

Subterranea Britannica Annual General Meeting 2025 – Minutes

12 April 2025, Canada Water Theatre, London

The meeting was opened at 10.00 by the Chairman, Tim Wellburn, who welcomed everyone and was pleased to see such a good turnout - 76 members were present.

1. Apologies were received from:
Jonathan Maisey, Phil Thirkell, Tony Radstone, Dave Maguire, Phil Catling, Barrie Eden, Nigel Headley, Jim and Jo Nelhams, Stephen Guest
2. The Minutes of the AGM 2024 held on 13 April were published to all members in **Subterranea** #66, September 2024. It was proposed by Clive Penfold and seconded by Bob Clary that the Minutes were a true reflection of the meeting; the proposal was accepted unanimously by those attending.
3. Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024. This has been made available to all members on Sub Brit's web site. Tim highlighted a few of our achievements of 2024:
 - Our Financial reserves remain strong, although we have suffered a hit to running costs – see item 6.
 - Membership of 866 at 2024 year-end; 6% down from a year ago. Do please invite friends to join to keep our numbers up.
 - Healthy subscriptions to our social networking channels
 - 3 new issues of **Subterranea**
 - A substantial programme of underground or underground-related site visits
 - Spring Conference, AGM and 50th Birthday celebrations in April 2024
 - New grant funding to relevant bodies continues
 - Donations of part of Paul Sowan's book collection to historic bodies.
4. Accounts 2024: Sub Brit's Accounts have been signed off by the Committee and Independent Examiner and have been filed at Companies House and the Charity Commission. They are also on Sub Brit's website.
5. Elections of Officers and Committee. Tim introduced all the Committee members attending today. Rikki Holland is standing for the first time as Sub Brit's new Treasurer having been already co-opted to the Committee; Tony Radstone is stepping down from this role. Andy Dyason has resigned from the Committee since the last AGM.

The motion that nominations for Sub Brit's Committee be considered '*en-bloc*' was proposed by John Lill and seconded by Roger Gosling. The motion was carried unanimously.

The motion to elect the following Committee members was proposed by Nigel Wall and seconded by Sue Monsell. The motion was carried unanimously.

The elected Committee for 2025/6 is:-

Tim Wellburn	Chairman *
Neil Iosson	Vice-Chairman (Website content) *
Rikki Holland	Treasurer
Linda Dixon	Secretary *
Richard West	Membership Secretary *
James Buller	Member (Social Media)
Phil Catling	Member (SB Meetings)
Martin Dixon	Member *

Rhiannon Green	Member (Projects)
Dave Maguire	Member (Subterranea article coordination and Visits)
Tony Radstone	Member *

* = Director

6. Subscription Rates for 2025. Tim reminded people of the rationale, which had been distributed with the AGM papers. Sub Brit's aim is to cover our costs, not make a profit or loss. However, we are anticipating enormous new charges from Google for their mapping function – an integral part of our Site Directory. To avoid running an operating deficit we are proposing a £2 increase, making the annual membership £32, effective from 13 April this year.

Some questions were raised.

Q1: Have we taken into consideration the rise in Royal Mail costs?

A1: We use 'Mailsort' to send out the magazine, at a much reduced postage rate.

Q2: Can we reduce magazine costs by offering a pdf?

A2: Magazine costs are largely in the set-up, so reducing numbers would actually put the cost per magazine up. Pdfs are already provided for those who require them.

The meeting was asked to vote on the increase to £32; the vote was unanimous with no abstentions. The new rate will be effective 13th April 2025.

The Meeting officially closed at 10.25, but Tim made mention of two more specific items.

As mentioned last year, Paul Sowan's books were catalogued by Peter Burgess, and about half (c.500) were despatched to English Heritage and the Northern Mining Institute, as a public resource. Subsequently, Mike Moore made a large selection of the remainder available for sale to members through his online bookshop MooreBooks, raising funds for SB's work.

Tim repeated his thanks to Peter and Mike for all their efforts.

We have also long-deliberated the best way of creating some form of tangible memorial to Paul. The answer appeared in a grant request, from Nenthead Mines Conservation Society, for funding to help them establish a permanent storage facility for their mining archives, artefacts and mineral collection. They readily agreed that we could erect a plaque in memory of Paul in association with this.

And finally, Tim proposed a huge vote of thanks to Tony Radstone, who is handing over his long custodianship of our finances. The meeting gave Tony a rousing round of applause for a job well done.

The AGM was followed by the Spring Meeting.