



## Minutes of the 149 Annual General Meeting

### Meeting details

<b>Topic</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>Date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> of December 2025
<b>Location</b>	Held via Microsoft Teams
<b>Apologies</b>	None
<b>Guests</b>	Lord Francis Stafford – Chair of Trustees, Jon Mutton – Headmaster  Abbot Robert, Fr Richard, John Dick, Holly Ainscough, Richard Tams, Digby Walker, Emma Craig, Alex Deedes, Iwona Cristea

### Agenda items

<b>Item</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>1. Opening</b>	Lord Francis Stafford	
<b>1.1. Welcome</b> Everyone by Lord Stafford		Completed
<b>1.2. Opening Prayer</b> The meeting was opened with prayer by Fr Richard	Fr Richard	Completed
<b>1.3. Confirmation of previous minutes</b>	Emma Criag	Completed
<b>2. Chair's welcome and Introduction to the meeting</b> Lord Francis Stafford welcomed all the attendees and gave a particular welcome to Abbot Robert, Headmaster	Lord Francis Stafford	Completed

<p>Jon Mutton, and new members of the Development team, including Iwona Cristea and Alex Deedes – Philanthropy Manager, mentioning Caroline Wilkie who will be joining the team shortly as a Manager of Alumni Relationships. Lord Stafford said that the AGM took place during the Society’s 150th anniversary year and recorded sincere thanks to the Abbot and Headmaster for hosting a highly successful and enjoyable anniversary weekend at Ampleforth. The weekend demonstrated strong engagement with the Society and reflected the deep affection held for Ampleforth and its work.</p> <p>The anniversary weekend also marked the launch of the new Strategic Plan, prepared by Holly Ainscough and Emma Craig. Including those four important aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening and engaging the Ampleforth community</li> <li>• Reunions in the UK and overseas, including year groups and houses</li> <li>• Pathways to professional development, including careers, mentoring and networks</li> <li>• Fostering belonging and a culture of giving back</li> </ul> <p>It was emphasised that the Society is not a fundraising body but looking to create a culture in which generosity and giving back can flourish through strong relationships. The Chair noted plans to establish committees and sub-groups to support delivery of the Strategy in the coming year</p>		Ongoing
<p><b>3. Membership Report</b></p>		
<p>3.1. <u>Report</u></p> <p>Iwona reported that there are approximately 14,000 individuals known to be eligible for membership of the Ampleforth Society, with 8,500 currently active subscribers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82% Old Amplefordians</li> <li>• 15% Current and former parents</li> </ul>	Iwona Cristea	Completed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3% monks, staff and friends</li> </ul> <p>The geographical spread of active members is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75% resident in the UK</li> <li>• 15% resident in Europe</li> <li>• 10% rest of World</li> </ul> <p>The positive news was noted that since last AGM meeting 82 new Old Amplefordian members joined upon leaving the school at the end of the summer term 2025 and 103 parent members.</p>		
<p><b>4. Annual report on engaging events and activities</b></p>	Emma Craig	
<p>4.1. <u>General report</u></p> <p>Emma summarised the Society’s first comprehensive written Review of the Year, clearly linking activity to the Society’s charitable objects, particularly fostering relationships across the wider Ampleforth family.</p> <p>She noted that, following investment in data and systems and a significant programme of work by the Development Office, the Society now has a much clearer understanding of its active membership. As a result, all recorded members with up-to-date contact details can now receive newsletters and event invitations directly, which was not the case two years ago.</p> <p>4.2. <u>150 th Anniversary Weekend</u></p> <p>The weekend of celebration was a huge success that brought together Old Amplefordians, the monastic community, current and former parents, students, staff and friends of the community in a programme that was as rich in substance as it was in spirit.</p> <p>4.3. <u>London Carols 2024</u></p> <p>Very good number of attendees. Raised significant support for the Lourdes Pilgrimage. The event helped reconnect many with Abbey and College.</p> <p>4.4. <u>Sports and Club Report</u></p> <p>4.4.1 <u>Old Amplefordian Football Club:</u></p>	Emma Craig	Completed

- Celebrated 20th season with a PJ dinner in Fulham
- Founder Louis Robertson and long-standing members recognized
- Encouragement for new recruits to sustain fixtures and aim for division promotion
- Key fixtures included:
  - Super Saturday of Sport in March at the valley
  - Arthur Dunn Cup fixture vs Old Reptonians in October

#### 4.4.2 Old Amplefordian Golfing Society

- 2025 season featured a busy schedule at top courses nationwide
- Mixed results:
  - Lost 11–3 to Aldeburgh
  - Strong performances at Royal Cinque Ports and Royal St George’s
  - Narrow win vs Old Gregorians at Sunningdale
  - Competitive results in Halford Hewitt, Cyril Gray, and Plate competitions
  - Record attendance at Invitation Day, retention of Russell Bowl
- Northumberland Meeting, Northwest Tour, and Autumn Meeting at Ganton highlighted competitive and social success

#### 4.4.3 Old Amplefordian Hockey Club

- Super Saturday of Sport matches vs College highlighted family connections
- OA women’s team fielded 16 players: loss to college, but strong teamwork and camaraderie

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OA men narrowly defeated, showing competitive play</li> <li>• Plans for the OA Hockey Club to become a formal Club within the Society, led by OA women</li> </ul> <p><u>4.4.4 Old Amplefordian Rugby Club</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024/25 season: 6th in Counties 2 Surrey</li> <li>• New season: 4 wins in first 6 matches, 2 losing bonus points, currently 5th in 12-team league</li> <li>• 44 players used so far, mostly SHAC alumni</li> <li>• Strong youth participation ensures a pipeline of talent for future seasons</li> </ul> <p><u>4.4.5 Super Sports Saturday</u></p> <p>Growing participation across generations, strong involvement from younger Oas and current parents</p> <p><u>4.5 Year group and houses reunions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increasingly supported directly by the Society</li> <li>○ Three reunions supported in September/October as a model for future work</li> </ul> <p>Looking ahead, Emma reported that the Society anticipates a particularly busy programme of reunions, including six year-group reunions, and several significant house anniversaries. Early planning is underway for the 80th anniversary of St Thomas’s House.</p> <p><u>4.6 Return to the Valley and spiritual life:</u></p> <p>More members are returning to Ampleforth for retreats and stays, supported by Beckett House and Abbey accommodation. The OA-led “Listen” retreat for under-30s was highlighted as a sign of a strong and growing young faith network.</p> <p><u>4.7. Digital engagement</u></p>	<p>Emma Craig</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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<p>Newsletter subscribers increased by over 1,500 (a 24% rise). Instagram and LinkedIn communities continue to grow. Launch of a new Ampleforth Society website providing a clearer and more accessible digital home is a current plan.</p> <p><u>4.8. Support for the Abbey and College</u></p> <p>Society members continue to mentor students, give talks, share professional experience and open networks. Support for the Lourdes Pilgrimage remains strong, and there has been growing engagement with oblate life among OAs and former parents.</p> <p>Emma emphasised that the Development Office is working to ensure professional, strategic and sustainable operations, and that all activity is directly aligned with the Society’s charitable objects. Thanks were expressed to members and to past and present Development Office staff. No questions were raised.</p>		
<p><b>5. Strategic Plans and Priorities</b></p> <p>Holly outlined the Strategic Priorities developed over the past year by Trustees, staff and Society members, intended to guide the Society over the next five years.</p> <p>The priorities are:</p> <p>6. <u>Engaging and strengthening the community</u></p> <p>6.1. Building a diverse and connected network of OAs, parents, staff and friends</p> <p>6.2. Strengthening regional and international groups</p> <p>6.3. Expanding events, reunions and communications</p> <p>7. <u>Pathways and professional development</u></p> <p>7.1. Career guidance, mentoring and networking for members and pupils</p> <p>7.2. Development of structured career groups and internships</p>	<p>Holly Ainscough</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>7.3. Embedding Benedictine values in professional life</p> <p>8. <u>Fostering a sense of place</u></p> <p>8.1. Supporting opportunities to return to the valley</p> <p>8.2. Encouraging engagement with the Abbey’s retreat life</p> <p>8.3. Celebrating Ampleforth’s traditions and identity</p> <p>9. <u>Culture of giving back</u></p> <p>9.1. Encouraging service, volunteering and mentoring</p> <p>9.2. Enabling members to contribute time, skills and opportunities</p> <p>Lord Stafford thanked Holly for a clear and inspiring presentation. No questions were raised.</p>		
<p><b>10. Abbey Report</b></p> <p>The Abbot reported that the monastic community currently numbers 37. Over the past four years, nine monks have died, two have been dismissed and five dispensed from vows. He noted that while numbers attract attention, the deeper focus should be on the spiritual vitality of community life.</p> <p>The Abbey has recently undergone its regular four-year Canonical Visitation, following extensive preparation and self-reflection. The report was broadly positive, highlighting strong developments alongside areas requiring further focus.</p> <p>Hospitality and retreats are now central to the Abbey’s mission. The 2026 retreat programme is already almost full, with growing demand from schools and groups. Online Home Retreats continue to attract participants from across the world.</p> <p>The Abbot also reported on the Zimbabwe foundation, which continues to grow, with plans to clothe a new novice in January. He concluded by noting both signs of hope and the serious questions the community continues to face.</p>	Abbott Robert	Completed

<p>Lord Stafford thanked the Abbot and assured him of the Society’s continued support.</p> <p><b>11. College Report</b>  Jon reported that student numbers remained strong in September 2025, even with the introduction of VAT on school fees. The school is now fully co-educational, with a near-equal balance of boys and girls, and a vibrant mix of UK and international students.</p> <p>He highlighted significant staff recruitment, the ratification of a new Strategic Plan, and the College’s continued dedication to Catholic, Benedictine values, service, and academic excellence.</p> <p>The Society’s role was emphasized as central to recruitment, mentoring, advocacy, networking, and widening access. Jon also reaffirmed the College’s ongoing commitment to bursaries, while noting the importance of securing sufficient funding to further expand opportunities.</p> <p>An Impact Report will be published shortly, and it is expected to receive a very positive response, reinforcing the College’s future engagement and philanthropic initiatives.</p> <p>Lord Stafford congratulated Jon on his first year as Headmaster.</p>	<p>Jon Mutton</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>12. Financial Report and Resolutions</b></p> <p>The accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 were presented, noting a transition to a new funding model and reduced income, balanced by lower expenditure. Capital funds stood at approximately £893,000, reflecting positive investment performance.</p> <p><u>12.1 Resolutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of the accounts: <i>(Carried unanimously)</i></li> <li>• Re-appointment of Armstrong Watson as independent examiners: <i>(Carried unanimously)</i></li> </ul>	<p>John Dick</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>13. Any Other Business</b></p>	<p>Emma Craig</p>	<p>In progress</p>

<p><b>13.1 . St Thomas’s House 80th Anniversary:</b> Emma confirmed the reunion is likely to take place in 2027, subject to availability and school approval.</p> <p><b>13.2 . Collaboration with other Benedictine schools:</b> Emma reported progress on joint initiatives with Downside, Worth and Stonyhurst, including a joint Mass and shared careers and faith initiatives. No further business was raised.</p> <p><b>14. Remembrance and Closing Prayer</b> Fr Richard led prayers for deceased members of the Society.</p> <p><b>15. The meeting was closed</b></p> <p>Lord Stafford thanked all participants of the meeting and wish everyone positive and successful year ahead.</p> <p>The next AGM is expected to take place on <b>9 December 2027</b>, in London.</p>	<p>Fr Richard</p> <p>Lord Stafford</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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