

**HEART OF ENGLAND WAY ASSOCIATION**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 22<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

**MINUTES**

**In attendance:**

Anne Beete	Tony Beete	Michael Crowther	Ian Green	Alan Growcock
Jim Hayes	Carole Jenkinson	Steve Maberly	Kay Manuel	Bill O’Gara
Ian Powell	Lorna Roden	Anne Whalley		

**Apologies:**

Sue Abbey	Sheila Carter	Sam Gidziewicz	John Goode	Cheryl Jackson
Nick Taylor	Sue Tootill	David White	Kate White	Ian Bird

There being 13 members present the meeting was quorate.

ISSUE	DECISION/ACTION	WHO
<b>Minutes</b> The minutes of the AGM of 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 were approved.	Approved	
<b>Chairman’s Report</b> Tony apologised for his temporary absence during the year but aims to be more involved and tackle some of the issues next year.	Noted	
<b>Treasurer’s Report</b> The audited accounts (circulated with the agenda) showed we just about broke even this year. Key sources of costs were insurance, the purchase of new badges for sale, and doing much more work on the upkeep of the Heart of England Way than in previous years. The bank is now charging a monthly fee and some of the reserves have been moved to an instant access savings account.	Noted	
<b>Audited Accounts</b> The audited accounts were circulated with the agenda.	Approved	
<b>Election of the Committee</b> All existing elected and co-opted Committee Members were willing to continue in their current roles and were duly re-elected as follows: Chair: Tony Beete Secretary: Ian Powell Treasurer: Steve Maberly Membership Secretary: Steve Maberly Warden Co-ordinator: Steve Maberly Publisher: Lorna Roden Programme Secretary: Bill O’Gara Registrar – Forest of Arden Way: Steve Maberly Co-opted member for promotions: Carole Jenkinson		

<p>Kay Manuel and Sam Gidziewicz put themselves forward to join the Committee with their roles to be decided at a later time and were duly elected. Sam had expressed an interest in possibly undertaking the Arden Way role.</p>		
<p><b>Appointment of Auditor</b> David White was proposed as the auditor for 2025/26</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Treasurer</p>
<p><b>Constitution</b> Last year's AGM agreed to a review of the Constitution and for a draft new Constitution to be presented at this AGM. A draft revised Constitution and explanatory notes were circulated with the AGM agenda. The draft was approved subject to the following amendment:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"In the event of a hung vote the Chair will have a casting vote".</p>	<p>Publish the revised and agreed new Constitution.</p>	<p>Secretary</p>
<p><b>Membership Fees</b> The Committee had proposed increasing the membership fee by £1 this year and every subsequent year subject to ongoing review. To reflect increasing costs and to protect the Association's financial reserves it was agreed to raise the fee to £12 for 2026, and by a further £2 each subsequent year if needed. Consideration was given to charging £1 per person for those attending walks. The idea was generally supported with some reservations about the practicalities. However, in view of the agreed increases in membership fees it was decided not to proceed with the idea this year. Consideration was given to encouraging Members to make voluntary donations to the Association, to supplement income from membership. It was agreed to add a sentence to the membership renewal letter inviting members to do this when renewing their membership if they want to.</p>	<p>Apply the new membership fee.</p> <p>Do not proceed this year.</p> <p>Amend membership renewal letter.</p>	<p>Membership Secretary, Treasurer</p> <p>Membership Secretary</p>
<p><b>Part Year Membership</b> A proposal was considered to allow new members who join more than half way through the membership year to pay one membership fee for the remainder of that year and the whole of the following year. The AGM rejected the proposal in view of the need to raise income and the low cost of membership.</p>	<p>Proposal not approved.</p>	<p>Membership Secretary</p>
<p><b>Honorary Membership</b> Brian Keates was put forward for honorary membership in view of his many years of service to the Association, being one of the founder members of the Association and the Heart of England Way.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Membership Secretary</p>
<p><b>Promotional Activity</b> Flyers had been produced to put up in community settings to promote the Association. They were available for use while further work is underway to add colour and improve their overall quality. Someone with IT graphic design skills needs to be identified for this.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	

<p><b>Wardens Report</b>  Very little maintenance work had been done on the route since Covid. The resulting backlog has been tackled this year with a big improvement thanks to the ongoing work of our Wardens and everyone who has participated in the regular working parties.  New waymarks have been purchased to replace faded and missing old ones.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	
<p><b>Local Authorities &amp; Parish Councils</b>  The Committee had decided that when Wardens report footpath issues on the Heart of England Way or Arden Way to the Local Authorities they should do so in the name of the Association using the Association's account, rather than as individuals. This means that the complete picture can be seen in one place, is accessible to all, and records are not lost in the event of a change of Wardens.  There was some confusion how to do this but help is available to explain and help to set it up if needed.   There is an outstanding aim to identify all Parish Councils and their contact details for use in promoting the Association and seeking their practical and financial support. It was reported that this task is bigger than it seems and will be divided up to reduce the individual workload.</p>	<p>Report path issues in the name of the Association rather than as individuals.   Provide IT support as needed.   Noted</p>	<p>All Members   Wardens Co-ordinator</p>
<p><b>Christmas Dinner</b>  This has been booked for the Arden Hotel on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 1.00pm.   A deposit of £5 is required from each Member attending, to be paid by bank transfer to the Association. Attendance to be notified by reply to the email invitation.</p>	<p>Email all members   Pay deposit and notify attendance.</p>	<p>Programme Secretary   Members</p>
<p><b>P-Cloud</b>  A request was made that any work we do on behalf of the Association be saved to the cloud service we have set up, so that it will be available to the Association directly and independently of any individual, rather than saving it exclusively in individuals' own computer records where it is not accessible by the Association. Help is available if needed to set up and use the cloud service.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Members Treasurer</p>
<p><b>E2 Waymarks</b>  If Wardens who have received E2 waymarks to put up are having any difficulties, please contact Ian Powell for assistance. The aim is to have them all in place by the end of December if possible.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>Date and time of next AGM or Special AGM: To be determined.</p>	<p>AGM to be held no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November 2026.</p>	<p>Secretary</p>