

DHO Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 23 November 2025 (AGM held virtually by Zoom) @ 11.00hrs

Present:

**Sarah Hoyle President,
Tessa Lawrance Vice President
Marguerite Nice Treasurer
Jolanda Groenhuijzen Board Member
Will Myles Board Member
Geoffrey Gay, Board Member**

Committee Members:-

**Charles Hainsworth Member
Brian Bollen Editor,
David Orf
Rachel Eastwood
Robert Baguley
Christine Robinson**

Members:-

**Ingrid Christophersen, Linnet Waghorn, Andrew Robinson, Trevor Campbell Davis,
Richard Lawrance, Olivia Gordon, Emma Wilson, Deborah Flindall, Paul Flindall, Diane
Paterson, Michael Woodhall, Bob Eastwood, Robert Baguley, Nigel Ley, Mike Oliver,
Victoria Marshall, Wim Dartee,**

Susie Davies (Secretary recording of minutes),

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The President opened the meeting at 11:02, thanked members for attending—particularly on a Saturday morning—and outlined the agenda. She hoped the meeting would be efficient and brief.

1: Apologies had been received from: Edward Perrott, Max & Eden Davis, Michael & Heather Cockerton, Roger Kerry, Peter Job, Alastair Pink, John Quinn. Liz Moore, Stephen Davies, Diana Mathias, Janice Trausch Elan, Mike Oldham. Additional apologies noted from: Harry, Peter and Rosie Lawrence; Leo Flindall, Mary Baguley, Huw and Jenny Alban Davies

2. Approval of Minutes AGM held on 23 November,2024 No questions or queries were raised.

Outcome: Minutes approved unanimously as a true record.

3. President's Report:

"Good morning, and thank you for giving your time to attend this DHO AGM. They say that all good things come to an end. Undoubtedly this last 12 to 15 months have been extremely busy, and the Club has enjoyed a number of successful celebrations to mark its 100th birthday.

Thank you to all who have played a part in ensuring it was an amazing year. We will be lowering the curtain on the celebrations with a dinner at the Royal Thames Yacht Club on Friday 28th November. There is still space for late bookings. Contact me directly if you'd like to join in.

In the meantime, it would be fair to say that there has already been an unusually high level of communication on the events held and the 2025 edition of the Journal is full of stories marking our 100th.

I do not propose to repeat what can be read in the Journal, and in the various newsletters sent out during the year. It is important that we now look to the forthcoming season and to the future beyond.

We cannot predict what the future holds for us. Those who are in Wengen in the summer months will have seen the thousands of visitors on the trains and in the village. There is a general consensus that non-winter matters are assuming a greater importance in the future of traditional skiing villages and Wengen will not be exempt from that trend.

I have recently been asked to clarify the position regarding the Board's decision to continue with the system of having winter leaders rather than a full time Wengen Manager. Unfortunately, as with a number of issues, this is entirely part of the fallout from Brexit and the Schengen regulations. To be honest, we have pursued a pretty exhaustive series of investigations to see if we can find a way round the restrictions. Sadly, this is impossible as things stand. I would like to reiterate, and confirm, that taking the decision to change the arrangements for the winter season was NOT for financial reasons.

The Board has therefore concentrated on putting in place measures to strengthen and enhance what is offered to members. That is, two ski leaders per week throughout the winter, co-ordinated by Tessa, our Vice President. Whilst I share the disappointment being expressed by some members, the Board believes that we now have arrangements in place which provide a good service. We have listened to comments received, some of which have been unusually positive.

For the forthcoming season, Tessa has in place two leaders throughout the season and with the help of Christine (our membership secretary) she will again provide each leader with written guidelines on the role and key responsibilities. In addition, she will meet with them all via Zoom at the beginning of December.

Coggins and Eagles will this season be organised and run by Andrew Davies, supported by his wife Hayley. Please can I ask that if you have children wanting to join either group that you contact Andrew now rather than leaving it to the day you arrive. You may not be lucky if you just turn up on the day!

Moving to ski racing. Liz Moore will once again organise both the 25/26 DHO/ Kandahar race and the teams for the AICC races. The 25/26 race, hosted by the Kandahar, will be held on the Lauberhorn piste on Sunday 28 December as the Kandahar are unable to obtain a suitable piste in Murren for the race to be run.

The AICC races will be hosted by Arlberg Ski Club in `lech, Austria. Although they are organising a weeks' activities, the races themselves will be held on 19th and 20th March 2026. Liz would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in taking part in either of the events. I know she is looking for ladies over 60 years to compete in the over 60s category.

Andrew has 45 members signed up for the Inferno which will be held on 24th January. If the Inferno is on your bucket list to compete in please contact Andrew who will provide you with information for the 2027 race. McMillan week will be from 2nd to 7th February, and a dinner following prize giving on Thursday 5th, the day of the race, will be arranged. Weekly fun races will continue throughout the season. Sign up is in the Clubroom.

Today we elect new members to the Committee, about which more will be said shortly. The Club relies entirely on the goodwill of many volunteers. I am particularly grateful to them all, as without the help and support that they give, the DHO would not be the Club it is today.

One thing that is crystal clear is that we need an Honorary Secretary to take care of a number of unsung but important behind the scenes administration issues. If anyone here today is interested or knows of someone who would consider taking on the role, please contact me. Doing one job is difficult enough but two leaves me hairless at times.

Thanks to the celebrations of the 100th birthday, the DHO has been extremely well supported by the local people. We received some lovely gifts, for which we are warmly grateful.

Integration of the Club into the village is of utmost importance and the Board and I will continue to explore further opportunities for this to occur.

There have been a number of changes in hotel ownership, and I am advised that hopefully the Palace Hotel, where the DHO began its life on 7th February 1925, will once again turn on its lights run 2027. Sadly, it was not open to help us celebrate 100 years, but `I have already put down a marker in the hope we can hold a function there once it reopens.

I have over the last 12 months contacted and met both Swiss and UK Ambassadors to emphasise our links with Switzerland and the very positive relationship that has already developed. As a consequence, the Board agreed that we should offer Ex Officio membership of the Club to both Ambassadors and both have accepted.

I close by firstly thanking the Board and Committee members for their continuing hard work and support. Secondly, for the friendship and enthusiasm you all bring to the club. I hope that snow falls and once again we will all enjoy time in the mountains and especially in and around our beloved village of Wengen. Thank you."

4. Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 30 June 2025

Presented by Marguerite Nice, Honorary Treasurer

Financial Highlights:

- Subscriptions: £62,000 (slightly down from £64,000).
- Centenary events: all broke even or made modest profits.
- Auction raised c. £4,500.
- Regatta, Inferno, and Schoolboys events generally cost-neutral (with some accounting adjustments planned).
- Year-end surplus: £19,000 added to club funds.
- Bank balance appears high due to timing of a late invoice from Jungfrau for c. £39,000 (now paid).
- Outstanding Swiss mortgage: CHF 80,000; club exploring repayment or refinancing options.

Questions Raised

- Query regarding refinancing discussed; current r mortgage interest rate is c. 1.96%.
- Clarification given regarding cash balance vs. creditors.

Outcome: Accounts approved unanimously.

The President thanked Marguerite and Robert for their work managing the club's finances

5. Reappointment of Independent Accountants

Proposal to reappoint Moss Williamson as independent accountants.

Marguerite confirmed:

- They are willing to continue.
- Fees remain reasonable.
- They were helpful during recent issues with Barclays.

Outcome: Reappointment approved unanimously.

6. Proposed Changes to Articles of Association

The President explained the need to update the Articles of Association, which came about following a review of our current Board and Committee structures to ensure that both can deliver the future strategy for the Club.

The main changes are given in the supporting paper circulated with the AGM papers.

There are proposed changes to manage the retirement of Edward Perrott as Company Secretary, and it is our view that we should keep the position vacant until such a time that a suitable candidate comes forward. How we will cover the vacancy is referred to in the paper.

With the main Committee, it is proposed to increase its membership to ensure that we can address the findings of the membership survey. The positions are clearly listed and if there are members interested in these positions please do let me know.

Finally, we have considered the Tenure of Board and Committee members for the reasons given. She confirmed that all extensions of tenure will be subject to approval by the Board and or Committee. This will be clearly reflected in the Articles.

No questions raised, so the President asked members to approve the proposed changes

Voting: Conducted via poll.

Outcome: 25 votes for, 2 abstentions, none against (plus 12 proxy votes in favour).

Resolution passed.

7 - 15. Retirements and Thanks:-

The President expressed her sincere thanks to all the longstanding Board and Committee members stepping down, and invited the meeting to note their departure from office :-

- Susie Davies – long service including as Secretary, Clubroom Chair, Vice President and Board member; key role in organising gala dinners; recording minutes today.
- Catherine Melia - former Club Secretary.
- Sarah Hirst Malin – former Membership Secretary.
- Edward Perrott – Company Secretary.
- David Orf – Website manager for a number of years, significant support for centenary events and Schoolboys races.
- Mike Fox – Marketing & Communications (eligible for re-election).
- Richard Holt – Committee member.
- Will Myles – moving from committee role to nomination for Board membership

Election of Officers and Committee Members

16. Reappointment of Vice President - Tessa Lawrance

Outcome: Approved via poll –

26 for, 1 abstention (plus 12 proxies in favour).

Resolution passed.

17. Election of Vice President – Ingrid Christophersen. Ingrid briefly addressed the meeting (technical challenges noted).

Votes: • 21 for, 1 against, 1 abstention (plus 11 proxies in favour, 1 abstention).

Outcome: Resolution passed; Ingrid elected Vice President.

18. Election to Board of Will Myles

Votes: 26 for, 0 against, 1 abstention (plus 11 proxies in favour, 1 abstention)

Outcome: Resolution passed

19. Election of Membership Secretary Christine Robinson

Votes: Total including proxies 35 for, 0 abstentions, 0 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

20. Election of Wengen Treasurer Robert Baguley

Votes: Total including proxies 38 for, 0 abstentions, 0 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

21. Election of Mike Fox as Lead for Social Media

Votes: Total including proxies 30 for, 6 abstentions, 3 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

22. Election of Stephen Davies as Committee Member

Votes: Total including proxies 36 for, 0 abstentions, 2 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

23. Election of Committee Member Andrew Robinson

Votes: Total including proxies 33 for, 0 abstentions, 3 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

24. Election of Committee Member Simon Phillips

Votes: Total including proxies 31 for, 4 abstentions, 3 against

Outcome: Resolution passed

25. Election of Committee Member Charles Hainsworth

Votes: Total including proxies 38 for, 0 abstentions 0 against.

Outcome: Resolution passed

26. To transact any other business which may be properly transacted at an Annual General Meeting, and for which notice has been deposited with the secretary four weeks before the meeting. (A notice of a special resolution needs to be signed by not less than one twentieth of all members)

The President reported that no items had been received.

Any Other Business The President invited comments –

- Members praised the quality and breadth of the centenary edition, noting that it was one of the most substantial issues produced in recent years.
- Thanks were expressed to all contributors, particularly those who coordinated event reports and historical material from the centenary year.
- Several members emphasised the importance of maintaining a high standard of content and ensuring timely submission of articles.
- A question was raised about the distribution timeline for next year's edition, given that many members abroad did again (second year in a row) not receive their hard copy of the Journal. Brian Bollen confirmed that the editorial team is working to get this sorted for next year. A plan will be discussed at the next Board meeting. In the meantime, members can access a copy on the DHO website. Also, hard copies will be transported to Wengen in December and copies will be available from the clubroom.
- Members were encouraged to submit photographs, race reports, and recollections from the season to support a rich edition for 2025/2026.
- Appreciation was expressed to the editorial and production team for their voluntary effort throughout the centenary year.

Close of Meeting: After brief further exchanges the President thanked all participants, and closed the meeting at 12.09pm