

**HEREFORDSHIRE & MID-WALES  
SECTION NEWSLETTER – GENERAL  
MEETING SPECIAL**



Issue GM 2021 special – November 2021  
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Dear Herefordshire and Mid-Wales Section Member,  
We consider that the upcoming General Meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> at the National Arboretum, is of such importance that we have felt the need publish a special edition of our newsletter. The aim in doing this is not to tell you how to vote, but to encourage you to reflect on the issues and to use your vote.

The central task of the General Meeting is to approve the Board of Director's plan for our Club's near term future, as set out in the October issue of 'Vintage & Classic Motor Cycle', usually referred to as 'The Journal'. We urge you to read these plans carefully. If you no longer have your journal, you can find them here on the VMCC website.

<https://issuu.com/vintagemotorcycleclub/docs/vmcc-oct-full-lr>

### **CHANGES ALREADY IMPLEMENTED**

Traditionally, the greater part of the membership has taken little interest in the Club's strategic management and are happy to let whoever the Directors are 'get on with it'.

This meeting is particularly important however because the Club at National level has gone through a difficult few years (made worse by COVID), with substantial financial losses, ineffective management and lack of clear direction in its overall purpose. Efforts to get sufficient agreement to resolve these challenges have not previously been successful.

The current Board of Directors, led by its influential Chairman, has already implemented substantial change and in this ambitious and wide-ranging draft plan he seeks your approval to implement further radical and fundamental change.

### **CONCERNED VOICES**

As you might expect, these changes have not met with universal approval and many members with long associations with the Club have begun to voice concerns about the plan and about the apparent achievements made to date.

### **LACK OF FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

Underpinning this is a lack of financial transparency. There is undoubtedly an improvement in the Club's financial position with a reduction in staff and overhead costs and a stable and possibly increasing membership – a situation we applaud. However, the last published figures in May 2021, still project a full year loss of £166K a welcome improvement on the previous year's loss of £206k, but on the economic miracle that the casual reader might assume from the Club's internal publicity. The excellent monthly financial summaries that were published previously, have not been available to members since May '21, which is disappointing as they gave a comprehensive picture of how the Club was performing. This is also in direct contradiction to the plan's ambition to *..."Continue to publish everything on the website for transparency"*. The cynical observer might suggest that these reports have disappeared because they do not back up the rosy picture that has been painted.

### **MEMBERSHIP INCREASING?**

In May 2020, the Club reported a membership total of 14,173. This had reduced to 13,104 by March '21 and it continued to decline until May '21 when it reached 12,983. I would love to believe that membership has increased since then, so, if it has, why not publish the data on the same basis as these excellent reports? Let's show the data and celebrate the success!

### **A DAZZLING ARRAY OF OBJECTIVES**

The forward plan is not lacking in ambition and seems to leave no stone unturned, but you might like to ask yourself if all of this is achievable? Is all of this desirable?

As these objectives in this plan are so wide-ranging, encompassing as they do, almost all aspects of our club's activities. A "Yes" vote for all of the 7 sections is effectively giving the Board of directors, "carte-blanche" to do what they think is best for the club, without further consultation for the next 3 years. Is this what you wish to happen?

### **NO BUDGET FOR THE PLAN PERIOD**

It should be noted that the plan does not include a budget for the plan period – an obligation for the Board of Directors under the Club's own rules. Surely, a budget is a key measurable, against which progress can be measured. What could be the reason for this omission?

The plan is presented as an "all or nothing" choice. The agenda, whilst it has time for a guest speaker, does not seem to schedule any time for discussion or debate on the central issue. The choices remain in "big chunks" with seemingly no opportunity to accept parts or to modify any part of each section. What do you do if you broadly support the plan, but feel that it would benefit from some revisions?

### **ROGER BIBBINGS**

Our section secretary, Convenor of the RAG group and acting Area Rep for the South Wales region, Roger Bibbings, poses these questions about the plan.

- Does the Plan express what the VMCC is and what essentially it is for?
- Are the objectives all valid?
- Are they prioritised? (Which are more important than others?)
- Does it explain how delivery of plans against each objective will be managed?

- Is there sufficient information on projected costs, income and timetabling of expenditure?
- Is future management of the Club's assets clearly explained?

## NEIL LEWIS

Neil Lewis, the Area Rep for the North East is a long serving club member with impeccable credentials who has worked closely with the current Board on a number of issues, including the draft **Secretary's Handbook**. He too has serious concerns with the plan and expresses them in some detail on the Club Forum. You might like to read his concerns here:- <https://forum.vmcc.net/viewtopic.php?f=152&t=5695&p=60699&hilit=neil+lewis#p60699>

## YOUR CHANCE TO VOTE ON THE FUTURE OF YOUR CLUB

Although there is quite a lot to read (pages 37 - 51) I would urge every member to give the draft plan very careful consideration and to cast their vote as **they** see fit.

There are three ways we can vote on the seven propositions that make up the draft plan.

- We can vote in person at the meeting (see joining instructions at <https://vmcc.net/GM>)
- We can each send in a postal vote using the Freepost for in the October Journal
- We can indicate that we have given our right to vote to a 'Proxy' (also using the form or on-line) and they will cast it as they see fit.

Roger Bibbings, will be attending the General Meeting and is very happy to carry your proxy votes. If you wish to give Roger your proxy, you need to complete the form on P 51 of the October Journal (tick the "PROXY" boxes and return it to Allen house no later than 48 hours before the meeting. It's very helpfully a "Freepost" reply, so there is no cost to you. His membership number is 15749. Please be clear that Roger intends to vote against the Plan because, in his view, it is not adequate and still requires substantial additional work.

## SUMMARY

I urge you to read the plan carefully to read the concerns of Neil Lewis - and when you have formed an opinion, use your vote in one of the 3 ways suggested above.

**Geoff McGladdery - Editor**

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Updates and other stuff can be found on our Facebook page – Feel free to add your views.

<https://www.facebook.com/VMCCHerefordshire>

## SECTION WEBSITE

You can find almost everything you need to know about our Section and its activities on our website.

Why not take a look?

<https://herefordmidwalesvmcc.org/>