

Minutes of Directors Board Meeting

Date of Meeting: 13th November 2025

Time of Meeting: 2pm

Place of Meeting: Tea Room, Combe Mill

Purpose of Meeting: Additional Board meeting of Combe Mill Society

Distribution: Directors, Noticeboard, Website Members' page

Present: Tony Simmons, Peter Trowles, Margaret Gruber, Nigel Evans, Rose Ralphs, Richard Stone, Lorna Gale (minutes)

1 Apologies: Bob Wheeler

2 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the Directors' Board meeting on 9th October 2025 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

3 Matters arising from previous minutes

3.1 PT to discuss with Evenlode Catchment Partnership, E.Coli testing for the river water. They currently have no test kits. The water quality is currently better downstream because of 2 natural springs entering the river further up.

3.2 NE needs to approach individuals to become fire marshals.

3.3 PT to formally sign agreement to approve Sarah Menary as museum accreditation mentor.

4 Correspondence

PT has received a card from Philip Hawtin's daughter. She has asked about a plaque commemorating Philip, either to be combined with the one to Philip's late wife which is in the wheel room, or a separate one. There is also a clock which is being donated by the family, likely to go in the Foreman's office.

PT will respond to daughter and request dates. TS and NE agreed to meet with family.

5 Winter jobs lists

NE has presented the winter jobs lists. NE to email list to the Board. NE to be consulted if any further jobs are needing to be added or removed.

It was suggested a quote was obtained to replace the fuel store roof and then apply for a grant.

A separate meeting to be convened to discuss the millstone project.

The Board approved a spend of up to £2000 to complete winter jobs.

6 Discuss and tentatively agree event dates

The Board needs to make a decision about event dates and activities for 2026 by the 17th December 2025 in order that these can be published.

RS and TS had put together some data looking at correlation between weather, competing events, bank holidays, special days etc. (attached).

Weather does not seem to be a factor but competing events such as Ducklington show appear to influence footfall and income. From the data May and July are particularly poor. Despite best efforts, it is difficult to attract people into the Foreman's office for events such as STEM Change and Adapt.

There is no rationale for choosing the 3rd Sunday in the month apart from expectation. Since we are running on reduced volunteer numbers anyway, would we have enough volunteers for Mothers Day and Fathers Day for example?

There was discussion around pros and cons of keeping the same dates or choosing to move those dates that clash with external events.

Decision made to move the May and July steaming to 2nd Sunday for 2026 plus adding November see if there is an improvement in attendance. Christmas Fayre will then be guaranteed in December.

PT to write to Wild Oxfordshire

MG to phone around car/bike clubs

2026

	1 st Sun	2 nd Sun	3 rd Sun	4 th Sun	5 th Sun	Potential event
Mar			15th			Mothering Sunday. Just steam, no event.
Apl			19th			Not Easter. In Steam. ?Military vehicles
May		10th				Mills weekend. In steam. Amm. Radio.
Jun			21st			In steam Father's Day. ? cars? Bikes ?Tool/book fair
Jul		12th				In steam Avoids Ducklington. ?? Wildlife
Aug			16th			Models and collections. In steam
Sept			20th			Crafts/skills In steam
Oct			18 th			Woodcraft. In steam
Nov			15th			??? Food and drink fest ?in steam
Dec	6th					Christmas Fayre. No steam

AOB

Need to agree fee, price and hire charges for 2026

RS to contact Chris Maycock to revise refreshment costs for group visits.

Request made for Directors to have access to Combe Bookings digital calendar.

Next meeting: 11th December 2025 1.30pm (note time)

Lorna Gale (minutes secretary)

