

# Cossack Owners Club

**AGM 2025 Held at the Talybont Camp site 2<sup>nd</sup> August**

## **Agenda**

Honorary President

Peter J Ballard

### **Committee**

Adviser for Identification & Registration.

Peter J Ballard

Secretary (retiring)

Tony Jones

Editors

Andrew Mutter/Nick Tucker

Membership Liaison

Paul Codling

### **Non-committee support roles reporting to the COC & committee**

Membership (retiring)

Gina Inman

Treasurer/Regalia (retiring)

Phil Inman

Shows

Carl Booth

Dave Cox

Web master & FB moderator

Welcome and identification of AGM Chairperson (tba) and Secretary.

1. Apologies for absence. Carl, Andrew, Nick, Tony, Phil and Gina.
2. Approval of 2024 AGM minutes as published in Horizontal News.
3. Committee reports & reports from non-committee support roles
4. Proposal from members. (\*It was agreed in 2013 that advance notice of proposals need not be made so you may make any proposals now and they will be discussed and voted on.)
5. Election of Committee.
6. 2026 AGM venue and date discussion.
7. Any other business.

If you wish to address the meeting please identify yourself before speaking.

Copies of the Club's Constitution and Rules as well as a copy of last years AGM minutes are held by the Secretary if you should want to examine them.

### **Welcome by AGM Chairman ~ Peter J Ballard temporary for this AGM.**

Good to see some new and some regular members. Thanks for coming.

I will chair the meeting in line with the agenda and Paul will take notes.

Most of the information is from the reports submitted by committee members and those in non-committee support roles.

Apologies:

Phil Inman (Treasurer)

Gina Inman (Membership & regalia)

Andrew Mutter (Joint Editor)

Nick Tucker (Joint Editor)

Tony Jones (Secretary)

## **COC Minutes**

The 2025 Cossack Owners' Club AGM was chaired by Peter Ballard and these minutes were taken by Paul Codling, who, significantly, were the only Committee members present. The meeting was attended by twelve club members.

Peter read the Apologies for Absence from Carl Booth, Andrew Mutter, Nick Tucker, Tony Jones and Phil and Gina Inman.

That the 2024 AGM minutes as published in Horizontal View were a correct and comprehensive report was proposed by Paul Codling and seconded by Nick Turnham. Of course they were.

The Committee Reports were read out by Peter, except that from Paul, Membership Liaison, because as he explained, he'd been too embroiled in other club issues to find the time to write one. Paul's report was delivered in person, to be written up for publishing in HV later.

Proposals from members, because there were only 12 present, took the form of the informal discussion of suggestions submitted from the floor and by email in response to Paul's Liaison emails. Only two were voted on according to traditional procedure. These were.....

First, that we should abandon the selling of regalia as a club committee responsibility. The argument for this was that the tiny revenue it brought the club was no reward compared to the administration, storage and stress piled upon the volunteer charged with operating what in effect is an on line shop. Phil Whitney proposed and Mike Rowe seconded. The meeting voted unanimously in favour.

Second, Peter offered to perform the role of club Secretary because he's already a point of contact with the club in his responsibility for machine dating and liaison with DVLA, so could manage the sparse and infrequent enquiries on other subjects without too much more work. Jim Manley proposed and Nick Turnham seconded. The meeting voted unanimously in favour.

In general discussion, the idea that members who wanted to buy club T shirts, sweat shirts, hats or whatever, might order those directly from the club's current supplier was considered a good one. Being a business, they were sure to be accommodating with money to be made. Apparently they'd already offered to do this. "Someone" would need to approach them to instigate it and inform the club of the necessary details.

We discussed the idea of a members only Facebook page, and with it the usefulness of a forum as a means of communication between members. By Liaison email, Richard Makara complained that the public Facebook page was cluttered with all sorts of inconsequential junk and therefore he was reluctant to use it for posting content interesting to him. We all agreed building any sort of useful, accessible archive on Facebook was fraught with problems. In the past, members' Facebook pages and forums have been a perennial topic at AGMs. We agreed the problem with them, as ever, was that "Someone" would have to moderate and maintain them. Currently, the man most easily placed to have this extra work load heaped upon him is Dave Cox, the public Facebook page moderator, and assuming by default that any forum would be run on the website was inconsiderate.

Paul attempted to point out that one of the uses for the improved communication in the Liaison emails was to enable members, if they wanted a forum or a members Facebook page, to organise it, or at least research what the club thought of the idea beyond the 12 people at the AGM. He wasn't sure he had the meeting's full attention at the time.

We briefly discussed the possibility of on line or postal voting on essential issues, which could also be enabled by the use of Liaison emails. This would spread decision making throughout the year, or at least inform the members of the decisions to be made and empower them at the AGM the decisions were made at. Paul pointed out that John Warner, in response to a Liaison email, had sent him a screen shot of an MG Owners' Club ballot paper in an email suggesting virtual meetings. The MG Club already do this.

Igor suggested "pinning" a heading post on the top of the public Facebook page which would come up first and constantly, unimpeded by Facebook's daily chatter. This would contain links to important information on the COC website such as "What oil goes in a Dnepr gearbox?" in a new FAQ page on the site. He thought this would pre-empt public Facebook users from asking the same questions over and over again, burying important content, and, keep uninformed, casual Facebook users mindful of the Cossack Owners' Club's existence. We all agreed this was a brilliant idea, but would need the absent Dave Cox to implement it, and it wasn't fair to assume he would without his participation in the discussion.

Igor pointed out that anyone who googles Cossack Owners' Club is offered the public Facebook page first, so that's where they go, not to the COC website. No one else had thought of this terrible phenomenon.

The committee were re-elected, more by default than voting, which seemed somehow appropriate given that the club faces a future based on a less traditional model and a more evenly distributed burden of responsibility. There will be much discussion on this and the points suggested following the AGM.

We agreed we'd like to combine with the MZ Club again for next year's AGM but they're holding theirs in The Lake District, too biased Northerly for us. Apparently the MZ Club are organising the next East European Rally at Talybont next year. We don't yet now when.

Peter closed the meeting, with one minute of our hired time in Talybont Village Hall left!

## **COC AGM 2025 – Reports**

### **President, honorary – Peter J Ballard**

Firstly, accepting that the committee are all unpaid volunteers, it is sad that for various valid personal reasons only Paul and I represent your committee here today.

We are obviously having difficulty attracting members to volunteer to join the committee to support nearly 300 members. This is no different to many other likeminded clubs we talk with, surely we do need to consider a different way of running your club. The roles of treasurer, membership and www/FB moderator are already non-committee support roles but do report to the committee, this was achieved so that the holders of these roles can concentrate on their roles without the need to get involved in the discussions and decisions needed to run the club. This leaves secretary, membership liaison, editors, 'identification and registration' as committee positions. I note that Tony our secretary is standing down after many years at this AGM and that also Phil and Gina who run treasurer and membership are retiring but will support the club up to at the very latest Christmas this year to enable a handover. These two support roles can be split up to a certain extent to reduce the load BUT the club still need members to volunteer their time and skills or we will have to seriously consider paying an outside company to administer the club.

One well known 'distraction' is that the COC FaceBook Group is free to join by anybody with a Soviet or PRC motorcycle, ok many of the COC club members are also users of the COC FaceBook, vote was to keep it like that. There are many issues with the COC FaceBook that also crop up with other clubs, these are just two examples:

- i. Any valid technical submissions or photos are effectively 'lost' as they get scrolled down and vanish. If submitted to the website or the associated club Flickr site that you pay for then they are saved for all to see.
- ii. Technical advice offered on FaceBook has no available claimed credibility, thus the reader can ignore the advice or take it and risk safety or damage to the motorcycle; that is unless it comes from a respected individual that the reader might know and trust.

After discussions between Paul Codling, Dave Cox and I have come up with a few actions that aim to encourage members to contribute. Paul now creates a monthly or more frequent liaison news email to keep members in touch with events and club administration, that is going well as Paul can see the number of members who have at least opened the email. Dave has been adding facilities to the website so that members can feedback their views and also view the latest liaison news email. Both these should help the committee understand what the members want and maybe even result in volunteers coming forward.

I am sure we will discuss these issues today either formally or after the AGM, we need to.

Peter J Ballard.

### **Identification and Registration ~ Peter J Ballard.**

I support members with identifying their motorcycle and/or sidecar, often with photos sent in by owners or via other COC committee or those with club non-committee roles. This is not only a visual assessment of the motorcycle but also inspection of the frame plate and frame stamp. I might get one a month, but as there are so many images on the www it is not difficult to identify one's motorcycle.

Then also around monthly I suggest to members how to declare importation whether a mandatory HMRC 'Import Declaration' through an approved Import Agent or a DIY NOVA (Notification of Vehicle Arrival), both required by law.

Following that I support members with their UK DVLA registration in terms of what needs to go on the V55/5 application and creation of a Date Certificate. We have a designated manager at DVLA who receive all COC members' registration applications, then he either approves or gets in touch with me to provide more evidence. Still on a 100% success rate, but there are always bikes that can not be registered 'age related' if the frame plate is missing or has a replica or has no documentation that relates to the bike. There is no point in me supporting an application if it will be absolutely rejected.

First time we are supporting a MSVA (Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval) application of a MT11, a Reconstructed Classic of a M72 and application for a new DVLA frame number as the original was ground off.

Thanks for your support, willing to continue. Peter J Ballard.

## Secretary ~ Tony Jones

My apologies for not attending the AGM. I have lost my storage and have to be out by this weekend. This will be my final Secretary's report as I wish to stand down and hopefully someone will step up to fill the vacancy.

2024/2025 has been a quiet year for me as far as being involved in club activities goes. I have attended the Club stand at Stafford twice. I have as usual been the main contact point for outside enquiries which I have answered where possible and forwarded on membership, dating enquiries etc. I have liaised with the MZ Riders Club to share this camping weekend and booked the hall for the AGM. I hope it meets with your approval.

I wish the Club all the best going forward and I will of course remain a member.

Tony Jones.

## ***Horizontal View* Editors ~ Andrew Mutter & Nick Tucker**

As we write this, we're now on the sixth edition of *Horizontal View*. We hope you're enjoying our efforts to keep you informed about Soviet biking and the goings-on in the Cossack Owners Club.

The first two issues were a real baptism of fire — we had to learn a whole new layout program, navigate differing opinions on design, and ensure all the technical information we published was accurate! Paul and Peter's editions were a tough act to follow. Paul had produced the magazine for many years, and Peter had stepped in as both editor and temporary editor on numerous occasions.

We set out with the aim of producing a consistent 28-page magazine, with more visuals and a layout that's appealing, informative, and reflective of the experience and knowledge of our members. At this point, we must thank all the Cossack Owners who've contributed — and also our brilliant proofreaders and the printers, who do an excellent job reproducing the magazine and getting it out to members.

Of course, the magazine wouldn't exist without contributions from people like you. So here's our plea: any time you go anywhere or do anything on your bike, please take some photos and send us a few sentences about it. If you're doing a repair — replacing a tyre, rebuilding an engine, or even dismantling an alternator — send us the photos! We can always have a quick phone chat to turn your experience into a write-up. The info you share can help others and inspire ideas for travel, maintenance, or restoration.

We'd also really welcome more feedback — we want *Horizontal View* to reflect what you, the members, want from your magazine. We still believe there's value in a printed copy over a digital one that can disappear into the ether. Since I've been a club member, I've collected at least 20 issues and regularly refer back to them.

We're happy to continue editing *Horizontal View* for the next year — unless, of course, someone else fancies the job!

Nick Tucker and Andrew Mutter

## **Membership Liaison ~ Paul Codling**

So far, I've sent out five liaison emails from wix.com, using the email marketing function on the site because that enables the use of the email addresses of all members signed up to the members' only area. This number varies with the turnover of members and is usually around 190. Only around half the emails are opened. There could be many reasons members ignore it, such as not checking spam folders, not checking emails at all or being frightened by the scary looking sender's address, Wix rather than the COC. An astonishing number of people have replied "What emails?" When I've asked if they got them OK.

Given that only two thirds of the club is signed up for the website, and half of those don't open the emails, the emails are reaching only a third of the club.

Dave Cox has placed a Club News box on the website, available for anyone to see without being signed up, which is going to make the last one or two Liaison Emails available for casual visitors to the site. We hope a few more people will notice it.

The point of the emails is to enable more direct communication throughout the club, necessary because although it seems initially to provide this service, Facebook has some serious, fundamental flaws. Postings are buried quickly and are almost impossible to find even days later. It matters that not all COC members have Facebook accounts or want them. There are many other reasons why better cross club communication could be useful.

For example, responses to the emails from members have so far included suggestions for an on line forum, a members only Facebook page, postal or on line voting on important issues and an offer of help with the burden of digital club management. All these could be discussed at the AGM even though those having suggested them couldn't be there.

Lately, AGMs have been poorly attended, meaning that a handful of people are making decisions concerning hundreds and the pool of enthusiasm for executive responsibility is limited to the small number of people assembled that afternoon. I think it's not fair to adopt the opinion that if members can't be bothered to attend, they give up their opportunity to be heard. All of us lead frantic lives with desperate responsibility elsewhere and the COC is after all, only a motorcycle club.

Traditionally, the club is too much work for too few people to run. In the past, in our youth, camping weekends were a joy for hundreds and members relied on their Soviets for transport. Now, very few people go anywhere and Facebook has eroded the personal, social contact the club once thrived on. These days there is less reward for working so hard as committee members and I hope that the better communication afforded by these Liaison emails can allow a fairer distribution of the work load across the club. For example, it might be possible to share traditional committee roles between two or more members, restoring the fun in a lighter, less demanding responsibility. Many of us work from home these days, so why not?

I think we need to escape from the perception that the club membership subscription buys the services of the committee, as if the committee were a business and the members its customers. I'd like to promote the idea that the subscription facilitates the club as the mechanism through which we can share our common interest.

So far, the frequency of sending the emails has been around two weeks. This is because during high summer, events come thick and fast. Feedback has been positive and as yet, no one has blocked me. The two week interval is arbitrary, a wild guess. I'm aware that too many is going to irritate some members.

Dave Cox told me he thought the tone of the emails was "desperate". I'm aware of that too. I have been imploring, pleading perhaps, members to read them. However it's a fact of life that many people don't read. Of course they can, but they don't want to. Perhaps the emails are currently too long or too vague in presenting their content prosaic and precise. I'm thinking about that.

Liaison emails are very much work in progress. Think I might be able to reach more members by sending emails from a personal email account rather than from the Wix website. This means maintaining a more comprehensive list of members' email addresses and complying with the consequent data protection issues. We're in discussion about that.

In future, for example, you might fancy a meet up somewhere, a pub, a cafe, a bike show or a ride out, even if it's just a handful of locals to make friends with and keep in touch. You could use a liaison email to suggest it to the whole club, within the club, rather than risk going public on Facebook.

I'm sure not many people can see what I'm up to yet. I hope they do when I get the hang of it.

### **Membership Secretary ~ Gina Inman**

Firstly, my apologies for not being in attendance this year. The AGM clashes with an annual event we attend to which we have a rolling hotel booking! Also, we have family issues and health issues which have dominated our lives this year.

Membership Numbers:

Year ending 2024/25	251	Paid-up Members
	21	Honorary Members
	272	Members in Total
Year ending 2023/24	261	Paid-up Members
	21	Honorary Members

The downward trend in membership has continued this year with less people joining but also people failing to renew their membership. We've lost 78 people this year as opposed to 87 last year and the number of new people joining was only 55, which compares well to 57 last year. This does include a significant number of people rejoining after letting their membership lapse.

#### Horizontal View Distribution

In my role as Membership Secretary I am also responsible for the distribution of Horizontal View. Some years ago we contracted the Printer to distribute the posted magazines while I continue to send out the email copies. Although using Thistleprint to post copies does cost a little more per magazine per person against doing it ourselves, it is definitely a benefit to the club as it cuts the time between printing and posting.

#### BACS Payments.

Last year it was decided to introduce the facility for members to pay their subscription using BACS. This has had a slow take up but numbers are increasing. This necessitates a very close working relationship with the treasurer.

However, to the few who didn't think to identify themselves, we are, sadly, not mind readers and if we don't know who you are the payments cannot be allocated. Therefore, some people will have dropped off the radar despite paying their subscription, and possibly some have never joined despite paying their subscription.

#### Emailed Magazines

After last year's big drop in the number of emailed magazines being sent out it has remained fairly static this year at 68.

#### GDPR General Data Protection Regulations

For the benefit of new members, I want to reiterate the way the Club holds personal data. GDPR primarily affects clubs in the area of security of data and how long data is kept after resignation. The membership Database is backed up to the Cloud and password protected. Data is only ever shared with trusted partners such as Thistleprint and Embroidery Unlimited in order to fulfil their commitments to us as a club.

In accordance with the law the committee put together a full GDPR Statement. This is included on every membership welcome letter.

After a very busy year with ageing family as well as health problems of our own, Phil and I have decided to step down from the roles of Membership, Regalia and Treasurer. We are willing remain until replacements can be found and handover completed but wish to have this concluded by Christmas.

Gina Inman- Membership Secretary, 29 July 2025

**TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR-END 31 JULY 2025 ~ Phil Inman**  
**(incorporating Regalia Secretary's Report)**

Please see the attached Year-End Financial Report, which gives a detailed breakdown of Income and Expenditure, by category.

Our bank balance at Year End was £6,820.33, compared with £5,859.53 for Year End 2024.

**Income** amounted to £6,377.61, the bulk of which came, as usual, from membership subscriptions. Overall income from the East European Rally, 2024, amounted to £296.00. Regalia sales amounted to £439.10. Income from member subscriptions showed an increase of £80.56 compared with last year.

**Expenditure** amounted to £5436.81, compared with £6,159.10 for last year. Postage costs were £123.20, which was £44.24 less than last year. Costs associated with our attendance at shows amounted to £249.48.

The largest item of expenditure was, as usual, the printing and postage of the Club magazine, at £3,095.26, which was £26.00 less than last year.

The Club's income has exceeded expenditure by £940.80.

**Regalia** sales were significantly higher than the previous year, at £439.10. Cost of new stock was £326.99. Stock levels are satisfactory.

After a tenure of 12 years, I have decided to stand down as provider of the Club's Treasurer and Regalia services. However, I have agreed to continue until the end of 2025, or until a successor is nominated, if this happens earlier.

Phil Inman COC Treasurer 31 July 2025

**Cossack Owners' Club – Year-End, 31 July 2025**

**Financial Report**

<b>Ledger</b>	<b>Account</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Income	Donations to COC	364.00
	East European Rally 2024	602.00
	Equipment	71.99
	Membership Subscriptions	4680.87
	Regalia Sales	257.81
	Shows	439.10
	Total Income	<b>6377.61</b>
Expenditure	AGM 2025	40.00

	Bank Charges	34.04
	East European Rally 2024	306.00
	Equipment	304.92
	Insurance	100.80
	Membership – Clubs & Societies	121.73
	Postage	123.20
	Printing	3095.26
	Regalia	326.99
	Shows	249.48
	Stationery	19.91
	Subscriptions	111.84
	Website/Subscriptions	644.83
	Total Expenses	<b>5436.81</b>
Total excess of income over expenditure for the year (Net Profit)		<b>940.80</b>

Bank Balance as at Year-End = **£6820.33**

## Website administrator & Facebook moderator ~ Dave Cox

### Website

As websites go, the club website remains essentially the same. This year, 2025, a few improvements have been introduced.

Paul's Liaison emails have been added to the website for all club members to see. This is a work in progress, and the format may change from time to time. The heading for this is: 'COC NEWS'. There is also a shortcut on the website 'Home' page, shown as 'CLUB NEWS'.

In the 'Members Area', I have placed a simple 'Feedback/Suggestion' form for the members to use if they wish to, of course. We would greatly appreciate it if you would contribute your thoughts regarding the club. There are three boxes to use, and you don't have to fill in all three

1. What do you like about the club?
2. What do you not like about the club?
3. What changes could we do to make it better?

You won't be placed in the club's stocks for a week for telling us what you don't like, this information is what we need to know to improve your club. The feedback will not be published anywhere, and is private to the club committee members only.

Flickr. Again, there are minimal photos of the rallies that have been held already this year. The club pays an annual fee for the use of the system. Photos sent to Facebook are lost over a very short period; they're still in it, but you have a hard job trying to find them after a few days. Using Flickr, you can see them anytime you wish. Download if you want of course. Photos can be sent to me using my email [kamuro@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kamuro@hotmail.co.uk). If you have more than the standard email allows, consider using WeTransfer; it's free, unless you use it frequently. [WeTransfer | Send Large Files Fast](#)

On the membership tab, you will see a dropdown box saying 'Constitution'. It has always been on the 'Membership' page, but hidden in a scroll photo on the top right. It's still there, but now it's not a PDF anymore, but an easily readable page. Have a look.

## **Facebook**

As of 2025, our Facebook group is functioning reasonably well, with a diverse selection of posts.

We are still constantly being sent Sales posts, which I decline every time. I have tried to make all Facebook members aware that sales adverts are not allowed in our group. However, I instruct them to send any sales adverts to Tony's Cossack Buy Swap page for posting. The featured permanent post at the top of the page instructs people where to place their adverts. That doesn't seem to work, as people tend to ignore it or simply don't see it. It may have helped to a degree, but I've found that people often ignore most messages. I can only do so much, and then it's up to the people posting.

Joining our group is another area where time is spent maintaining the club's standards. When people wanted to join the group, they applied and then waited for my approval or rejection. Now, Meta has changed the rules to the effect that anyone can join any group without permission from the group's administrators (me). Unfortunately, this led to hundreds of people joining us, many of them had nothing to do with the motorcycles we use.

At one AGM, members asked me how many in the group have actually joined our Facebook group. I couldn't answer this, simply because I didn't know. It was then stated that the COC Facebook group should only allow people who owned supported motorcycles. From then on, I have been removing from our group those people who do not have motorcycles, or different makes of motorcycle. I did say it would take time to do this.

I started looking when the number of Facebook members reached 2500; to date, the number now stands at 1518 and is still dropping. When I have time, I'm going through all those people who have never contributed anything, pictures or posts.

They are easy to spot as I run down the list, and it clearly indicates whether people have contributed or not. I then open their profile to see what is in their posts.

I made a set of criteria for removing people from our group:

1. Never contributed a post to our group.
2. Profiles are closed or locked.
3. No supported motorcycles shown.
4. Other makes of motorcycles.
5. No motorcycles at all.

These are the main titles I work by, but there is my feeling about some of these members, who display nothing but religion, guns, and hate pages. These I remove and ban simultaneously. Believe me, there are lots of them out there.

The Facebook group has been in existence for 7 years, I am currently two years back and still have 5 years to go.

Out of the 1,000 I have already removed, only a handful have come back asking why they were removed. I tell them why, and nearly everyone has said they have bikes. I then ask them to show the motorcycle in their profile and reapply, which they have done. Out of the ten that have asked, eight have reapplied. So, I have successfully removed 992 so far. If those who have not been banned but were removed wish to reapply, they are free to do so; however, their motorcycle must be visible in their profiles.

On one occasion, I was prevented by Facebook (Meta) itself from removing people. They sent me a notification saying I was removing people too fast, and I was to explain the reason for this. I wrote them a letter explaining the cause and asked for the removal app to be restored; they did so after two days.

I haven't removed anyone for the last ten days, so as to give the Facebook watchers a break. Now, when I start eliminating people, I only do ten at a time.

There is a set of questions that new people have to fill in, and a copy of the Club Rules is shown. Again, many just ignore the Participant questions and join anyway. I look to see if we have new members several times a day, if there are any, I can see that they haven't answered any of the questions. I decline them immediately. Some will fill in the questions asked, but then not tick the box agreeing to the club rules. That generally means they want to sell something. Then some fill in all the boxes except 'Which model do you have? This is either blank or 'yes'. I then know they don't have a bike at all or have another make.

Calls are now being made for a 'COC Member Only' Facebook group. That's fine with me, but I will not run this. I'm just on 75 now, and it will require a younger person to run it, one who possibly understands Facebook much more than I do.

Currently, I am willing to continue managing the club's Website & Facebook page.

Regards to all David Cox

### **Show Organiser ~ Carl Booth**

Carl was unable to attend due to injury. Here is a little of what Carl would report.

A very successful Stafford show was well attended in April, both those displaying their bikes and visitors. Planning now for the October show.

Carl Booth.