

President's address for May 2026

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. 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 Talbott 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 and Richard Bush.