

THE LIVERPOOL MARITIME SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AT THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, LIVERPOOL
ON THURSDAY 21 MAY 2026 AT 2.30 PM

AGENDA

MEETING ADMINISTRATION: *Secretary*

ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND APOLOGIES: *Chair*

ITEM 2 - ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2025 AGM: *Secretary*

ITEM 3 - CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT: *Chair*

ITEM 4 - FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF 2025-2026 ACCOUNTS: *Treasurer*

ITEM 5 - TALKS PROGRAMME FOR 2026-2027: *Programme Secretary*

ITEM 6 - AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION: *Secretary*

ITEM 7 - ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: *Secretary*

ITEM 8 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS: *Secretary*

ITEM 9 - DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: *Secretary*

Attachments:

- A. Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting (*Less Attachments*).
- B. Chair's Report 2025-2026.
- C. Accounts for the Full Year 2025-2026.
- D. Talks Programme for 2026-2027.
- E. Proposed Amendment to the Society's Constitution.
- F. Council of the Society.

LIVERPOOL MARITIME SOCIETY
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT THE ATHENAEUM, LIVERPOOL
ON 15 MAY 2025

22 May 25

Present: The Chair of the Society and 26 Members.

ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Pam Brown, Ian Duckett, John Glover, Elfyn Hughes, Diana Lane, David Nicholson, Mervyn Rowlinson, and John Stokoe (Vice-President). A quorum of members being present, the meeting was duly constituted and called to order.

ITEM 2 – ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2024 AGM

2. The 2024 Annual General Meeting had been held on 16 May 2024. The minutes of the meeting had been available in the members' area of the website from 1 September 2024 and the principal supporting documents had been published in the September 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*. All the statutory motions had been carried without dissent and there were no matters arising. The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Proposer: Chair. *Seconder:* Secretary. **Accepted:** *Nem Con.*

ITEM 3 – ANNUAL REPORT

3. The Chair presented her Annual Report, which is attached. Overall, the outlook for the Society remained positive. The administrative difficulties of a year ago had been resolved for the time being, and the Council was now at full strength. There was still concern, however, about the lack of resilience in executive roles with none of the current incumbents having a nominated deputy or informal 'shadow'. The Council would address this issue directly with the wider membership in the very near future. The Council's primary focus was now on increasing membership and making the Society better known and more appealing to a younger, more diverse audience, and among the initiatives being pursued, we were investigating the potential benefits of achieving charitable status.

4. Total membership at 189 was slightly higher than last year, but account needed to be taken of 13 members who were thought unlikely to renew their subscriptions, and a further 12 members in non-paying categories, leaving a total of 164 subscribing members. Despite inflationary pressures, subscription rates had remained static since 2020, but a recent review of expenditure had shown that an increase was now essential and a proposal for a £5 increase across all paid membership categories would be put to the meeting. To improve the service to members, it was hoped that as many as possible would agree to pay their subscriptions by debit or credit card through the website and guidance on this would be issued during the year. Because of the particular difficulties and expense of handling cheque

and cash payments, it was intended to phase out these means of payment as soon as practicable.

5. The Chair thanked current and new members of Council for their work through the year. She expressed particular thanks to Mervyn Rowlinson, David White and Ian Duckett for maintaining the high standard of *The Bulletin*. Mervyn had edited *The Bulletin* for almost 18 months but had recently indicated that he would need to stand down during the forthcoming year. Anyone with an interest in taking up the role was invited to get in touch with any member of the Council.

ITEM 4 – FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF 2024-2025 ACCOUNTS

6. Mr Melling (on behalf of the Treasurer) presented the independently examined 2024-2025 accounts, which are attached. Notwithstanding a slightly increased subscription income of £3159 (from £2920), there had been an overall deficit of expenditure over income of £606. This was largely due to the second instalment (£1635) of the website development fee being paid during the year. The net result was a reduced end-of-year balance of £7600 (from £8206 last year). In response to a question from the floor, there was a short discussion about the amount of interest earned by the Society.

Decision: The Treasurer would investigate if any improvement could be made to the amount earned by the Society in interest.

7. Additionally, The Athenaeum had informed the Society that the 2025/26 room hire rate was to increase from £1180 to £1800. This was judged unsustainable and the Council decided to pursue other options. Following an extensive review of potential venues, it was decided that the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, which offered room hire at £675, would be the best choice on the basis of facilities, convenience for members, and value for money, and this would become the regular Talks venue from September 2025.

8. Despite the reversion to 'steady state' IT costs, and mitigation of any immediate increase in room hire charges through the change of venue, the forecast income and expenditure for next year remained finally balanced. A financial review carried out by the Treasurer and Mr Melling, supported by other officers, had recommended a £5 increase in subscription rates from April 2026.

9. The Society's financial position was assessed as stable overall. The proposed increase in subscriptions together with other savings identified were expected to reverse the deficits of the last two years, but it was only through a sustained increase in membership that the continued viability of the Society could be guaranteed. The 2024-2025 accounts were approved.

Proposer: Chair. *Seconder:* Secretary. **Approved:** *Nem Con.*

ITEM 5 – SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2026-2027

10. It was proposed to increase the annual subscription rates for all membership categories by £5 from 1 April 2026.

Proposer: Chair. *Seconder:* Secretary. **Approved:** *Nem Con.*

ITEM 6 – TALKS PROGRAMME FOR 2025-2026

11. Nine Talks had been confirmed for the 2025-26 season although two of the titles were still to be announced. Mr Foale reminded members that, starting in September, all future Talks would take place in the Crosby Suite of the Adelphi Hotel, Ranelagh Street, Liverpool, L3 5UL, at the new earlier time of 11.30am (doors open at 11.00am).

ITEM 7 – ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

12. Having been elected to the position of Vice-Chair of Council in 2022 and 2024 respectively, Ms A V Toner reverted to the position of Vice-Chair of Council until May 2026, and Mr W A Ogle assumed the position of Chair of Council until May 2027.

13. Mr Ian Duckett, Mr Peter Foale, Mr Colin Jones, Mr Richard Martin, Mr Tony Melling, Mr David Nicholson, Dr Mervyn Rowlinson, and Mr Ted Scaplehorn were elected/re-elected to the Council.

Proposer: Commander Cedric Loughran. *Seconder:* Captain Peter Woods.
Agreed: *Nem Con.*

ITEM 8 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14. There was no other business.

ITEM 12 – DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

15. The next Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool Maritime Society will be held in May 2026 at a time and venue to be notified.



E J SCAPLEHORN
Secretary

Attachments:

- A. Chair's Annual Report 2024-2025.
- B. Accounts for the Full Year 2024-2025.
- C. Subscription Rates from April 2026.

Liverpool Maritime Society - Chair's Annual Report – 2025/26

Already it is time to reflect and report on another year for the Society. Probably the most significant change, and issue, has been our relocation from the Athenaeum to the Adelphi hotel. The choice seemed ideal so far as location and proximity to trains and buses, and the cavernous Crosby Suite appeared welcoming and comfortable. However, it was soon apparent that access was difficult because of the number of stairs and unreliable lift. On top of this we learned that any social gathering before or after the talk was unlikely because no service is available in the central lounge! Next came news of a significant price increase because provision of the large tv screen was no longer included in the room charge. A further relocation is clearly necessary.

We were delighted when Professor Nick White of Liverpool John Moores University accepted the invitation to become President of the Society. Nick is Professor of Imperial and Commonwealth History and Co-director of the Centre for Port and Maritime History, a Trustee of the British Commission for Maritime History, and Life Vice-President of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

I am sorry to report the deaths of four members; Jim Butterworth, Eddie Hoyle, Danny Marks, and Don Watt. They are all sorely missed.

Peter Foale our indomitable Programme Secretary had created a fascinating schedule of talks, and the first in September was well attended and well received. Sadly, the number attending the following meetings in October, November and December were disturbingly reduced despite prestigious speakers and attractive subjects. It became clear that the earlier start time was an issue for some members and so with effect from January we reverted to our normal arrangement of doors open at 1200 for a start at 1230, which gave an improvement.

As with so many clubs such as this, membership numbers are difficult to maintain. However, during this last year, we gained 28 new members and lost 21 for a variety of reasons. Our current membership stands at 196, an increase of seven on last year. This has obviously helped the financial picture, additionally a proportion of new members take the Bulletin in digital format which obviously reduced printing and postage costs. As already mentioned, a key issue is the low attendance at the monthly talks, and we have undertaken an in-depth analysis of non-attendees who live in or close to Liverpool. We will be making polite contact during the summer recess aiming for a positive result from September.

We believe that the improved level of recruitment is due to a combination of the new website, which is now maintained by Colin Jones who is proving most successful in regularly providing new copy for the home page. Colin is especially keen to hear about items (news, events etc) that will interest our members (webmaster@liverpoolmaritimesociety.org will reach him). The website also incorporates, for members, video recordings of our talks. Members no longer need to live 'local to Merseyside' to receive full benefits. We have also advertised for members in the journal *Shipping Today and Yesterday*, exhibited at the Wirral History Fair and introduced a Facebook page.

Arising from the work on developing new strategies, which has occupied council members to a considerable extent this year we are reaching out to fresh institutions to attract not only members but also contributors as speakers and sourcing copy for the Bulletin. In both areas we are seeking to embrace past, present and future. We have identified two critical functions:

1) The talks, and their ability to attract attendances. This is a function of content, location and time. A significant change is planned effective May 2026 when we will relocate, again, to The Friends Meeting House in School Lane (L1 3BT) and the timing will change to Doors Open at 2.00pm for a 2.30pm start. As catering facilities are readily available on site, we will NOT be holding any more separate coffee mornings. That opportunity will exist on site, both before and after the talk, without any special arrangement.

2) The Bulletin. There is little evidence that this can attract new members, but its continued production is a key to maintaining renewals. Sadly, Dr Mervyn Rowlinson has been obliged to stand down as Editor due to poor health. Fortunately, he does plan to continue research and production of copy for the Bulletin. We wish Mervyn well with gratitude for his contribution. I have resumed the role, hopefully on a short-term basis. The need to appoint an editor is now even greater; we hope that someone can step forward to initially assist as full help and support can be guaranteed. It has become clear that two separate roles exist here. Firstly, the production of suitable copy; this is largely undertaken by speakers and members. To provide a possible third source we are actively contacting students on maritime related courses whose cv would benefit be having been published. Secondly is that of the Editor, whose main task is the assembly of a Bulletin leading to production and mailing.

The Merseyside Maritime Museum remains closed but, by appointment, researchers can still access the archives at North Street and, as ever, we are grateful for the ongoing help and support given by Sarah Starkey and her staff.

The society would not function without the two key roles of Secretary and Treasurer, and we all owe a debt of gratitude to Ted Scaplehorn and David Nicholson who do so much work behind the scenes.

Our Vice-Chair, Ann Toner, now completes her tenure and I must thank her most sincerely for her calming presence during a period of considerable change and where difficult issues have been addressed.

I should also like to record a debt of gratitude to Tony Melling, who is standing down today after 12 years of continuous service on the Council, including lengthy terms as Secretary and Treasurer. I'm sure we would all like to thank him for his very active and valuable contribution to the Society, and hope we will continue to welcome him as a member for many years to come.

We will be moving on to elect council members for the next society year when new challenges will be presented, but this has been a regular pattern since 1938. Shortly we are anticipating our 90th and then Centenary Years and it is our intention to reach these dates in a strong and healthy condition.

Finally, I offer my sincere thank you to all of those members and Council colleagues who have given such valuable advice, help and support during this time. And of course, the wider membership who continue to demonstrate their loyalty and commitment to supporting the Society's future.

Bill Ogle, Chair, Liverpool Maritime Society

Liverpool Maritime Society

Accounts for the full year 2025/2026 held at Santander Bank.

Full year 1st. April 2025 to 31st. March 2026

Opening Bank Balance at 1st April 2025: Current A/c: £1,355 Deposit A/c £6,270 TOTAL: £76 £7,625

<u>Income</u>	2024/25	2025/26
Subscriptions	3159	3121
Donations	80	155
Refreshments	69	0
Book Sales	0	0
Merchandise Sales	0	0
Deposit Interest	65	64
TOTAL	3373	3340

<u>Expenditure</u>		
Bulletin Printing	528	678
Promotions	0	760
Distribution/Stationery	7	0
Room Hire	1180	1165
Speaker Expenses	26	224
Refreshments	123	0
IT Costs	1635	492
Hon. Treas. Expenses	0	0
Hon. Sec. Expenses	0	0
Donations/Gifts	0	0
Bulletin Postage	480	611
Other Postage	0	0
Pastoral	0	0
Bank Charges	0	25
TOTAL	3979	3955

Surplus/Deficit during year -606 -609

Opening cash b/c/e 1st. April 2024 8206

Closing Cash balance 31st. March ch 2025 7625

Closing Bank balances 31st March 2026: Current A/c £ £676 Deposit A/c £6,334 TOTAL: £7,010

Nominated Assessor: Mr C Loughran

Honorary Treasurer: Mr D Nicholson

Liverpool Maritime Society, Talks Programme– 2026/2027

2026

- 17 Sep 'Jules Verne and Birkenhead' by John Lamb
How the CSS **Alabama** became the Birkenhead Nautilus in Jules Verne's '20,000 Leagues under the Sea'
- 15 Oct 'History of the Royal Albert Dock' by Anthony Clarke
Hartley's classic masterpiece from 1846 descended into dereliction before becoming the most visited tourist destination outside of London.
- 17 Nov 'The Dockers' Umbrella' by Keith Hick
Opened in 1893 it was the world's first electric elevated railway
- 18 Dec 'Fflat Huw Puw' by Elfyn Hughes
A one-hundred-year-old Welsh children's song and the Mersey connection"

2027

- 21 Jan 'The Dock Strike of 1966' by Philip Parker
Looking back after sixty years.
- 18 Feb Cammell Laird by John Drummond
The new Mersey ferry
- 18 Mar The Forgotten Empress by Bruce Duncan
Near misses, maritime risk and the **Empress of Ireland** disaster
- 15 Apr The History of the Merchant Navy by Andrew Linington
- 20 May AGM plus 'Ships, cars and planes' by Ron Neish
The Part Journey of a Loftsmen

LIVERPOOL MARITIME SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

Proposal

To amend the procedure for electing the Society's Chair and Vice-Chair.

Rationale

Unlike ordinary members of Council who are elected annually, the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair follow a four-year cycle, by which a member is elected to serve a year as Vice-Chair, followed automatically by two years as Chair and a further year as Vice-Chair. The only election, therefore, is that of Vice-Chair on a biennial basis. While this arrangement is intended to promote stability and continuity, it has proved inflexible in circumstances where an incumbent is unable to continue in office for the intended period.

Remedy

To elect all Council members including the Chair and Vice-Chair for a period of one year, with the option to stand for re-election if desired. This change has democratic, as well as practical, advantages, since it will continually refresh the Chair's mandate, and any contest for Chair/Vice-Chair will be settled by ballot at the AGM. The amendment also addresses the situation where the Chair or Vice-Chair is unable to complete a full year in office.

Proposed Amendment

Sections 6(6) and 6(7) of the Constitution to be amended as follows:

(6) Members annually will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and up to eight additional members of Council. The Chair, Vice-Chair and other Council members will automatically retire at the next AGM, but may then stand for re-election.

(7) If for any reason the Chair is unable to continue in office, the Vice-Chair will assume the position of Acting Chair for the remainder of the term. If the Vice-Chair is unable to accede to the Chair or is otherwise unable to continue in office, the remaining Council members may elect a Chair and/or Vice-Chair *pro tem* until the next Annual or Special General Meeting.

THE LIVERPOOL MARITIME SOCIETY

COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY

ELECTION OF CHAIR OF COUNCIL¹

The following member of the Liverpool Maritime Society offers themselves for election to the position of Chair of Council in accordance with Section 6 Para 6 of the Society's Constitution:

Mr W A Ogle

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL

The following member of the Liverpool Maritime Society offers themselves for election to the position of Vice-Chair of Council in accordance with Section 6 Para 6 of the Society's Constitution:

Mr I A Duckett

ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

There are no nominations for Council in accordance with Section 6 Para 5 of the Society's Constitution.

The following members of the Liverpool Maritime Society offer themselves for election/re-election to the Council in accordance with Section 6 Para 6 of the Society's Constitution:

Mr P Foale	(Re-Election)
Mr C Jones	(Re-Election)
Mr R Martin	(Re-Election)
Mr D A Nicholson	(Re-Election)
Dr M P Rowlinson	(Re-Election)
Mr E J Scaplehorn	(Re-election)
Ms A V Toner	(Election)

¹ If the constitutional amendment proposed under Item 6 has not been accepted, then election of the Chair is not required, and elections of the Vice-Chair and Council Members will proceed in accordance with the extant Section 6 Paras 6 and 7.