

MINUTES OF THE AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB MIDLANDS & OVERSEAS CENTRE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2023
RAF Cosford, Cosford TF11 8UP

Apologies: Vlady Gabrhel

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Minutes of previous meeting had been circulated. There were no matters arising and were approved.

Proposed: Bob Kemp Seconded: John Northwood

Chairman's Report: Charles Fraser-Macnamara

Well, it is that time of the year again, when we have to remember all the fun that we have actually had during the year!

This was the first year that we probably got back to our levels of pre-Covid activity, and it was great to be able to see the cars and the members out there and enjoying themselves.

Can I first pay a grateful tribute and congratulations to Graham Morris for the "blooming" WhatsApp Groups, which are now popping up throughout the whole of our area.

This innovation has worked incredibly well, and members are meeting locally on virtually a monthly basis, both during the day (and as the nights draw in) in the evenings.

A healthy core in each of the various WhatsApp Groups are promoting the same, and lots of information about Healeys, venues and other car shows are being exchanged direct.

I would urge all members to become a member of their nearest WhatsApp Group and, also, they may want to become members further afield.

A warm welcome will be given to all those members who wish to join, and indeed many new members have found this an ideal bridge to getting to know members of the club.

The year effectively commenced with our late Christmas Lunch in January at The Kings Head, Aston Cantlow, which was enjoyed by over 35 members.

The WhatsApp Groups continued to meet throughout the year and we have endeavoured to have a monthly luncheon in most months.

The club once again ran a stand at the Restoration Show at the NEC and indeed at the earlier National Classic Car Show in November 2022 two out of the three cars were provided by Midland.

In the up and coming National Show at the end of November, we are again provided one out of the three cars for the stand.

Drive It Day was a great success, organised by the “Two Ian’s” and we had approximately 18 members turn up, either in their Healeys or, if either the cars or the drivers were “hors de combat”, in modern easier to drive examples!

The Midland Concours took place on Father’s Day as usual at Elford Walled Garden and we managed to complete the same without getting too wet (that applied to most people, but not to me – I succeeded in getting “drowned by showers” twice on the way home) – one of the joys of driving a Frogeye Sprite without a hood!

So far as the social events are concerned, we had a very full calendar and we had a three-night mid-week event in mid-Wales at LLanerchindda Farm, who provide a service known as “Classic Tours of Wales”.

We all now know, if we didn’t already, why Wales is so green. It rained in “stair rods” and I have to say that I became an expert at putting up and taking down my hood – on one day I seem to recollect that I managed to do this on 14 separate occasions!

I also learnt a salutary lesson inasmuch as you must take very good care of your mileage - the various tour maps, had you resetting your odometer on about three occasions in each tour, and I failed, miserably, to calculate the maths in relation to the petrol consumption – running out of petrol on at least two occasions! Many thanks to those who bailed me out on the appropriate occasions.

The season concluded with a BBQ at Helen House, and whilst a number of members had to pull out at the last minute, I think it is fair to say that it was enjoyed by all, as always.

In relation to the activities that are planned for next year. It is hoped that we shall have another mid-week getaway, and we are looking, as always, at running the Practical Classics Restoration Stand in March.

Drive It Day will take place in the middle of April, as per normal, and we are hoping that the Midlands Centre Break will take place around about the middle of July (the time and venue are yet to be determined, as the Midland members that run the Concours for the National Committee have agreed, on a one-off basis, to stay in place for one further year to run the National Concours in North Yorkshire).

May I take this opportunity of thanking all Committee Members, and the members generally, for their contribution to the Club, and in particular to the Midland Centre.

Hopefully, by the time we get around to finishing the AGM we shall have another couple of members on the Committee.

Treasurers Report: Peter Dodson

A copy of the accounts had been circulated. There is a balance of £24,333

This year’s Centre accounts have been drawn up as required by Austin Healey Club Ltd, as the Centre’s accounts are now combined with the National accounts. The Centre’s account shows a headline deficit of £105. Last year, the figure was a deficit of £1,950. All the figures are exclusive of VAT.

The levy for the Centre was paid in August. The figure is £20 lower than the previous year, which means that our Centre membership number is roughly the same year on year.

Your Centre organised the stand at the NEC Restoration Show, which was held in March. The cost of putting on a stand is shown in the accounts. The cost of the Show was refunded by National for the first time in many years. The overall cost for the Show was lower than previous years due to the Treasurer having sciatica so did not attend the event.

The Chairman once again organised a BBQ, which was well attended and successful. The AGM was organised again at Statfold Barn Railway Museum. The cost of which is shown in the accounts. The Planned Drive was a great success in very dry and hot weather and it again supported Childline. The Centre covered the cost of the starting tea/coffee and sandwiches. The concours event was held at Elford Gardens on a very warm day and attracted a good number of cars; the cost of the event was a donation to the Gardens Trust. The Centre organised a midweek break at Llanerchindda Farm, Landoverly, which was fully booked, but the weather was a little poor. There is some very stunning scenery in this part of Wales, with some very interesting runs. This event was not financially supported by the centre.

The Committee continued to meet on a need to meet basis with some meetings taking place at social gatherings.

The Centre has almost completed the transfer of its banking arrangement from Barclays Bank to the Metro Bank.

The balance sheet for the Centre remains very healthy.

Proposed: Mike Ward Seconded: Bob Kemp

Membership Report: Bernadette Bryan

Membership of the Midlands & Overseas Centre currently stands at 279. During the year we had had 13 resignations for various reasons but we had also had welcomed 27 new members. Of the 279 members 240 are in the UK and 39 are Overseas.

Paul Fennell asked how much per member we received in the membership levy. Peter Dodson said that it was £6 per member. Paul Fennell also asked if the Committee were happy with that level of levy, David Broughton said that we were satisfied that the levy was set at the right amount.

Robert Youdell asked if there was a heat map of Midland members. Bernadette Bryan responded that she had not yet updated the heat map but it would not have changed very much from last year.

Peter Seaman asked if we had a breakdown of members by age range. Bernadette Bryan said that this was not something she had looked at but would do so.

Robert Youdell asked that as we have overseas members could we be affiliated with any clubs particularly in the USA. Mel Ward responded that in the USA there are 40 – 50 “Chapters” so it would be difficult also AHC UK was the “mother” club so in theory they should affiliate with us. There were no other questions re membership.

Proposed: Bob Kemp

Seconded: Mike Ward

NEC Report: David Broughton

All in all, 2023 has been a pretty unexciting year, which is probably a good thing overall and definitely reflects the increasingly professional way in which the NEC is going about it's business!

Highlights, such as they are:-

The consequences of **Covid** still lurk in the shadows and all NEC meetings continue to be held in a hybrid format which as well as helping those who for various reasons need to shield, it enables those directors from further flung locations to attend on line and avoid lengthy round trips. It's also an arrangement that's particularly helpful for those who have a more limited remit such as Graham Skyrme our excellent Treasurer – apart from our main budget meeting in August, his contribution rarely takes more than 20 minutes or so, so hardly worth a round trip from west London – our lunches certainly aren't that good!

Over the year we've also made good progress on the next **5 Year Plan** and have whittled the original 22 sections down to just 10 and dealt with several of the more contentious ones in the process, so whilst there's still work to be done, we're getting their!

The **Marque Registers Project** was brought to a successful conclusion last month – this time last year the only ones remaining were the Jensen Healey and the Historic & Special Cars registers. Thanks to Jim Palmer's perseverance, the Jensen Healey was up and running in July, but unfortunately the Historic & Special Cars proved to be more of a challenge as a result of Paul Woolmer's (the Register Secretary) refusal to share the details of the register and allow them to be uploaded onto the main club database. Apart from the whole principle of his position being unacceptable, the more immediate and fundamental concern for the NEC was that it's current curation was not compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. This left the club (and all the directors) exposed to the potentially draconian consequences of any breach and left us with no alternative than to close the register. Although this was an unfortunate and disappointing conclusion, the loss to the club is actually minimal as virtually all the cars concerned are individually on other relevant registers - it's simply that this dispersal means they're no longer quite as easy to identify and reference.

So eventually, all done and you'll be pleased to know that this will be the last time you'll hear from me on this particular issue!

On the **Regalia** front, arrangements with Logo That Polo (LTP) continue to operate successfully - I'm still awaiting final year figures, but looking at the first 10 months we're going to finish comfortably ahead of 2022's sales and generate an income from these in excess of £1,200. LTP offer excellent value and continue to be proactive in developing new products, they're quick to respond to changes in the market and very flexible in developing bespoke items to our own particular requirements.

In general, stock availability, order turnaround and prompt delivery have been maintained and the minimal complaints that we have had, have all be swiftly and satisfactorily resolved and we look forward to continuing to work with them in 2024.

In contradiction to the demographic doomsayers (who actually do have a very valid point) **Membership Nationally** continues to grow with a total at the end of October of some 1743 – up

by only 40 year-on-year, but an increase nonetheless, and whilst there's no reason for complacency, it's more than some other classic clubs can say.

For those of you who are interested, the breakdown across the regions is as follows:-

Members by Centre 3rd October 2023		1st June 2023
National	28	288
Eastern	213	201
Healeysport	72	72
Midlands	275	259
Northern	364	346
New Forest	177	173
Southern Counties	233	223
Southwestern	221	202
Thames Valley	160	148
Total	1743	1652
includes		
Overseas Members	67	63

I should also add at this point that despite all the inflationary pressure that we've had to deal with during the past 12 months, Membership fees for 2024 will be held uncharged for yet another year – at just under £1 a week, it really is pretty good value as I hope you'll all agree!

Under Steve Everest's editorial stewardship **Revcounter** continues to steadily improve, as does the punctuality of its delivery and distribution. Steve has also negotiated a new deal on postage with our printers that has not only improved punctuality and visibility of any problems, but is also on target to save us over £3,000 a year in costs.

In addition, we have recently increased all our display advertising rates by an average of 10% - we felt that this was not unreasonable under the prevailing economic conditions, and despite some initial misgivings from a couple of directors, I'm pleased to report that these have been universally accepted with no pushback from any of our advertisers - we really appreciate their continuing support.

Finally, there has only been one change to the **NEC** personnel – earlier in the year, Paul Paveley took over from Brian Loades as director for New Forest centre, and whilst for one reason or another, we haven't seen that much of him thus far, I'm sure he'll eventually make a worthwhile contribution!

Social Media Report – Graham Morris

Our main WhatsApp group , Healeys Together, now has 79 participants. As new members join the Midland region and after a courtesy welcome chat, they have the opportunity to join the group. There is also the facility on our Midland website for members to submit a form requesting inclusion in the group.

We now also have 4 other subgroups, Staffordshire Healeys, E.M. Healeys, Warks Crusaders, and a new Northampton Healeys group. These subgroups facilitate and organise their N and N

gatherings each month. However your committee hopes that general chit chat, club matters and classic car chat still comes through the main Healeys Together site as all members from subgroups are on the main site.

Whilst a lot of members are on the WhatsApp groups, other means of communications are still used, emailing of all events goes to all members and notifications are in the Revcounter magazine.

Nomination Of New Committee For 2023/2024

There were no new nominations for the Committee:-

Post	Nominee
Chairperson	Charles Macnamara
Vice Chairman	David Broughton
Secretary	Bernadette Bryan
NEC Director	David Broughton
Membership	Bernadette Bryan
Treasurer	Peter Dodson
Webmaster	Robin Astle

Technical Advisors:

Big Healey	Robin Astle
Sprite	Bob Kemp

General Committee:

Graham Morris, Viv Dodson, Linda Kemp, Simon Leese and Ian Thomas

It was proposed that all of the above persons were appointed by a block vote.

Proposed: Mike Ward Seconded: John Northwood

All were in favour.

AOB

The Austin Healey Club make an annual contribution to the AHC museum in Holland. This gives AHC members free admission to the museum. Consideration was being given to organising a trip there in 2025 if people would be interested. The general consensus was that this would be supported and so the Committee will start to make enquiries and draft a proposal.

In the museum there are two trophies that are owned by AHC Midlands. Charles confirmed that they were on a 5 year loan agreement to the museum in Holland. Mike Ward wanted this fact minuted to ensure that the club are aware of where the trophies were and it is reviewed each year.

Robert Youdell asked about attendance at Silverstone Classic and why there was not an AHC area. David Broughton said it was really down to the number of members that had signed up to the

event, which was very low. Also someone would need to man the area and there had been no-one willing to organise it and carry this out.

Graham Morris said he had contacted Shelsley Walsh about whether we could have a dedicated Austin Healey area at the 2024 Classic event. There was a minimum requirement to have 12 cars present to be able to have an allocated area. He agreed to organise this if there was enough support from members.

Paul Fennell asked about the possibility of canvassing members on what additional activities they would like the club to consider. Bernadette Bryan said she would look into this with Robin Astle.

Andy Birch remarked on a local non Healey event that he had attended and suggested that when members went somewhere different then they should be encouraged to share this with others potentially via WhatsApp.

Rod Hazelwood asked about the Historic Endurance Rally Association and the Hero Tour and whether this was coming to the Midlands and if members could attend. This would be looked into.

Ian Snelling offered a vote of thanks from all members to the Committee for all the time and effort they put into the Midlands Centre.

Charles Fraser-Macnamara thanked everyone for their input and attendance.

Meeting closed in harmony at 12.15 pm