequently the Society's income had risen. The net surplus for the year was £1257.

The Acting Treasurer emphasised that the Society's finances were healthy and he noted that there was no need to consider raising the subscription levels.

The generous pro-bono work of Seymour Taylor in examining the accounts over many years was recognised and Richard thanked them for this year's work on behalf of the Society.

There were no questions and the Statement of Accounts was adopted by show of hands.

6 - Changes to Constitution

The Vice President advised that one proposed change to the Society's Constitution had been published in *Newsletter*. He called on George Lawrence, Hon Secretary, to outline the change.

The Secretary explained that in order for the Society to make application for grants, local government required sight of its Policies. The Constitution change would give prominence to the existence of these Policies and formalises their position in the Society's administration. It was proposed this be achieved by adding a second paragraph to existing Article 7 Administration, worded as follows:

To facilitate day to day administration and management of the Society, from time to time Policies may be proposed by the Society's Officers for adoption by the Executive Committee. The Officers are to ensure publication to the Society's Members of the Policies so adopted.

Hon Secretary proposed and Olwen Elliott seconded the motion to so change the Constitution. The proposal was accepted by show of hands.

7 - Election of Officers of the Society

The Vice President advised that the following Officers had offered themselves for re-election and had been nominated:

Richard PARKER and Andrew WOOD as Co-Chairman
Mark HOWARD as Hon Membership Secretary
George LAWRENCE as Hon Secretary

No other nominations having been received, the meeting confirmed the re-election of these four Officers.

8 - Election of an Executive Committee

The following six Members of the Society had indicated their willingness to continue to serve on Executive Committee and had been nominated:

Sarah CAPEL-SMITH, Katie COOK, Olwen ELLIOTT, Ray ISTED, Barry MOUTREY, Geoff WOOD

The maximum number of Committee places allowed by Constitution being greater than the number of candidates standing, the meeting was pleased to confirm the re-election

of these Members, bringing the newly elected Executive Committee to ten Members with the Officers.

9 - Appointment of an Independent Examiner of the 2025 Accounts

The Vice President noted that although the Society was not required under Charity Commission rules to undertake an examination of the accounts, the Executive Committee continued to support the holding of a voluntary examination.

Seymour Taylor Audit Limited had indicated the firm's willingness to continue as Independent Examiners of the Society's accounts. By show of hands the meeting confirmed the firm's re-appointment for the Society's financial year ending 31st December 2025.

Closing

The Vice President thanked those who had come to the meeting and expressed his confidence that Naomi Riches' talk would provide a rich reward.

Mr Overall noted that one of the Society's successes over the last year has been a significant increase in membership. Many new Members had joined after attending one of the excellent monthly talks organised by the Society's Local History Group. He congratulated Adam Baxter and his team for their exceptional work to provide a fascinating programme.

Sadly we had also lost long standing Members of the Society. The Vice President made particular mention of two Members:

Michael Eagleton, who had died in September, had been a great supporter of the Society. Michael had enhanced the Society's exhibitions and events with wonderful material. He had himself given several illustrated talks over the years, which had always drawn capacity audiences.

John Evans, who had also passed away. He had been a prolific researcher of local history when he lived in Marlow, work now made available in the Society's archives. He had contributed to the Society's Newsletter after he moved away - and had still kept in touch when he later moved to Dorset.

The Vice President noted that the work of the Executive Committee had benefitted from participation in its monthly meetings by representatives of the local County, Town and Parish councils. Mr Overall expressed the Society's thanks to the outgoing Councillors for giving of their time - and he looked forward to the Society having as effective a working relationship with our newly elected representatives.

In closing, Mike also offered thanks on behalf of the meeting to the Co-Chairmen Andrew Wood and Richard Parker, to their Executive Committee colleagues and especially to Julia Pendlebury and Raymond Gale who had stood down, and to the many Members of the Society who had volunteered so much of their time to the Society's work.

The Vice President particularly requested the Co-Chairmen pass on the meeting's best wishes for a speedy recovery to the Society's President Sir Keith Stuart.

Post AGM Talk

After the formal meeting, Andrew Wood introduced the evening's speaker, Naomi Riches MBE DL Hon DUniv (BNU). Members much enjoyed her lively illustrated address titled 'Marlow, Just Like Gold Dust'.

Richard Parker
Co-Chairman

George Lawrence
Hon Secretary