

Berkswell & District History Group

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 25th February 2026 at the Village Hall, Station Rd, Balsall Common

Present: Marion Keeley (Chair), Peter Whalley, Dave Felthouse, Peggy Sargent, Helen Essex, Stephen Gill, Jackie Tomnie, Dawn Blundell, David Deanshaw, Angela Handfield, Louise Haydon, David Sargent, Glyn Price, Gordon Clarke, Barry Cousins

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Barbara Price, Ian Dury, Peter Blundell, Janet Veasey

2. **Minutes of Annual General Meeting 26th February 2025**

Were approved by the meeting nem con and signed by the Chair

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

4. **Chair's Report**

Marion Keeley distributed a written report to which she spoke. The report noted inter alia

- The decline in membership and efforts to publicise the work of the Group
- The excellent programme of speakers over the past year and the successful visit to St Mary's Guildhall in Coventry
- The work of the Trustees, to whom she offered her thanks
- The initial discussions being held re moving the archive of documents and other material to Warwick Record Office
- The full programme of speakers for 2026 and a planned visit to Coventry Charterhouse in October

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Dawn Blundell spoke to a summary of the accounts distributed at the meeting. The report noted a loss over the year of £27, which would have been greater except of the windfall sale of books and donations and the unfortunate cancellation of the Speaker at the November meeting.

The report was accepted nem con by the meeting and a copy signed by the Chair

6. **Membership Report**

Jackie Tomnie reported that last year's membership stood at 28. She referred to the need to find ways to increase the visibility of the Group to attract new members

7. Election of Trustees

Current Trustees (Marion Keeley, Jackie Tomnie, David Felthouse, Peter Whalley, Helen Essex, Peggy Sargent, Stephen Gill and Dawn Blundell) having all consented, were proposed for re-election by Glyn Price, seconded by Louise Haydon and duly re-elected nem con.

8. Fees and Programme for 2025

Helen made available a copy of the Programme for 2026 which has been widely publicised and is on the Group's website.

The Trustees proposed and the meeting accepted that membership fees would be held at £30 for a full year with an £8 fee for visitors.

9. Any Other Business

Glyn Price proposed a vote of thanks to the Trustees for their efforts to continue the work of the History Group, a sentiment echoed by the meeting.

The AGM was followed by a talk by Nigel Metcalfe: A Nostalgic Trip Down the High Street– A Look at the History of Some Familiar Shops and Brands

Stephen Gill

Secretary

27th February 2026

Approved at 2027 Annual General Meeting

(signed)

Chair

Date:

BERKSWELL AND DISTRICT HISTORY GROUP AGM 25.02.26 – CHAIR'S REPORT

2025 has proved a mixed year for our history group. Not surprisingly, the decision at last year's AGM to considerably increase our subscription fee has led to a marked decrease in membership. We also lost one of our long-standing members when Alan Douglas passed away, and a card of condolence was sent to his wife.

To try and attract new members, we advertise our meetings at both Balsall Common & Meriden Libraries, Balsall Common Village Hall, the Jubilee Centre, in Berkswell Village and at Temple Balsall, in the Balsall Common Village Residents' Association Newsletter and in the Meriden Mag. However, this has failed to have the desired effect.

On a brighter note, we have enjoyed a varied 2025 programme of speakers thanks to Helen Essex, followed by refreshment courtesy of Peggy Sargent. We have explored folk remedies, been mapping the Arctic, interpreted the symbolism of Victorian cemetery memorials, looked at Birmingham's contribution to the Industrial Revolution, and explored Warwickshire's contribution to the English Civil Wars (1642 – 51). In November, our planned speaker for our 'Christmas' meeting was unwell. Helen gave us an excellent impromptu demonstration + talk of the ancient art of spinning, dying and weaving, from raw sheep wool to the finished garment.

Helen also arranged a tour of Coventry Guildhall in October, with tea afterwards for those who wanted to stay. Using October proved a popular new venture, being away from the mayhem of the summer months. Early October will be used for this year's trip to Coventry's Charterhouse (National Trust).

I am grateful to all our Trustees for continued support this last year. In addition to Helen and Peggy, I also thank Stephen, Dawn, David, and Peter on your behalf.

Finally, the continued future of our history group is now precarious due to falling membership. To this end, your Trustees have had to start making contingency plans for the Archive, housed in Berkswell. We have had early discussions with the local history lead in Solihull, and with Warwickshire County Record Office. However, until the end of our group dawns, we will continue to enjoy our 2026 programme.

Marion Keeley, Chair

Berkswell & District History Group				
Income & Expenditure period ended 31st December 2025.				
	<u>31.12.25</u>	<u>31.12.25</u>	<u>31.12.24</u>	<u>31.12.24</u>
Income:				
Annual Subs	810		660	
Visitor Fees	130		110	
Donations	55		59	
Book Sales	114.25		20	
Outing Ticket Sales - Guildhall Coventry	412		0	
Interest Income	30.6	1551.85	38.87	887.87
Expenses:				
Speakers' Fees	335		428	
Room Hire	201		267	
Refreshments	41.16		40.99	
Insurance	90		90	
Computer - Domain name 10 yrs	220.79			
Computer expenses	214		214.15	
Subscriptions	12		12	
Outing - Guildhall Coventry	412			
Bank Charges	53.2		70.8	
		1579.15		1122.94
Net Profit/Loss		-27.3		-235.07
Berkswell & District History Group				
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2025.				
Assets				
Bank account - HSBC community	2309.13		2165.43	
computer cost prepayment 2025			214	
Prepayment - BALH 2026 insurance	90		90	
Gross Assets		2399.13	2469.43	
Liabilities & Equity				
Cemex Archive Room Fund	813		856	
Sundry Creditors:				
Accruals		0.5	0.5	
Total Liabilities		813.5	856.5	
Net Assets		1585.63	1612.93	
Equity b/f 1.1.2025	1612.93		1848	
Current year Profit(Loss)	-27.3		-235.07	
Equity c/f 31.12.2025		1585.63	1612.93	
The above accounts were approved by the Trustees on 25th February 2026 and signed on their behalf				
Mrs M Keeley - Chair of Trustees				