

CLA CUMBRIA BRANCH AGM 2026

Wednesday 14th October at Gowbarrow Hall Farm



Minutes of the 2025 AGM

Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 9 October 2025 at Dalemain Mansion & Historic Gardens, CA11 0HB

1. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting:

The Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting held on 1st October 2024 at Hutton-in-the-Forest, Penrith, CA11 9TH had been previously circulated were approved and signed.

2. Branch Chair's Report:

Mr David Bliss presented his report for the year 2024/2025 which was approved by the meeting

3. Election of Officers and Committee:

The following were duly elected:

a. President: Mr David Bliss, Branch Chair: Jocelyn Holland, Branch Vice-Chair: Peter Knox

b. Branch Committee:

(i) Resignations – Morgan Robinson, Diana Matthews

(ii) Re-elections – Giles Mounsey-Heysham

(iii) New Members – Peter Knox

4. Branch Representatives to Council:

Mr David Bliss, Mrs Jocelyn Holland, Mr Peter Knox, Mr John Turner

5. Any Other Business:

Members were encouraged to contact the North team to discuss any opportunities to recruit new members in the Cumbria region.

We would like to thank The Beaumont family for hosting this event, and GSC Grays and Harrison Drury for their generous sponsorship.

This event is supported by:



Chair's Report 2025/26

I was delighted to read an account of a recent speech by Lord Blunkett, in which he said that Inheritance Tax for farmers was 'a mistake' and that Andy Burnham should use his Premiership to listen to the countryside more. Let us hope that the new Prime Minister listens to his long-time mentor and responds to the message that this legislation remains harmful to over 5.3 million family-owned businesses in the UK.

The past year has seen significant changes to legislation and policy affecting rural areas. One of the most important has been the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). For Cumbria planning is particularly important. We need a system that allows farms and rural businesses to develop, diversify and invest, while recognising the particular circumstances of rural communities. The CLA has responded to consultations with our local committee providing valuable input particularly on agricultural development, diversification and planning.

We are also looking ahead to the election of a county wide mayor in 2027. With increasing devolution and significant devolved funding, the mayor will have an important role in representing Cumbria nationally. It will be vital that local authorities and government bodies recognised the contribution of rural businesses and create a positive environment for them to invest, employ and diversify.

The long-awaited reset of the Sustainable Farming Incentive has been another major development. The number of options has been reduced, application windows have been tiered and new actions are for three years, with a £100,000 cap per farm business.

The CLA has continued to lobby strongly for upland farmers and has secured significantly increased payment rates for upland and moorland actions. This demonstrates the importance of having an effective voice representing the particular challenges faced by farmers in Cumbria.

The Renters' Rights Act has also brought significant change to the private rented sector. The CLA has worked hard to ensure that the particular circumstances of rural landlords and agricultural tenancies are recognised.

Rural housing continues to be a major issue particularly in Cumbria with the large amount of retired and second homeowners creating a very large shortage of affordable housing stock. The CLA continues to lobby for small numbers of homes in many villages, to help keep them running as vibrant communities.

Since becoming Chairman of the Cumbrian Committee and joined a National committee, I have gained a much greater appreciation of the incredible range and depth of work carried out by the CLA. Our teams at Head Office and in the regions work tirelessly on consultations, lobbying, legislation and importantly, providing advice and support to members.

Finally, a huge thank you to the Cumbrian Committee who give their time not only to our local committee but also to represent Cumbria on National Committees.

September 2026

Jocelyn Holland

