

MINUTES OF THE AUSTIN HEALEY CLUB MIDLANDS & OVERSEAS CENTRE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2025

Woodland Grange Hotel, Leamington Spa CV32 6RN

Apologies:

Simon Leese, Paul & Judith Fennel, and Vlado Gabrhel

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

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

Proposed: Mike Ward

Seconded: Robert Youdell

Chairman's Report: Charles Fraser-Macnamara

In making my annual report this year I feel like in many ways I'm writing a "work of fiction"

For a large part of the year, Members will recollect that I was out of the country in the Czech Republic from late April till early September having both my knees replaced with the associated Physio that went with it.

The year started with a late Christmas lunch on the 15th January once again at the Joiners Arms Bruntingthorpe.

On the 26th February we were able to visit CMC Engineering on an engineering tour followed by lunch at a nearby pub. Many thanks to Graham Morris for organising the same.

The NEC Restoration show took place between the 21st and 23rd March and our revamped stand was, for the last time, organised and constructed by Peter Dodson. A stripped down 3000 and a Frogeye were partially restored on the stand all be it that on the Frogeye, the brake shoes were put on backwards!

The annual FBHVC Drive it Day took place on the 27th of April in the Cotswolds. For next year we are splitting the Drive it Day into two regionally independent drives to cut down on the traveling to the Start / Finish venues – the later will hopefully be on effectively circular routes starting and finishing at the same venues.

In May (19th till 22nd) we decamped to the Royal Lodge in the Forrester of Dean for a 2/3 night tour ably organised by Ian Thomas which had decent weather for a change, albeit a number of cars suffered mechanically, one having to be trailered home!

Sadly, we lost one of our good friends in June with the passing of Gerald Stevenson – A new Midland Open Concours Class for non-midland members has been named the "Gerald Stevenson Memorial Trophy" in his memory.

At the beginning of June the National Club launched the Austin Healey Members insurance scheme and David Broughton as Midland Director will give more details in his NEC report.

The scheme offers substantial benefits to members with consequent savings in premium costs. For example, in the case of my two Healeys the premium costs offered substantial savings. With the frogeye the premium was £142 as opposed to existing insurers Premium of £310, the 3000 £216 as opposed to existing premium of £662.

In July, we returned to Llanerchindda Farm and in glorious sunshine for a change! Members who attended 2 years ago will recollect that I won the informal competition for how many times you could put up a Healey Hood (In my case 14 times over 2 days!).

Midland Concours took place on the 13th of July at Gaydon as part of the anniversary celebrations for the Abingdon Works anniversary and was well attended, organised as always by Mell & Mike Ward and included at least one overseas member Bruno Verstraete who won the Gilliland Trophy (for the car the Judges would most like to take home) and the Open Class and Overall National Trophy were both won by Mark Rainer.

The Himley Classic car show on the 7th September was a "Wash out" in every sense; it was billed as a new members event but few attended and the Regular stalwarts suffered a day of relentless horizontal rain which put great stress on our new Midland Centre Gazebo – without it though we'd have been thoroughly soaked (and not because of the Czech Champagne!).

The WhatsApp group's under Graham Morris's direction have increased their membership and the monthly lunches or evening meals continue to have healthy attendees. Graham's enthusiasm, in spite of a Hip Replacement, has been the key to such growth.

In the summer Peter & Viv Dodson gave notice that neither would be seeking re-election to the Committee, and in Peter's case would not be seeking re-election as Treasurer.

No one can seem to recollect when Peter first became treasurer (Peter is not sure either!) but it certainly is more than 25 years ago as both were already in post when I joined the Committee.

They both have been stalwarts of the Midland Centre and we hope they will continue to attend Midland events and fully participate both with their presence but also their knowledge of the Midland Centre.

I know you will all join me in wishing them well in their retirement.

For my part can I thank my Deputy Chairman David Broughton and the rest of the Midland Committee for his and their support in what has been a personally challenging year.

May I take this opportunity to wish all our members an early Happy Christmas and a prosperous new year.

Proposed: Peter Seaman

Seconded: David Broughton

Treasurers Report; Peter Dodson

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 £1,113. Last year, the figure was a deficit of £812. All the figures are exclusive of VAT.

The levy for the Centre was paid in August. The figure was £7 higher than previous year, which means that our Centre membership number has increased slightly.

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, including the new back drop walling, and is the reason the overall cost for the Show was higher than the previous year.

The Planned Drive was a great success in very dry and hot weather, and it again supported Childline. The Centre organised a successful midweek break in the Forest of Dean, overlooking the River Wye, in beautiful weather. We had some very interesting runs and visits. Those that attended the Llanerchindda Farm break, also enjoyed some very good weather.

The Midlands concours event was held at Gaydon, British Motor Museum, in conjunction Abingdon Works Motorsport Celebration, on a very hot day and attracted a good number of cars, to make up for the dry days the Centre had a wet day at Shelsley Walsh.

The Centre also purchased a new high-quality gazebo, which was tested at Shelsley Walsh hill climb and Himley car show, in some very wet weather.

The AGM was organised at Cosford Aerospace Museum. The cost of which is shown in the accounts.

The Centre has sold the trailer that held the NEC display items. This has reduced the loss the Centre made last year by £400.

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

The Centre has invested £10,000 in a 1year fixed rate bond. The bond has a yield of 5.05% with the Redwood Bank.

The balance sheet for the Centre remains very healthy and currently stands at £22,408.

Questions:

1. Richard Statham asked if we needed to purchase another trailer. Peter Dodson said no as we did not need to transport as much equipment and we several people on the committee had trailers we can use.

Acceptance of the balance sheet was:

Proposed: Charles Fraser Macnamara Seconded: Mike Ward

Membership Report: Bernadette Bryan

At this time last year membership stood at 282 (244 UK, 38 Overseas). We welcomed 30 brand new members but unfortunately lost 29 members bringing the membership numbers to 283 (241 UK, 42 Overseas).

As per last year, in April we emailed members that had not renewed their membership and again this delivered positive results.

We are often asked about the distribution of the membership in our centre, BB produced a heat map, a copy of which was circulated to attendees.

Questions:

1. Richard Statham asked if we had done a survey with those members who did not renew as to why that was. Peter Dodson said that National had done so one year but the results were inconclusive. David Broughton said we can one next year.
2. Robert Youdell said that a good place to recruit new members is at classic car shows. Charles Fraser-Macnamara said that we do this at the Restoration show and also at the Classic show in November. Mel Ward said that AHC offer a reduced membership of £15 at the November Classic show but because the Restoration show was at the time of the annual renewals, we could not offer a discount at that event.
3. Doug Squires asked how membership is paid for. Bernadette Bryan said that the majority is paid via direct debit, but a few members still send in a cheque.
4. Mike Ward asked if we had much problem with post. David Broughton said that in respect of Revcounter the Post Office has to make the final delivery, so although we use City Post they then have to hand it over to Royal Mail and at that point we have no control over the deliveries. Mike Ward then asked about renewals postage. David Broughton said this has now moved online so nothing is sent out by post for renewals. Mel Ward confirmed that for new

members Robert Thornburrow sends out a welcome letter, key fob, a copy of Revcounter and the register form by post.

Acceptance of the Membership Report was:

Proposed: Richard Statham

Seconded: Doug Squires

NEC Report: David Broughton

It's been a comparatively uneventful year on the NEC front – a lot of time and effort has gone into improving general administration and procedural processes, which have all added to the excitement of spending sunny Sunday's incarcerated in a hotel room!

That said though, the NEC year has been dominated by two major events, the first a welcome and very successful introduction and launch of the Club Insurance Scheme back in June, but the second was the very unwelcome news of the sudden and untimely death of Caroline Curran also in June. Whilst to many Caroline was probably best known as the club's national membership secretary, she, together with her husband Tony have been major figures and contributors to the club over many years – with her warm and welcoming personality, she was ideally suited to the membership secretary's role, and she will be sorely and sadly missed.

On a purely pragmatic level, her untimely departure necessarily initiated a reappraisal of this role and its interface with the webmaster's where there is quite an overlap of functions. This has now been successfully completed, and the revised Membership Secretary's position has recently been advertised in Revcounter. I am pleased to report that Tony Curran (Caroline's husband) had applied and has been appointed National Membership Secretary.

In brief, on the administrative front: -

We've updated our Safeguarding protocols and procedures

We've cleared redundant archive material and the remainder is now largely digitised

An improved version of the New Members Welcome Pack is being developed

Work is also advancing on a central database that will draw together all the various strands of tech data currently scattered across various regional centre websites, and within archived copies of Revcounter. The plan is that these can then be easily referenced and accessed directly from the main club website.

Revcounter itself has continued to receive many detailed improvements that have been incorporated throughout the year – the next big change will be a major revision to the Events Planner section in the Calendar to improve the visibility and clarity of Regional vs National events.

As far as the individual Regional Centres are concerned:-

I'm pleased to be able to report that the excellent Jim Palmer is now representing New Forest centre on a permanent basis.

Nick Varlow has taken on the similar role for Southern Counties to replace Dave Colwell, who in turn has been appointed to the position of Club Vice Chairman and Jonathan Woodrow has taken over the chairmanship of the region.

Finally, Pete Edwards has taken over from Rob Hudson at South Western.

The latter change conveniently leads me on to news of another change and this is the pending retirement of John Keener from his role as Club Chairman at the forthcoming National AGM. The reason for this is simply that he has reached the end of his maximum number of terms of office.

He will be greatly missed, not only at a national level but also internationally where he was held in very high regard, and also regionally where he was a regular supporter of club events throughout the length and breadth of the country. You can be assured that the wheels are already turning to persuade him to accept an honorary position in the club that will enable us to continue to access his enormous knowledge and experience.

Meanwhile, it's the unanimous wish of the NEC and directors that Rob Hudson should take over from him as Chairman and we hope that this will be ratified unopposed at the forthcoming AGM.

Operationally, 2024/5 was a very successful year, primarily due to the continuing professional composition, competence and conduct of the NEC members and Officers. Highlights were the overall financial performance and a further reduction in the level of debtors.

A forecast operating deficit of £1,518 was turned round into a net surplus of £4,134 which included some £6,821 of interest on our reserves – the more alert of you will note that without the latter, in operational terms the P&L would show a deficit of some £6,827 so the earnings on our reserves are being used to subsidise day to day expenses, including the continuing freeze membership subscriptions which remain unchanged since 2016!

You don't need me to spell out the fact that the Consumer Price Index has risen by some 38% over this period, but I would emphasise that this performance has only been achieved by tight cost controls and increasing operational efficiencies directed by prudent professional management at all levels.

Nevertheless, costs have increased, particularly those in respect of Bank Charges, Website and IT costs and Car Shows – in the latter respect, National are now absorbing the costs of the Restoration Show, albeit that Midlands Centre will continue to run it.

On the Trade Debtor front which is of key importance, the figure has reduced from £8,369 to £2,924 – some £5,445, or more meaningfully by 35% which is a remarkable advance in the current economic climate and great credit is due to the club treasurer Graham Skyrme for this achievement.

As far as 2025/6 is concerned, there will be a significant (and hopefully short term) reduction in advertising revenue – with the advent of the club scheme, we will lose

revenue from the insurers who currently advertise with us. Against this we will receive commission on the income from the new scheme, but it will take time for this to accumulate to similar levels. We have therefore prudently forecast a £12,000 loss in the 2025/6 budget, but I would expect the outcome to actually be much closer to break-even.

And that's about as far as NEC matters are concerned ladies and gentlemen – sorry it's not a more dynamic or exciting report but I'm happy to take any questions or feedback from you.

Questions:

1 John Vedy said had had recently been at meeting with several charities and they were having trouble with their banks, and asked if this has affected account for AHC. David Broughton said yes this has affected NEC, all directors have to provide personal details passport etc. Peter Dodson said a couple of years ago Nat West closed our Midland's account and so we moved to Barclays. Unfortunately Barclays would not supply debit cards, which made life somewhat difficult, so we switched to Metro Bank who have been very good. He said however that Metro Bank were now introducing a £4 per month service fee.

Acceptance of the NEC Report was:

Proposed: Mike Ward Seconded: Peter Dodson

Social Media Report: Graham Morris

Our main WhatsApp group 'Healeys Together', now has 95 members, slightly up on last year. The site has been operating successfully with little need for intervention of the group admin controller. To the credit of all on the group, virtually all posts and comments relate to club and classic car matters.

Members can access the group via the Midlands website, where there is a simple form to complete to comply with the clubs requirements on DPA.

We still have four sub groups, Staffs Healeys, Warks Crusaders, E,M, Healeys and Northants. These groups organise their own N and N meetings, so thanks to Richard Statham, John Vedy, Helen Acton and Brett Dillon who are the organisers.

However, your committee hopes that general chat comes through the main Healeys Together site, as all members from the sub groups should be on the main site, thus a wider audience.

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

Questions:

1. Ian Thomas said that for the FOD trip earlier this year a WhatsApp group had been set up for the attendees. This was particularly useful as we had members from other centres attending so everyone could be kept up to date. The group was closed 90 days after the event in line with policy.
2. John Vedy asked if new members are told that WhatsApp group is the main channel of communication. Graham Morris said it was although if people did not want to join then they would still receive emails .

Acceptance of the Social Media Report was:

Proposed: Jill Seaman

Seconded: Ian Thomas

Nomination of New Committee For 2025/26

There were two nominations for the Committee: - Treasurer Graham Morris, General Committee Ian Eaton

Post	Nominee
Chairperson	Charles Fraser-Macnamara
Vice Chairman	David Broughton
Secretary	Bernadette Bryan
NEC Director	David Broughton
Membership	Bernadette Bryan
Treasurer	Graham Morris
Webmaster	Robin Astle
Social Media	Graham Morris

Valuation Advisors:

Big Healey	Robin Astle
Sprite	Bob Kemp

General Committee:

Linda Kemp, Simon Leese, Ian Thomas and Ian Eaton

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

Proposed: Mike Ward

Seconded: Ian Snelling

All were in favour

AOB

Charles Fraser-Macnamara made a presentation to Peter and Viv Dodson on their retirement from the Committee and thanked them both for all their tireless efforts for the club. Peter Dodson thanked everyone and said that although they were retiring from the Committee, they would still be very much part of the club.

Bernadette Bryan went through the draft event calendar for 2026 and said that the events were being finalised and that an Event Calander would be on the website in the next couple of weeks. She also asked that if anyone had any ideas for events/trips then to please let the Committee know and they will look into them.

Ian Snelling offered a vote of thanks from all the members to the Committee and thanked them for all the work they do on behalf of the club.

Meeting closed in harmony at 12.15pm