

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION  
Unit 16B Chiltern Court, Asheridge Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 2PX

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SEPTEMBER (AGM) 2025

Minutes of the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Inland Waterways Association, held at 11.30am on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at the Jubilee Conference Centre, Nottingham NG8 1DH, with some members also attending electronically via Zoom.

The meeting was preceded by presentations made by Charlie Norman to update members on recent current campaign activities, and by Hannah Rigley and Paul Thomas covering water supply issues on the Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canals.

### PRESENT

80 persons were recorded as present in the room and a further 23 electronically.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mike Wills called the meeting to order and thanked local members and staff for making the day's arrangements. He then welcomed those present to the meeting.

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING

No amendments were proposed, and the minutes of the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were agreed as a true record of that meeting.

### ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mike Wills introduced the Annual Report and Financial Statements and Colin Porter, chair of Finance Committee, briefed those present about the summary financial results for the year. There had been a surplus of £296k in the year, of which just under £48k was in respect of restricted funds. Colin Porter reminded members of the transfer of Essex Waterways Ltd to Essex Waterways Navigation Trust on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and the impact that this would have on the 2025 financial statements. The Association's balance sheet value at year end was £2.3m, of which £618k was General Funds that had not been designated for specific purposes. The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, which had previously been approved by trustees, were received by the meeting.

### APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Mike Wills explained that he and Dave Chapman had completed their terms of office, and that they were willing to be reappointed. Rick Barnes retired having completed his term of appointment and Christl Hughes was resigning for family health reasons. Two candidates were put forward for election: Mike Wills and Dave Chapman. Both candidates were duly reappointed as trustees, each for terms of three years. Thanks were recorded to retiring trustees.

### APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The meeting approved a resolution to reappoint Sayer Vincent LLP as auditors to the Association and to authorise trustees to determine the auditors' remuneration.

### NATIONAL CHAIR

Mike Wills addressed those present to summarise the challenges faced on the inland waterways in recent months following drought conditions, and the challenges facing the Association, especially with reduction in membership numbers. He explained steps that were

being taken to reinvigorate campaign work and spoke about the future challenges of funding for navigation authorities. He said that trustees would be developing a longer-term campaign strategy over the coming months.

#### TRUSTEES QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Members made several comments and asked questions on a variety of subjects including welcoming the enthusiasm of new members of staff, engaging with all political parties, revitalising branches that had faltered, using volunteers including WRG on navigable waterways for maintenance work, support for Fund Britain's Waterways, governance of the Association, succession planning including recruitment of younger trustees, legacy income, membership recruitment and subscriptions, relations with Canal & River Trust top management, ways of gaining income from volunteer activities, and the closures on the River Weaver that had prevented the Daniel Adamson from reaching Liverpool for use as a venue for a Labour Party conference function.

Members thought that the Association was moving in the right direction.

Mike Wills informed members that this concluded the meeting.

#### NATIONAL AWARDS

Following the conclusion of the formal meeting, national awards were presented:

**Richard Bird Medals:** Nigel Hardacre, Nick Parker, Andrew Phasey, Derek and Jeanne Smith, and Verna Smith

**Christopher Power Prize:** Helen Watson-Moriarty (Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership)

**Branch Achievement Award:** IWA Leicestershire Branch

**Cyril Styring Award:** Helen Whitehouse

**Sustainable Boating Awards:** Lynch Motors and Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust

The meeting was followed by presentations by Bowman Bradley on HVO, Martin Pilbin on grey water recycling, and by Mike Palmer on Waterway Recovery Group's recent activities.