

# Milford PROBUS Club

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting

on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026 at Godalming Freemason's Hall

### 1. Attendees

There were 20 attendees including 6 committee members.

### 2. Apologies:

Tim Lewis, Steve Stanley, Richard Carter, Brian Whitehead, Martin Foran, Maria Coles, Ian Macfarlane, Tim Gowing, Neville Carrington, Angela Ballard, Liz Cox, Robin Bellwood, Martin Pierce, Doug Smit, Colin Simmons, Liz Simmons, Chris Vollers, Stuart Miskimmin.

### 3. President's Address.

First of all, I would like to inform you that I am stepping down as President and handing over to Peter Parker who for the past year has been Lunch Secretary. Getting people prepared to serve on the committee is a problem for most Probus clubs these days including our friends in Godalming Probus so your club needs you if you can help. We always welcome any member who feels that they would be prepared to join the Committee even without a specific role in order to see what we do and maybe take on a role.

I would also like to thank you all for supporting us during the last year. Inflation has caused rising costs for the lunches and there has been a change of caterers partly to try and keep costs down. I'm afraid that we are having to raise the cost of a lunch to £34 from 1st April 2026. We have also lost a few old members as usual but I am glad to say that recruitment has been reasonably successful and we achieved a net gain to 45 members. At least 2 will join us as at 1st April 2026 when new subscriptions are due.

Please note, for those who have not already done so, that subs were due on 1st April. They are now £30 for an annual subscription.

We have had 10 normal lunches with generally a good standard of speaker. Plus, we had a Summer Outing to Loseley House which was most enjoyable, according to those who attended. My thanks to Colin Simmons for organising this and to Meg Allnutt for an excellent guided tour. Godalming Probus organised our joint Spring outing in May to Mottisfont Abbey and in the Autumn we organised a visit to Winchester which was not as well attended as we hoped, although we had an excellent guided tour of the Cathedral. Like last year we decided to hold our Christmas Lunch again at the Masonic Hall which was excellently organised by John Talbot in Peter Parker's absence so thank you very much and also thank you to Chris Vollers for organising an excellent quiz.

We need to give a big thank you to Peter Parker who is stepping down as Lunch Secretary. John Talbot will be taking on the role of Lunch Secretary and I will go back to the role of Committee Secretary as well as continuing as Membership Secretary which includes being the first point of contact for the Club. Colin Simmons, who was doing the role of Social Secretary, has decided to step down due to other commitments, and Steve Stanley will be handing over to Chris Vollers as Speaker Secretary. Neil Bamford continues to be doing a very good job in publicising the Club, both in Round-and-About and Vantage-Point as well as various other publications, and this has resulted in a certain amount of interest and new members.

As well as gaining some new members we have also lost several old members who have died. These include Martin Allnutt, Maurice McCracken and Richard Bush.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report on the Accounts for 2025 -2026**

1. The Income and Expenditure Account for 2025-26 and Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 have been distributed. Subscriptions were received from 47 members, amounting to £1,175. There were ten standard lunches, from which there was a surplus of £24. The catering cost per person increased from £28 to £29.50 in January, but the charge to members and guests remained at £32 throughout the year but has now gone up to £34.
2. The aim is for lunches and outings to break even while the subscriptions are used to cover speaker fees.
3. The visit to Loseley Park broke even, but there was a deficit of £151 on the joint outing with Godalming Probus to Winchester and a deficit of £28 on the Christmas lunch. Speakers' fees amounted to £678.
4. Other expenditure comprised a donation to Shooting Star Children's Hospices (£300), and website, stationery and equipment costs (£94). There was a deficit on the year of £33 and the year-end balance was £2,388.
5. The accounts have been independently examined.
6. Subscriptions for 2026-27, at £30, are now due and should be paid preferably by bank transfer to the Milford Probus Club account, sort code 60-09-04, account number 72924047. Thank you to the members who have already paid. The charge to members and guests for standard lunches went up to £34 from April 2026.

#### **5. Comments arising from the accounts**

Jon Warnke raised the issue as to whether we are sharing both profits and losses on outings with Godalming Probus. This has not been happening.

The break-even number for lunches is about 28 or 29 members and guests.

The special Summer Lunches such as the Vineyard visit and the visit to Loseley House have not been well supported. So it has been decided that this year we will have a normal lunch with speaker in July.

Note that as agreed last year, the subscription has been raised to £30.

#### **6. Membership Secretary's Report**

- Membership for 2025 - 26 was 47. The number of members has been offset by the usual resignations due to ill-health, moving away from Godalming, and sadly, death. These numbers are up from the time of the Pandemic but not up to the levels of before COVID.
- We had 3 members join us at the end of 2025 and 3 members joined us in April 2026 and there are more who have been given forms.
- Thanks to Neil Bamford's efforts in achieving good publicity for the club and for lunches in monthly publications such as Vantage Point, and Round-and-About, and also in the Compton News, we continue to attract new members through this route. We have also been forwarded some enquiries from Godalming Probus, from prospective lady members.

#### **7. Luncheon Secretary's Report**

Being Luncheon Secretary for the last year I have introduced round tables and new seat numbers and we also now have the use of a microphone.

I would like to thank John Talbot for printing new badges and table letters.

I would also like to thank Chris Rogers for doing more than his fair share of stewarding on the front door.

Altogether I have organized 10 lunches with an average attendance of 30 members and guests.

We usually have less for the AGM.

To break even on costs. we need to average 32 people. (see earlier comment by the treasurer)

Finally can members please spread the awareness of The Milford Probus Lunch Club and try to bring friends along as guests to future meetings?

Thank you.

## 8. Motions

Participants' votes were taken at the meeting on the following five motions. The Committee proposed:

1. The minutes (circulated to all members) of last year's AGM be accepted.
2. The Treasurer's report and accounts for 2025/2026 (circulated to all members) be accepted.
3. The annual membership subscription should be increased to £30.
4. Milford Probus Club make a charitable donation of £300 to the President's chosen charity: : Cut Out Cancer.
5. The Committee for the Milford Probus Club for 2026 – 2027 should be as follows:

President	Peter Parker
Treasurer	Christopher Rogers
Committee Secretary	Miranda O'Brien
Lunch Secretary	John Talbot
Membership Secretary	Miranda O'Brien
Speaker Secretary	Chris Vollers
Media & PR	Neil Bamford
Website Manager	Nicholas O'Brien

All have agreed to serve in the above capacities and are nominated by the existing Committee.

Sue Dailly has agreed to come on the committee, initially as a member without portfolio although we do have a vacancy for an Outings Organiser. Miranda welcomed having another lady member to join her on the committee.

All motions were voted for by the meeting with no dissenting voices.

## 9. Members' Issues

Members are asked to note the following activities and are invited to comment on them.

- a) **Feedback on the Joint Spring Outing, organised by Godalming Probus, to Weald & Downland Museum on Thursday 14th May 2026. If it takes place.**

This outing was cancelled. Only one member from Milford Probus had asked to come along.

- b) **Speaker Programme for the rest of 2026.**

The speaker programme for 2026 is available on the website but not everybody looks at the website. Eileen Kirton in particular said that she finds it difficult due to not having a

smartphone. A copy is attached to these minutes but no comments were raised from those that had looked.

**c) Should we have an Autumn Joint Outing? If so any suggestions?**

Colin Simmons was trying to raise this question via an on-line questionnaire but this was not achieved due to discussions about what else to ask. There remains considerable doubt based on poor attendance on past outings as to whether there is still sufficient interest in such Outings to justify a coach and still break even, Jon Warnke pointed out that earlier, pre-Covid, both clubs had 60 to 70 members plus spouses so we have even needed two coaches.

No suggestions were made.

**d) Christmas lunch Friday 11th December. To be held at the Masonic Hall?**

Neville Carrington had sent in the comment by e-mail:

“I would not be enthusiastic about attending the Christmas Lunch at the Masonic Hall. Rather than having a fairly amateurish meal, I would prefer to pay a little more to go to better surroundings such as Frensham Ponds or Bramley Golf Club.”

Unfortunately venues for Christmas Lunches get booked up very early so it is probably now too late to contemplate a further change so the Masonic Hall has been booked for this year.

Most members seem to be reasonably happy with the Masonic Hall but the Lunch Secretary may look into alternatives for Christmas 2027.

## **10. Other Responsibilities**

The following members have special responsibilities without being members of the Committee. They deserve our warm thanks.

Stewart Miskimmin - Independent Examiner

Chris asked the meeting to reappoint Stewart for another year. He is happy to continue and it was agreed.

Martin Farr – Walks Organiser

An enthusiastic group enjoys regular walks in delightful countryside ending with a fine pub lunch. There is a healthy interest in both the A (up to about 7 miles) and B walks (up to about 5 miles). Martin normally offers a choice of dates for each and will pick the most popular.

It was commented that the walks always end up in a jolly good pub for lunch.

## **11. Other Questions**

Jon Warnke asked about what had happened to the large portable public address system that we used to have?. Nick believes that it may well be in the garage of the previous equipment organiser who was Alan Day. As demonstrated by one of the recent speakers, modern equipment is much more compact but just as effective so this old equipment can be junked and written off. The Treasurer pointed out that this equipment was not shown as an asset and so does not need to be written off.

There was a question about speakers. It was felt that getting good speakers was essential and it was asked how this was done. Neil Bamford had recently stood in for the Speaker Secretary at the Surrey Probus Speaker's Forum where all the local Probus Clubs reported on the speakers they had used over the previous year and the speakers and topics were all rated. The

spreadsheet provided as an output from this forum is an invaluable tool for Speaker Secretaries.

It was mentioned that if a local member spoke at a lunch they usually waived a speaker's fee but often money was given to a chosen charity instead. A case in point was that the equivalent fee for Jeremy Hunt's talk was given to Sarcoma UK.

The meeting voted a special thanks to Miranda for being the first Lady President and for doing two years in the post.

## 12. Incoming President's Address

Thank you Miranda for your leadership over the past year, you have kept our club vibrant, connected and smoothly run, leaving behind big shoes to fill.

Let's give Miranda another warm round of applause.

When I first joined Probus 4 years ago I looked forward to the great fellowship, the fascinating guest speakers, and the wonderful outings. I never quite imagined that I would be standing here today wearing a chain of office.

It is a true privilege and an honour to accept the presidency of Milford Probus club.

As we look ahead, my goal is simple, to build on the fantastic foundation we already have. It is a place where retirement doesn't mean slowing down, but rather redirecting our curiosity. Sharing our collective wisdom and enjoying great company.

This year we will continue to focus on bringing in high quality speakers, organising engaging trips, and most importantly, ensuring that every meeting is an opportunity to catch up with old friends and welcome new ones.

Of course, a club like ours doesn't run itself. I want to extend a massive thank you in advance to our incoming management committee. Your dedication behind the scenes, planning and hard work are what makes our monthly luncheons and activities possible. I'm incredibly grateful to be working alongside you.

I look forward to a wonderful 12 months filled with friendship, fun, and fellowship.

Here's to a fantastic year ahead.

## 13. Conclusion

The meeting finished at 2.55pm.



Milford Probus-  
final accounts.xlsx



Milford Probus-  
Treasurer's report 20:



Programme for  
2026.docx