



THE ICKNIELD WAY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting of the Icknield Way Association, held at Wilkinson Hall, Church Square, Toddington on Saturday 18th October 2025 at 3.00pm.

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by Tom Chevalier and Doug Landman which gave a brief history of the Icknield Way and an overview of the route.

Present. IWA members present were: Tom Chevalier (Chairperson), Alec Gallagher, Alex Goldie, Tim Johnson, Doug Landman, Laurence Rix. Also present were: Bridget Chevalier, Jill Rix, and three members of the public.

Tom Chevalier opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and welcoming everyone to the IWA's 41st AGM.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Lesley Blundell, Chris Hinchliff MP, Rachel Hopkins MP, Chris James, Laura Kyrke-Smith MP, Alex Meyer MP, Karen Mills, Wendy Morrison, Phil Prigg, Alastair Strathern MP, Ian Thomas, David Waterson, Roy Wheeler.

Blake Stephenson MP met with Doug Landman and Tom Chevalier immediately before the AGM and apologised that he was unable to stay.

2. Minutes of the 2024 AGM

The minutes had been available for review on the website for 12 months. All present agreed that they were an accurate reflection of the meeting and they were approved unanimously.

3. Officers' Reports

Written reports from all officers had been made available on the [website](#) ahead of the meeting. The Chair asked that each officer present key highlights only.

Development. Doug Landman highlighted the following:

- Development activity this year has focussed on our efforts to obtain National Trail Status, both for the Icknield Way itself and for the Great Chalk Way in its entirety.
- Since the 2024 AGM, we have developed relationships with, and garnered support from, a number of the MPs through whose constituencies the Icknield Way passes. In particular, Chris Hinchliff MP has agreed to champion the process through Parliament. Laura Kyrke-Smith MP has offered actively to support these efforts, and Blake Stephenson MP has committed to engage with colleagues along the route.
- The briefing paper that underpins this activity will be made available on the website. It was produced with input from a range of interested parties. We have encountered no opposition thus far.
- We have requested a meeting with DEFRA ministers and are awaiting a response.
- Doug also reported that the three GCW Information Boards financed by the IWA have been installed and expressed his thanks to the partners who undertook this work for us, particularly those at the National Trust, Central Bedfordshire Council, and the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.
- Doug continues to submit articles for publication in local magazines and newsletters.



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Finance. Tim Johnson highlighted the following:

- At the 2024 AGM, we outlined plans to spend some of the IWA's accumulated funds to support the launch of the Great Chalk Way project, a key plank in our plan to obtain National Trail Status. This expenditure was made as planned. These non-recurring costs have delivered a negative surplus of £4,500. This is as planned. The current year's accounts also include the costs of the 40th anniversary AGM.
- Without these non-recurring costs, the IWA would have shown a positive surplus of circa £600. We remain in a healthy situation albeit with lower funds.
- Tim reiterated the points made earlier in terms of our strategy for pursuing National Trail Status. We are pursuing two complementary strategies. First, following advice from Chris Hinchliff MP, we are seeking NT Status for the Icknield Way in isolation. Secondly, and as a longer term objective, we are working as part of the Great Chalk Way project group to obtain NT Status for the entirety of the GCW.
- The meeting moved, at this point, to agenda item 4 *Approval of Accounts*, then to item 6, both minuted below.

Guidebook Sales. Tom Chevalier highlighted the following:

- Sales for the year were healthy, 168 total sales representing the highest level for three years.

Website. Tom Chevalier highlighted the following:

- We continue to maintain three websites: two for the Icknield Way and one for the Great Chalk Way.
- The number of subscribers continues to grow, and we now have 290 subscribers who have registered their interest in news updates posted to the websites.
- We continue to have no social media presence and this remains a priority for the Committee.

Membership. Laurence talked to the report submitted by Lesley Blundell and highlighted the following.

- Membership increased during the year. The total number of members is presently 78.
- Sadly, another of our founding members, Roger Moreton, died in September.
- As we embarked on serious efforts to progress NT Status, it was important to ensure that we could substantiate our claim that the path remains walkable. Our Spring Patrol initiative saw all our Wardens walking their sections and submitting reports. Only one issue was reported involving a Byway closure in Suffolk. Thanks to all the Wardens. Coincidentally, Doug Landman had received feedback from a walker that the Icknield Way is, in his opinion, the best signed path he has walked.

Chairperson. Tom Chevalier highlighted the following:

- Tom thanked the Committee for their hard work over the year.
- Having been Chairperson since 2011, Tom advised that he will resign this position at the 2026 AGM. He wishes to remain on the Committee but believes that the IWA will benefit from the fresh impetus that a new Chairperson will bring
- Tom thanked the Wardens for all their work, saying that it is vital that we ensure that the route remains walkable.
- This has been a busy year and activities have included: the launch of the Great Chalk Way; the installation of GCW Information Boards at Ivinghoe Beacon, Dunstable Downs,



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and Knettishall Heath; the production of briefing papers in respect of National Trail Status; and engagement with stakeholders, including MPs, in support of NT activity.

- Tom finished by exhorting everyone to get out to walk or ride the Icknield Way and to tell their friends.

4. Approval of the Accounts

Following the Finance update recorded above, the meeting was asked to approve the accounts subject to independent review. Proposed by Doug Landman and seconded by Alec Gallagher, the accounts were approved subject to review by an Independent Examiner.

5. Executive Committee Membership

Tom Chevalier summarised the changes to the Executive Committee since the last AGM: Doug Landman has moved from Publicity Officer to Development Officer; and Maria Nicholson has stepped down from the committee. Efforts to fill the post of Social Media Officer are ongoing but, at present, the role remains unfilled.

All existing members of the committee had made it known to Tom that they were prepared to continue in post. The current makeup of the committee is, therefore: Tom Chevalier (Chairperson), Lesley Blundell (Membership Secretary), Chris James (Newsletter), Tim Johnson (Treasurer), Doug Landman (Development Officer), Laurence Rix (Secretary). Proposed by Alex Goldie and seconded by Alec Gallagher, the committee membership was approved.

New committee members will always be welcome. There are numerous specific duties which would benefit from focus. It would be particularly good to have representation from the riding community.

6. Appointment of Accounts Examiner

Jonathan Whitman took on the role of Independent Accounts Examiner following the 2024 AGM. Tim Johnson reported that he approved the accounts for 2023 and 2024 and made some useful suggestions which we have implemented.

7. AOB

- Alex Goldie reported that there is talk of development along the A600 around Ickleford and that this might impact the Icknield Way. This led to a brief discussion of Green Corridors and of the necessity to seek positive outcomes from all new development.
- Tom thanked Jill Rix and Bridget Chevalier for their help at today's meeting.

There being no other business, the Chairperson closed the meeting at approximately 4.15pm.