

# **Inland Waterways Association of Ireland**

*Cumann Uiscebhealaigh Intíre na h-Éireann*

## ***Branch Officers Handbook***

**Version 1.3**

**March 2019**



## **Contents**

**Introduction**

**Quick Reference Guide**

**Chapter 1 – The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland**

**Chapter 2 – How the IWAI is organised**

**Chapter 3 – Branch Finances**

**Chapter 4 – Branch Events**

**Chapter 5 – Protecting Members**

**Chapter 6 – Communications**

**Chapter 7 – Managing Meetings**

**List of IWAI Policy Reference Documents**

## Introduction

*If you are reading this as a Branch Officer, then thank you for your key support in running IWAI and enjoy your contribution to the Association.*

*If you are reading this as a member who is maybe considering volunteering as a Branch Officer then, if it's for you, please take that next step. With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer, however the benefits of volunteering can be enormous to all involved. I have read that a good volunteering match up can help you to reduce stress, be good for your general health and allows you to offer help to others and provides an opportunity to share your knowledge on specific topics with others.*

*This handbook provides a single source of reference for the various established policies and procedures of IWAI and is intended to assist the immense voluntary effort that is the backbone of our great organisation by explaining clearly the roles and responsibilities involved in running a Branch.*

*The use of this handbook will assist with maintaining good governance for our membership driven Association which is a registered company and subject to the rules of company law.*

John Dolan  
President  
Inland Waterways Association of Ireland

## Purpose of the Branch Officers Handbook

The **Branch Officers Handbook** is intended for the use of Branch Officers, Committee Members and IWAI Members.

It also includes a quick reference section which is a summary of the main points extracted from the body of the handbook, note this is for quick reference only, please refer to the relevant section for full details and also the relevant policy document where referenced.

As a limited company and a registered charity IWAI is faced with a number of obligations and ultimately the membership requires good administrative procedures and policies to meet its legal obligations. The purpose of this handbook is to assist all members to meet these obligations.

Any comments on the development of this handbook should be addressed to [honsecretary@iwai.ie](mailto:honsecretary@iwai.ie).

## **Quick Reference Guide**

This is a summary of the Branch Officers Handbook and is for quick reference only.

### **IWAI Structure:**

IWAI is a voluntary Association founded in 1954 to advocate the navigation, use, maintenance, protection, restoration and improvement of the Inland Waterways of Ireland. It currently has 23 branches.

It is a limited company with charitable status, the policy is managed by a National Council with the day to day activities dealt with by a Committee of Executive Directors chaired by the President.

### **Membership**

*IWAI members are members of a Branch of their choice. Second branch membership is also an option.*

- *Family Membership - €55.00 – with votes for 2 family members*
- *Single Membership - €44.00 – 1 vote*
- *Young Adult Member - €22.00 1 vote*
- *Second branch Membership - €20.00 – No additional voting rights*
- *NI Family Membership - £36.00 allows for two voting member33 in the family*
- *NI Single Membership - £33.00 – 1 vote*
- *NI Young Adult Member - £17.00 – 1 vote*
- *Corporate members 1 vote*

*Only members in good standing can be elected officers.*

### **Key Roles on Branch Committees**

The Branch committee must have a minimum of 3 officers namely Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, these are responsible for ensuring that all officers are IWAI members and promote growth in Branch membership. In addition each Branch must appoint a Child Protection Officer and a Safety Officer. Chapter 2 identifies the key roles and duties.

### **Branch Work Parties, Cruises in Companies, Rallies:**

These events should be used as an opportunity for recruitment and promotion of the Association. Chapter 4 details the correct procedures to have in place for such events.

### **Protection of Members:**

The Association has a full set of policies in place to protect members and the public. Chapter 5 deals with this area and in particular the following:

### **Child Protection Policy:**

The Association has a Child Protection Policy in place, it is a statutory requirement for each Branch to implement and operate this policy with a Branch Child Protection Officer(s) and Event Child Protection Officer(s) who have undertaken Garda Vetting through the IWAI.

### **Dignity and Respect:**

The IWAI treats everyone equally and respect individuality and diversity and has a complaints procedure and a process for investigation of incidents. The Members Protection Policy is available at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie)

### **Health & Safety:**

The Branch must appoint a safety officer. The Association's Health and Safety Statement contains template risk assessments which can be downloaded from the IWAI website and edited to make it specific to the venue [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie)

### **Insurance:**

The IWAI nationally has insurance to indemnify IWAI officers (in good standing) in the event of a claim for negligence. Chapter 5 Insurance deals with how boats attending IWAI events must declare that they have minimum of 3rd party insurance cover for the period of the event. Branches must inform National Treasurer of intended events, high risk activities - work parties should be highlighted. Volunteer members participating in work parties not covered by IWAI Project Insurance Policy are not permitted to use any powered tools. Chapter 5 also outlines what procedures must be followed by Branches regarding safety statements and recording attendance at these events

### **Communications:**

The IWAI has a public communications handbook available at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie). It is designed to help Branches communicate effectively with members, key stakeholders, the media and the wider public.

### **National Council:**

The affairs of the Association are managed by a National Council, comprising the IWAI Executive, 2 members from each Branch and 6 Members Reps. The Council meets up to 4 times a year.

### **Executive Committee:**

The day to day activities of the Association are dealt with by a Committee of Executive Directors chaired by the President. These are elected at the AGM.

## **Chapter 1 – The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland**

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help Branches understand the role and purpose of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland.

The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) is a voluntary body representing over three thousand enthusiasts, with currently 23 branches across the island of Ireland.

The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) is an energetic, voluntary organisation with members from all corners of the Island of Ireland, all sharing a keen and passionate enthusiasm for the waterways of Ireland.

IWAI advocates the navigation, use, maintenance, protection, restoration and improvement of the inland waterways of Ireland. It was formed in 1954 to promote the development, use and maintenance of Ireland's navigable rivers and canals.

When the Shannon was almost totally undeveloped for pleasure boating, IWAI campaigned against the building of low bridges, thus ensuring the development of the river as a national asset. In the 1960s IWAI successfully fought plans to close the Circular Line of the Grand Canal in Dublin. Later the Association campaigned for the re-opening of what is now the Shannon - Erne Waterway (formerly the Ballinamore & Ballyconnell Canal) and the Naas Line of the Grand Canal.

IWAI played its part in the restoration campaign for the re-opening of the Royal Canal between Dublin and the Shannon in recent years. IWAI assistance to the campaign to re-open the Ulster Canal has also borne fruit with the announcement that work is to begin on re-opening the first section. Currently, IWAI members are active in restoration projects on the Boyne, Newry and Lagan Canals and continue to campaign for other closed navigations including the Kilbeggan Line.

IWAI Branches hold approximately 200 events each year across inland navigations with the wider communities in many locations. These events include boat rallies, harbour festivals, walks, social gatherings, heritage activities, family activities and youth focused events.

IWAI is the respected voice of the waterway user, lobbying and advising national and local government authorities as well as other bodies on all matters connected with the waterways including byelaws, pollution and future developments.

### **Goals of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland.**

*IWAI is set up as a limited company - from our Memorandum of Association, it has the following objectives:*

- To promote the use, maintenance and development of the inland waterways of Ireland, and in particular, to advocate and promote the restoration to good order, and maintenance in good order of every navigable waterway and the fullest use of every navigable waterway by both commercial and pleasure traffic, provided such is not injurious to the environmental health of the waterways and surrounding areas
- To support any proposal which may be calculated to maintain or improve Irish waterways and also to improve navigation, lay moorings and carry out other works of improvement on and adjacent to the waterways

In furtherance exclusively of the above main objects the Company shall have the following ancillary objects:

- To oppose by appropriate action the abandonment or neglect of Irish canals or river navigations, the pollution of waterways, the obstructions of navigations by fixed bridges, aqueducts, overhead cables, or otherwise, the obstruction of towing paths, or any other action calculated to injure or destroy the navigation or amenities of the waterways of Ireland
- To prepare, either alone or in collaboration with any other body, guide books, charts, maps and other literature suitable for use by persons using the Irish navigations for any purpose, and to foster public interest in and knowledge of the Irish waterways by disseminating information on the subject to members and to the general public
- To organise visits to objects and places of interest on the waterways including water-borne journeys
- To do all such acts as shall further the active and corporate life of the Association and to cooperate with any other body having similar or sympathetic aims
- To represent the interests of boat owners in all matters pertaining to the above objects
- To organise, engage in, and sponsor boat rallies, exhibitions, displays, festivals, carnivals, sports, hobbies and entertainments

The organisation currently comprises of 23 Branches:

***Twenty one are geographically based***

- Athlone
- Barrow
- Belturbet
- Boyne Navigation
- Boyle River
- Carrick-on-Shannon
- Coalisland
- Corrib
- Dublin
- Kildare
- Lagan
- Lough Derg
- Lough Erne
- Newry
- North Barrow
- Offaly
- River Bann and Lough Neagh
- Royal Canal
- Shannon Harbour
- Slaney
- Ulster Canal

***Two are activity based.***

- Cruising Club
- Powerboat

The Association also has two Special Interest Groups, the Charts Special Interest Group (CSIG) and the Tranquility Special Interest Group (TSIG).

## Chapter 2 – How the IWAI is organised

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help members understand the organisation of the IWAI and the responsibilities resting with elected officers. It gives an overview of the roles of Members, Branches and Branch Officers, National Council and Executive Directors.

### Members

On joining the Association a Person or Family usually nominate the Branch to which they wish to belong, and in the absence of such nomination, the Association's Membership Secretary will allocate them to a Branch as appropriate, normally one nearest the postal address. To be regarded as a member in good standing a member must have paid the current membership fee.

A member ceases to be a member if they haven't paid the appropriate fee by April 30<sup>th</sup> or the date of the AGM for that year.

Members may attend events and a meeting of any Branch of the Association, however voting at such meetings is reserved to members of the Branch.

### **Branches & Branch Officers**

The Branch should have a minimum of three officers namely the following:

Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. It should also have a position of Vice-Chairperson if possible. There should also be a member, who is not an officer, and who, together with one of the officers, will represent the Branch at Council (Council Representative). Each Branch must appoint a Child Protection Officer and a Safety Officer.

The Officers shall be elected or re-elected at the Annual Meeting of Branch members, except that when a new Branch is being formed the Association's Executive Directors shall appoint Officers to serve until such time as there are sufficient members to hold an Annual General Meeting at which elections shall take place. On seeking election to one of these posts the member must have paid the appropriate membership fee for the current year.

In the event of needing to change the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer in a branch midterm due to resignation etc. the branch the normal procedure would be to hold an EGM and elect new officers as required, this will also facilitate bank requirements who will require sight of minutes indicating office holders were formally elected by the members.

### **Important Note**

The Executive Directors are responsible under the Companies Acts for the good and orderly running of the Association especially in the area of contracts as **only the Directors** may sign contracts or take out loans on behalf of the IWAI.



### **Branch meetings**

At least 2 weeks' notice shall be given by the Secretary or any deputy acting on their instructions, of the details of the Annual General Meeting and of every general meeting. The notice should have the Agenda for that meeting. See chapter 7 for details relating to AGM agenda items.

A general meeting must be convened by the Secretary if requested by the Committee or on receipt of a requisition signed by at least four Branch members. The Annual General Meeting of the Branch must be held in November or December each year at which the accounts of the Branch for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> October shall be tabled for approval, signed by the Chairperson and Treasurer once approved and forwarded to the National Treasurer without delay, accompanied by copies of bank statements.

Some Branches are organised by Committees, these are administered by a Committee comprising the Officers and additional Branch members elected at the Annual Meeting. The Committee has the power to co-opt further members to serve on it, but such co-opted members shall be subject to election at the next following Annual Meeting, and, if not then elected, shall not be eligible for co-option for at least 2 years.

The Committee shall meet when and where it or its Chairperson decides on giving to each of its members at least 7 days' notice or less if agreed by all committee members. Any three Committee members may call a meeting of the Committee. Three members are required for a quorum for any Committee meeting. When voting on elections and resolutions a show of hands will suffice unless at least two members present object, in which event, the vote shall be secret.

The Committee may appoint Sub-Committees or a committee with another IWAI Branch and this is covered in the Branch Rules.

When a Branch conducts its business by General Meeting it is administered by the Officers. Meetings are held when and where it or its Chairperson decides but members must be given at least 7 days' notice or less if agreed. Any ten Branch members may also call a meeting of the Branch. Five members are required for a quorum for the Branch meetings. When voting on elections and resolutions a show of hands will suffice unless at least two members present object, in which event, the vote shall be secret.

The Committee may appoint Sub-Committees or a committee with another IWAI Branch and this is covered in the IWAI Branch Rules.

## **Key roles on IWAI Committees**

### **The Chairperson's Role**

Preside at all meetings.

- Endeavour to ensure that the Branch is represented at each Council meeting and that the representatives report back to the Branch on all Council meetings
- Call an Annual General Meeting of the Branch to be held in November or December each year

- Ensure that the set of Accounts for that year up to 31st October, Minutes and Correspondence are ready for the meeting
- Use his/her best endeavours to ensure that there is at least one candidate for election or re-election to each office
- Ensure that tasks essential to the continued, safe operation of the Branch are allocated to officers
- Exercise a general supervisory role over the Branch to ensure that the officers and committees are performing their allocated tasks
- Ensure that proper accounting and financial controls are exercised over the Branch funds and property
- Ensure that one branch officer takes responsibility for recruitment and retention of members
- Encourage members to participate in Branch activities and join sub-committees thus providing for succession to both Branch and National offices

#### **The Secretary's Role**

- Send out notices of all meetings to those entitled
- Receive and deal with all correspondence
- Keep minutes of all meetings of the Branch and any Committee, and a record of all resolutions passed
- Carry out any reasonable duties requested by the Chairperson
- Ensure that all members attending and voting at the Branch Annual General Meeting are members of the Association in good standing i.e. have paid their membership fee for that calendar year
- Ensure that all Branch officers standing for election, or serving on sub or joint committees, are members of the Association in good standing i.e. have paid their membership fee for that calendar year

#### **The Treasurer's Role**

- Keep proper books of accounts in accordance with the Association's accounting templates and standards
- Bank all receipts and regularly balance the cash book or online accounting system

- Encourage all new and existing Branch members to join the Association or renew their membership using the online system
- Make all payments, except those of a petty cash nature, from a bank account
- Collect all outstanding debts and pay all duly approved bills as soon as possible
- Prepare Branch accounts and supporting schedules for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> October on the prescribed forms (the Accounts Package) and have them checked by an independent and competent person
- Present the accounts to the AGM with copies for all persons expected to attend; answer questions on them raised by members and give explanations as required by the meeting; secure their approval by the meeting and have them signed by the Chairperson and Secretary
- Send the signed Accounts and supporting documentation to the Association treasurer to arrive with him/her no later than 7 days after the Branch Annual General Meeting and not later than the 31st December
- Liaise as necessary with the Association treasurer
- Preserve the Branch's assets and ensure proper controls on receipts and payments and on the use of the Branch's assets
- Liaise and co-operate with the Association's membership secretary. Ensure that any subscriptions received locally are sent to the Association's membership secretary in a timely manner
- Co-operate with other officers and members in all matters concerning the promotion of the Association and the work of the Branch

#### **Membership Role**

- Takes responsibility for recruitment and retention of members

#### **Public Relations Role**

- Takes responsibility for branch public communications with members, key stakeholders, the media and the wider public

#### **Council Representative's Role**

- To represent the Branch's views at each council meeting
- To report to the Branch Committee and its members on Council activities

## **National Council**

The affairs of the Association are managed by a Council consisting of the following:

- (a) The President
- (b) Vice-President
- (c) Honorary Secretary
- (d) Honorary Treasurer
- (e) The immediate Past President
- (f) The six elected Directors
- (g) Two representatives from each Branch, the Chairperson or Secretary and one other member
- (h) Representatives of affiliated organisations such as the RCAG, Kilbeggan Harbour Restoration
- (i) Members of the Association elected to the Council at the Annual General Meeting. There are currently six of these members
- (j) Persons co-opted by Council
- (k) The Council may from time to time, invite such other persons as it deems appropriate, to attend meetings

The Council meets up to four times a year. Agendas and papers for these meetings are emailed by the Secretary. Branch officers are encouraged to inform their Branches of the Council business and to attend as many meetings as possible.

## **Executive Committee & Directors**

The day to day activities of the Association are dealt with by an Executive Committee. The Executive meets on a more frequent basis than the Council and ensures that the items discussed and agreed at Council are put into action.

The Executive of IWAI is made up of 11 members elected by the Annual General Meeting each year: President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Membership Secretary and 5 others, all of whom are Directors of IWAI. As the IWAI is a limited company it is required to have Directors.

Ten members of the Executive: President, Vice President, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Membership Secretary and the 5 other Directors are elected to office by the Annual General Meeting. The Immediate Past President is automatically elected to the executive in accordance with the Articles of Association. The Executive is empowered by the Articles of Association to co-opt additional non-voting members to the Executive as required.

While members frequently serve more than one term in office, they must put themselves forward for election at the AGM each year (except the Immediate Past President) For a number of years now it has been the practice that the names of members putting themselves forward for election to the Executive be notified to all members of the Association as part of the package of information sent out prior to the AGM. In the interests of transparency the names of those who are already known to be willing to serve on the Executive shall be published.

## Chapter 3 – Branch Accounting

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help Branches maintain and complete a simple but effective set of Branch accounts. It offers a standardised way to record and report on Branch financial details, makes preparation of accounts for AGM's simpler and quicker and will reduce the burden on you in maintaining this important function.

The guidance is divided into 7 sections:

- (a) **Definitions**
- (b) **Guidance Notes**
- (c) **Receipts Day Book**
- (d) **Payments Day Book**
- (e) **Adjustments**
- (f) **Income and Expenditure**
- (g) **Balance sheet**
- (h) **Handling cash and donations**

Don't be put off by some of these terms; the notes explain what's needed and how to go about maintaining proper records. These notes together with the sample layouts of the books will enable you to maintain a simple but adequate set of accounts. It is important that you are familiar with the Rules of the Association so that the timings and requirements of both your Branch and Council can be met. If (c) **Receipts Book** and (d) **Payments Book** are kept correctly and up to date then 95% of the work is done.

### (a) **Definitions:**

**Receipts:** Amounts of cash, cheques etc. received during the year whether or not they refer to the current, past or future years.

**Payments:** Amounts paid during the year whether or not they refer to that year (as above)

**Income:** Receipts as adjusted for those referring to other years plus amounts due but, as at year end, not yet received.

**Expenditure:** Amounts paid out as adjusted for those referring to other years plus amounts owing but not paid until after year end. Note, some Branches may not need any of these adjustments.

### (b) **Guidance Notes**

The IWAI as a limited company must conform to the Companies Acts and the principles of good corporate governance. Branches hold members funds and as such there is an onus on Branches to safeguard these funds and the assets of the IWAI which they are holding in trust. *The Treasurer should, not only keep good records, but be seen to be keeping good records. Such an approach ensures that every member and every other person seeing these records will have full confidence in the ability of the Branch and the Association to manage its affairs in a highly professional manner. As well as keeping the books it is the duty of the treasurer to exercise controls over the funds of the Branch. He/she should ensure that all dues are*

*collected and banked: that all payments are in line with the objects of the Association and properly authorised and that all records are filed for future reference.*

#### Online Branch Accounting.

The IWAI Online Branch Accounting (OBA) web application is the recommended method for recording branch income and expense transactions and for completing the Annual Accounts Report.

- It is an easy and useful tool to save time producing branch accounts for the branch and the AGM and to the National Treasurer and eliminates paper and emails with attached excels.
- It provides an asset register for the branch (sub set of balance sheet assets)
- It may ensure the assets are covered by the IWAI insurance policy.

The user manual of the application can be found in the link ;

[http://www.iwai.ie/online365/manuals/Online365\\_QuickAccessGuide\\_Treasurer\\_V2.pdf](http://www.iwai.ie/online365/manuals/Online365_QuickAccessGuide_Treasurer_V2.pdf)

However, if the Branch Treasurer wishes to use a paper based system or an Excel spreadsheet the following procedure may be used.

#### **(c) Receipts Day Book.**

The Receipts Day Book is an item by item record of each and every receipt of cash, cheque, postal order etc. as and when received. All receipts should be banked and the amount banked recorded in the daybook making the book self balancing and easily checked against the bank statements. Further the amount received should be placed in the appropriate column so that at end of year the total of each column (subject to certain possible adjustments) can be placed directly into the Summary Income section of the Annual Accounting Report. See sample Annual Accounting Report.

Note. Where a Branch runs big events it may wish to keep additional details of income and expenditure for its own records and for its own AGM. This can be easily accommodated by using an additional Sheet in the Day Book and placing the total in the profit/loss on rally into the Summary section on the Annual Accounting Report.

[http://www.iwai.ie/online365/manuals/Online365\\_QuickAccessGuide\\_Treasurer\\_V2.pdf](http://www.iwai.ie/online365/manuals/Online365_QuickAccessGuide_Treasurer_V2.pdf).

#### **(d) Payments Day Book (Cheque payments Book)**

All payments except minor amounts should be made by cheque and this book is a cheque by cheque record of these payments entered in cheque numerical order under the date in which they were written (not the date on which they were paid by the bank). Additional items such as bank interest and charges should also be entered as they appear on the bank statement. Again this treatment makes it easy to compare with the bank statement and, allowing for cheques written but not yet paid by the bank, reconcile with the branch accounts – note below

Minor Payments: Where an officer needs to purchase items for cash, these can be done by paying with own cash and claiming the amount which should be paid to him by cheque.

**Bank Account Reconciliation:**

This simple account should be completed regularly to ensure that sufficient funds are available for all known requirements. It can be completed on this layout and should always be completed for year-end accounts: The final amount in bold italics yellow is the amount to be transferred to the Balance Sheet on the Annual Accounting Report.

| Date  | 31. 12.15            | 28.02.16            | 31.05.16 | 31.07.16 | 30.09.16         | 31.10. 1      |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|------------------|---------------|
| Opening Balance 01.11.15  | 1001.11              | 951.11              | 1001.11  | 781.11   | 831.11           | 931.11        |
| Lodgements  | 250.00               | 500.00              | 100      | 250      | 400              |               |
| Total Available   | 1251.11              | 1451.11             | 1101.11  | 1031.11  | 1231.11          | 931.11        |
| Cheques   | 300.00               | 450.00              | 120      | 200      | 300              | 100.00        |
| <b>Current Balance</b>  | 951.11               | 1001.11             | 781.11   | 831.11   | 931.11           | <b>831.11</b> |
| Plus O/S Cheques – Cheques not yet cleared the bank but already written | 79 75.00<br>81 25.00 | 87 93.00<br>88 9.00 | 92 60    | 93 225   | 93 225<br>94 100 |               |
| Total not cashed  | 100.00               | 102                 | 60       | 225      | 325              |               |
| Balance per Bank Statement  | 1051.11              | 1103.11             | 841.11   | 1056.11  | 1256.11          | 831.11        |

Normally there will be another bank account i.e. a savings or a deposit account. It is much more satisfactory and easier to make all transfers to and from such an account from and to the current account; in that way the above accounts keep a record of the transactions for this account.

If the above three accounts are kept carefully there will be no problem in completing the Annual Accounting Report for the year.

**(e) Adjustments:**

This is the conversion of Receipts and Payments into Income and Expenditure.

As well as the receipts and payments, as covered above, the Annual Accounting Report figures may have to be adjusted for amounts due to the branch on 31 October but not received until after that date (Debtors) and provision for amounts owing by the Branch but not paid until after 31 October (Creditors). Further there may have been similar items in previous year's accounts (and received/paid in current year) which must be reversed. While this may appear complex it can be easily dealt with under the receipts and payments accounts headings in their respective books. See definitions of Income and Expenditure above.

Method:

1. Complete Receipts Day Book, Cheque Payments Book, and Bank Reconciliation. Underline all totals. See definitions of Receipts and Payments above.
2. In the Receipts Day Book, in left hand column write "Debtors" and under that sub-heading list all the items due to the Branch (if any) with the amounts placed under their respective headings as in the receipts above. Under these figures enter as minuses any similar figures contained in previous year's accounts. Underline, total, and underline totals of these figures. Add these totals to totals of Receipts above and you

have the figures to be placed in the Income section of the Annual Accounting Report with one exception and that is where certain accounts have to be netted – see below. The overall total of the Debtors is the figure for that item in the Balance Sheet

3. In the Cheque Payments Book, in the left hand column, write “Creditors” and under that sub-heading list all the amounts owed by the Branch (if any) with the amounts placed under their respective headings as in the payments above. Again, as in 2 above, under these figures enter as minuses any similar figures contained in previous years accounts. Underline, total, and underline totals of these figures. Add these totals to the totals of Cheque Payments above and these are the figures to be placed in the Expenditure section of the Annual Accounting Report with one exception and that is where certain accounts have to be netted – see below. The overall total of the Creditors is the figure for that item in the Balance Sheet.
4. As mentioned above, some accounts have to be netted. For many of our projects there are both income and expenditure and it is the net of these that is shown on the Annual Accounting Report.

Finally, for the Branches which have expensive equipment, depreciation may have to be dealt with. There has to be consistency of treatment and of rates for these items over the whole of the Association and Branches which have such equipment should advise the National Treasurer who will assist, in conjunction with other Branches, in dealing with this item.

#### **(f) Income and Expenditure:**

This can be daunting to those not familiar to the process, but once all the information is recorded in the Day Books as described on previous pages, then all that is needed is some addition or subtraction or simple transcribing of some of the information from the Day books. The Summary Income and Expenditure Sheet is filled out under certain headings, common to all Branches and Council of IWAI, for its audit.

##### **Summary Income Notes:**

From your Receipts Day Book enter the individual totals, as adjusted for Debtors (see section (d) “Adjustments” above).

1. Membership Fees from Council. Note except for Northern Branches all membership fees received direct from members should have been forwarded to Membership Secretary.
2. Donations and Grants received:
3. Surplus on Functions or Surplus on Rallies. This figure is the total of the various incomes (if any) recorded in the Receipts Day Book, less any outgoing (costs) that are recorded in the Payments Day Book. If the income exceeds the expenditure then the net value is recorded here, if a loss is incurred then the value is recorded in the Summary Expenditure.



4. Surplus on Merchandise Sales. Only a few Branches hold and sell merchandise. Merchandise is items the Branch holds in stock and intends to trade, i.e. sell. The correct approach to determining the profit or loss on such undertakings is to compute the purchase of stock ( at cost price) , this is done by valuing the stock at the start of the accounting period, adding purchases made throughout the period ( as recorded in the expenditure day book) then deduct the closing stock. This then gives an accurate figure for the cost of the undertaking. By simply subtracting this figure from the sales for the period the profit (or loss) can be easily computed. See Note 1 of Notes on Accounts in the Annual Accounts Reports.
5. Interest on Deposits. As well as any interest credited on the Current bank account and therefore recorded in Receipts Day Book, interest credited on the other bank accounts should also be included here.
6. Other Income. Add all the other income totals (if any) in the Receipts Day Book and enter the total here. Give details of any amounts over €100 or £100.

Summary Expenditure Notes:

From your Payments Day Book enter the individual totals, as adjusted for Creditors (see section (d) “Adjustments” above).

1. Secretarial, Postage and Stationary.
2. Branch Newsletters. If you have incurred costs producing a newsletter or other similar publications, then enter the total of the costs incurred here. If you are selling a newsletter, then it better treated as merchandise rather than a cost.
3. Losses on Functions. This item is the opposite of the equivalent item in the Summary Income. There will obviously be only one entry, either in either the Income or Expenditure, as you cannot have both a profit and a loss.
4. Losses on Rallies. As in 3 above
5. Projects. This figure represents the amounts spent on Work Parties, Mooring Buoys, Submissions, and other activities designed to promote the objects of the Association.
6. Grants and Donations. This represents the amounts granted or donated for the promotion of the objects of the Association.
7. Bank Charges & Interest. Include here, together with the figure from the Payments Day Book, any such charges debited on other Bank Accounts.

8. **Depreciation.** If the Branch has assets, then normally each year the asset will be worth less, just like a car for example. The Association must be consistent in its treatment and rates for this item, therefore please refer to National Treasurer for advice on this.
9. Add all the other income totals (if any) in the Payments Day Book and enter the total here. Give details of any amounts over €100 or £100.

**(g) Balance Sheet**

The Balance Sheet is a snapshot of the Branch monetary value or financial status at a given date. It contains assets and liabilities, surpluses for example are assets, where losses are liabilities. Again most of the numbers will come from the work already done:

**Assets.**

1. **Balances at bank – Current:** This is the “Current Balance” as shown above in the example Bank Reconciliation. Should it be overdrawn deal with it as a liability – see 2 below.
2. **Balances at Bank – Savings:** Normally the balance(s) as per the bank statement(s). Ensure that you have separately taken in Income any amounts of interest credited during the year.
3. **Cash on Hands:** Insert here any receipts not yet lodged again ensure that they have been taken into Income.
4. **Accounts Receivable or Debtors:** This is the sum of all amounts due to the Branch, taken into income but not yet received. They should be listed in that section of the Notes on Accounts.
5. **Stock:** If any stocks are being held by the Branch they should be dealt with in the first section of the Notes on Accounts and the closing value per these notes entered here.
6. **Property:** This is the written down value of equipment, being the figure in the previous period plus purchases during the year less depreciation. The depreciation figure is that amount shown in the Expenditure. Contact Treasurer to agree depreciation rates and treatment.
7. **Investments:** Show here the cost value. Should they be worth less than cost contact Treasurer to agree a write-down or write-off.
8. **Other Assets:** As in 7 above

**Liabilities.**

1. **Bank Overdraft:** See 1 above
2. **Accounts Payable or Creditors:** This is the opposite of 4 above and should be listed in that section of the Notes on Accounts.
3. **Other Liabilities:** List here any contingencies provided for in Expenditure and not included in 2 above.

**The net of these two figures is the “Accumulated Fund” of the Branch and this is the accumulated fund at the end of the previous year plus the Surplus (or minus the deficit) for the current year. This is shown in the “Represented by” section and if everything is correct the Balance Sheet balances!**

The National Treasurer will send you the forms for the current year and these forms will show how the previous year was dealt with and how to complete the current year using examples and explanations... The foregoing attempts to cover all possible aspects of a Branch's activities and therefore may appear complex. However most Branches will not have many of these complexities and the completion of the accounts will be simple. The most important requirement is that Receipts, Payments and Bank Reconciliation are complete and up to date. The rest can be very easily dealt with and the National Treasurer will always be available to assist.

The Association Honorary Treasurer (treasureriwai@gmail.com) is available to assist Branches in the production of accounts.

### **(h) Handling Cash Donations** (Ref. Charities Institute Ireland)

The key principles governing cash handling by the IWAI are;

All cash including cheques, postal orders, bank drafts, credit card and gift card donations is recorded and should be capable of being traced through to the branch bank account.

All cash is banked and acknowledged at the earliest possible opportunity.

Cash is at all times to be counted by two members or two authorized representatives of the branch at events and functions.

Cash handling procedures are important to protect the association from fraud, theft or embezzlement, to protect volunteers from accusations of dishonesty and to assure donors that their donations and gifts are used for the purpose for which they were given.

#### ***Cash and Non Cash Handling***

Cash is counted in a secure environment and held in a secure place till it is possible to bank it.

Income summaries ought to be made at the point of counting for reconciliation with banking details at a later stage.

Deductions must not be made from the cash received. Expenses must be met (where previously agreed) by the branch after the receipt of the cash.

A receipt is given to the donor or member recording the amount of the donation or fee, the donor's details the source of the donation and the purpose from which the donation or fee is being made (if relevant).

Acknowledgements are issued, where requested and where practical, to third party donors, e.g. a coffee morning participant, fundraising event sponsor, etc. This serves to ensure that the donor receives official confirmation that their donation arrived and will be used for the purpose the donor intended.

Records are made of all donations including taking note of those made for specific purposes to ensure donor's wishes are met. A simple form for recording donors is given in the Appendix - Donor's List.

Where the branch is unable to apply the donation to a specific purpose nominated by the donor the branch should have a procedure in place to immediately communicate with the donor and to deal with that donation in a manner satisfactory to the donor which may include returning the gift.

In principle it is best practice to acknowledge all donations however it may not be either practical or cost effective. A decision can be made by the branch as to the level of donations above which an acknowledgement to the donor is practical, say €100.00.

All cash handlers shall have suitable banking bags for counting and bagging up the money.

### ***Banking***

Wherever possible, cash is banked immediately. Counterfoils are retained for the branch and the individual responsible for banking.

Cash not banked immediately is placed in a sealed container in a secure place. If cash cannot be banked immediately, handling procedures should be agreed in advance. Cash is never left unattended or in an unattended environment. For security two should bank the cash, where practical.

### ***Cash Handling and Events***

Endeavour to sell any tickets prior to the event to reduce the need for cash on the day of the event.

Make pricing of tickets or goods for sale sensible (for example 50 cent, €1.00, €10.00 etc.) in order to minimize cash handling. All tickets for sale are pre-numbered and sales and takings reconciled.

Nominate one individual with overall responsibility for overseeing cash handling.

Consider ways in which cash can be held securely, for example, through the use of money belts.

### ***At the Event***

Issue round quantities of tickets or programmes with sellers signing for the quantity received.

Unsold tickets or programmes are returned and reconciled with the record of cash received from each seller.

Discrepancies should be investigated without delay.

To avoid sellers accumulating significant amounts of cash, pre-designated collectors should collect cash. Alternatively cash receiving locations should be available to sellers.

Ensure the Charity Registered Number (CRN) of IWAI “CHY10915” is prominently displayed on all collection boxes and badges.

Collections from sales or collection boxes are recorded on a summary with a signature from the sellers signifying the amount of cash collected. In certain circumstances it may not be practical for cash to be counted at interim stages during the course of an event, however, a record that a collection has been made should be evidenced by signatures from both collectors and sellers.

All final amounts including floats are collected and recorded from all locations at the end of an event.

#### ***Relations with Donors and Stakeholders***

Donors are encouraged to make donations by cheque made payable to the IWAI or branch or by credit card where practical rather than cash.

Donors are encouraged never to make a cheque payable to a named individual.

Volunteer cash handlers are given clear instructions for which to work.

All volunteer cash handlers should have appropriate documentation authorizing them to handle cash such as ID cards, CRN or letter of authorization.)

Try to verify the competence and integrity of volunteer cash handlers in advance.

Volunteer cash handlers should be supervised by a branch member where possible.

Where children are collecting money (for example, sponsored swims, bag packing, etc. they are accompanied at all times by an adult and the relevant documentation (sponsorship cards,) in regard to pledged monies should be available for inspection by sponsors.

It is illegal for children under 14 years of age to take part in cash collections (Street and House to House Collections Act 1962 as amended)

Ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place and that the cash handlers understand and follow the conditions of that cover.

Private companies and businesses may claim tax relief for donations of plant, equipment or provision of services to a charity. To ensure evidence to the Revenue Commissioners if the donor is subject to an audit it is good practice to also record the details of the donation in the Donors’ List form mentioned above.

#### ***Accumulated Fund.***

The accumulated fund in the Balance Sheet is the fund accumulated by the branch and its members since inception of branch and is represented primarily by the bank balance(s) of the branch.

Where the bank balances(s) exceed €2,000.00 the excess should be forwarded to the National Treasurer who will place it for safe keeping in the funds reserved or restricted to that branches projects and activities and released to the branch when required by the branch treasurer.

## Chapter 4 – Branch Events

The purpose of this section of the Branch Officers Handbook is to provide IWAI Branches with guidance on considerations that should be taken into account when organising and publicising events. These events should be seen as an opportunity for publicising the Association's objectives, recruitment and education.

### Land Based Events

Events should be planned well in advance to ensure that they are well organised and well publicised. If you are organising a speaker for the meeting it is important to bear in mind what will likely be of interest to all those present. It is worthwhile having a local member as a backup speaker in case the guest speaker cancels at short notice. To this effect it is worth contacting your speaker a few days in advance to make sure they still have it in their diary. Speakers should be thanked in writing. If you get a good speaker, let other Branches in your area know.

### Branch Meetings

These should be called in accordance with the IWAI Branch Rules, these are available the IWAI website [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie).

### Location of Land Based Events or Meetings

Careful thought should be given to finding a suitable venue in which to hold meetings. Suitability, facilities and cost can vary considerably.

- Consider ease of access including wheelchair access, parking, lighting, temperature, refreshment / welfare facilities etc.
- Check fire routes and exits are clear and available for use
- Check location and availability of first aid kit, fire extinguishers and assembly point(s)
- Know the number of people present (Sign-in sheet)
- Ask the owner / manager of the premises to share their risk assessments if available. If there are none available you can prepare a risk assessment for the venue using the blank templates in the IWAI safety statement

The following should be borne in mind when considering a meeting venue:

- Is the venue easy to find and serviced by good public transport?
- Is parking available on site or nearby?
- Has the meeting room got a good atmosphere, i.e. lighting, acoustics, temperature?
- Can the room be made dark enough for electronic presentations?
- Are there refreshment and lavatory facilities available before, during and after the meeting?
- Is location suitable for wheelchair users or those with mobility difficulties

### Health & Safety

Most meetings are held in a public halls or public houses, but it is necessary for the organiser of such meetings to ensure that the following points are checked:

- Fire doors must be unlocked and free access to them should be available.
- Fire extinguishers should be available, and serviced within the last year.

- An evacuation point should be designated.
- The exact number of people present should be known. (Sign-in sheet)
- The location of a first aid kit should be known.

There should be a written risk assessment for each venue used. The Association's Health and Safety Statement contains template risk assessments which can be downloaded and edited to make specific to the venue.

## **Work Parties, Rallies \ Water Based events**

### **Work Parties Duties**

Please see the published IWAI Guidelines at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie) for further guidance.

### **Cruise in Company Duties**

Please see the published IWAI Guidelines at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie) for further guidance.

### **Key Points**

#### **Agree a cruise in company itinerary:**

- Draw up a schedule for visiting the venues
- Meet and discuss the proposed itinerary with premises owners / lock keepers
- Record meetings, contact name(s) and telephone numbers
- Appoint a Cruise in Company subcommittee to include Secretary, Treasurer, Safety Officer, and Child Protection Officer, as required
- Compile a contingency itinerary as a backup plan

There a number of key duties in the event guidelines and a flow chart to help you in planning event in the IWAI Guidelines on cruises in company.

### **Be friendly**

If new members attending your event enjoy themselves they stay with us and come to future events.

Check the sign-in sheet for new names, welcome them and give them a list of future events or meetings. Tell them about IWAI's work and how they can become more involved, should they wish and offer them a membership form.

Appoint someone at meetings who is tasked with being hospitable to new or non-members, welcoming them to the meeting and telling the more about IWAI's work and how they can become more involved, should they wish.

## Chapter 5 – Protecting Members

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help Branches by informing them of the various obligations placed on the Association in the areas of Health & Safety, Child Protection and Insurance.

### Health & Safety

1. Since November 2006 the Association has a Health & Safety policy in place. This has been reviewed and updated in 2018 and is available at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie) and should be brought to the attention of all new officers and those involved in the running of events.
2. Health & Safety obligations impact on the Association, Branches, the organisers of events and individual members. Members should appraise themselves of these obligations.
3. Branches should appoint a Safety Officer. In the absence of the Safety Officer at any event the most senior member of the committee in attendance takes on that role.
4. The key to protection is the carrying out of Risk Assessments, the IWAI Health and Safety Statement contains template risk assessments that can be edited and made location and activity specific.
5. Training to members in all areas of Health & Safety should be provided by Branches particularly those involved in activities that involve physical risks.

### Child Protection Policy

1. The Association has a Child Protection Policy in place a copy of which is available on [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie)
2. This Policy is underpinned by several pieces of legislation including the Children First Act 2015.
3. It is a statutory requirement for each Branch to implement and operate this policy.
4. Each Branch must nominate a Branch Child Protection Officers (BCPO) and Event Child Protection Officer(s) (ECPO) and inform the Branch membership of the appointments.
5. Contact details of the BCPO & ECPO must be provided to the IWAI Vice President who will assume the role of National Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection under this policy.
6. BCPOs & ECPOs must complete an online Child Protection training programme and undertake Garda Vetting through the IWAI. Vetting held for other professional or voluntary roles in other organization no longer suffice.



## **Insurance**

1. The IWAI at national level has taken out an Insurance Policy to indemnify IWAI officers in the event of a claim for negligence.
2. The indemnity covers IWAI officers and designated organisers at IWAI organised events for members and the general public.
3. Event organisers and IWAI Officers are only covered by IWAI insurance if they are members of the Association in good standing i.e. they have paid the appropriate membership fee.
4. Boats attending IWAI organised events are required to declare that they have minimum of 3rd party insurance cover for the period of the event
5. Branches must inform the Treasurer through the listing of events of the activities that the Branch intends to hold in a year. Any particular activity that carries high risk such as work parties should be highlighted.
6. Volunteer members participating in work parties that are not specifically covered by the IWAI Project Insurance Policy are not permitted to use any powered tools.
7. Volunteer members participating in work parties must read and sign a copy of the IWAI Safety Rules for work parties.
8. Branches should record attendance at these events and work parties and retain these records for **3 years as required by the Association's Insurance Policy.**
9. A cover note to show the insurance policy is in place is available on request from Executive.

## **Member Protection Policy**

1. The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and intimidation and places considerable emphasis on establishing and maintaining Equality of Opportunity and Dignity and Respect within its organisation.
2. The Association has a **Member Protection Policy** in place a copy of which is available on [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie). This policy document explains what is meant by Equality of Opportunity and Dignity and Respect from the perspective of the IWAI and outline measures that will be taken to achieve them.

## **Chapter 6 – Communications**

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help Branches communicate effectively with members, key stakeholders, the media and the wider public.

There are many reasons why IWAI seeks publicity and some are set out below:

- Increase our profile, locally, regionally and nationally
- Place a subject/activity on the public agenda, i.e. create and raise awareness/interest of activities in IWAI
- Create a platform for ongoing media interest
- Encourage public support and endorsement of IWAI
- Deliver in- depth information and messages (which cannot be delivered by an advertisement) e.g. water abstraction, navigation closures
- Provide lobbying support messages to further the cause of improving the inland waterways

The activities of public relations include:

- Publicity- sending out a planned news release/article through selected media, to further the particular interest of the IWAI, an IWAI member or an IWAI event
- Promotion- to seek support for IWAI
- Issues management- identification of issues of potential concern to IWAI and the development of a system to respond to them
- Crisis management- identification of issues and an appropriate response mechanism for unanticipated situations
- Media relations- dealing with the media in seeking publicity for, or responding to, media interest in activities of the waterways of Ireland
- Merchandising support- the use of IWAI sales materials e.g. burgees, ensigns etc.
- Event management- involves planning activities or staging events, which will attract media attention. A Branch rally or cruise in company would be typical examples

- Promotion-This incorporates special events, storylines about the specific issue in activities, competitions or documents
- Public affairs- public relations involving community and government relations - which is dealing with officials within the community and working with legislative groups and agencies
- Publicity- sending forward planned messages through selected media, without payment to the media, to further the particular interest of IWAI. Publicity is a tool used by a public relations officer, it is not public relations in itself

### **Communication Methods**

This section aims to develop our collective skills in utilising as many different channels of information sharing as we can - get people talking about IWAI.

Some platforms for your consideration include:

- Local Parish Newsletters
- Local Heritage Officer in the County Council
- Local Environmental Awareness Officer in the County Council
- Local Community Forum Membership via the Community & Enterprise Section of the County Council
- Local Sports Partnerships via the Community & Enterprise Section of the County Council
- Local Public Representatives
- Local Development Agencies e.g. LEADER II companies, ADM companies
- Local Volunteer Groups where you IWAI and them might share a viewpoint e.g. fishing, rowing, canoeing, sailing, walking, historical societies etc.
- Local business support organisations e.g. Chambers of Commerce, County Enterprise Boards, Tourism Agencies, etc.
- Newspapers – Local, Regional, National (both on sale and free)
- Newspapers - Weekend Supplements
- Magazines - Special Interest Groups
- Magazines - Tourism and Transport related e.g. Cara Magazine, in house magazine for Aer Lingus
- Radio – National, Local & Community Stations e.g. Dublin City University student
- TV - Local News Roundup type programs e.g. Nationwide
- TV Production - Documentaries, Television Companies, try your ideas into TV production companies
- Internet - your own Branch page on IWAI
- Internet - your local town /county website, use both volunteers and statutory agencies
- Internet - tourism websites and events guides - get some exposure for your rallies, events, and launches
- Internet – Facebook, personal, Branch other, Twitter
- Internet – IWAI Forum

- Festivals Committees in your area - e.g. Scarriff Festival, Co. Clare; St. Patrick's Day Festival Dublin

### **Key Stakeholders**

Try and identify the key stakeholders in your area e.g. local politicians, clubs etc., and try to establish a rapport so that you may use joint communication methods and reach a wider audience. Remember the importance of the IWN as a communication tool. It has an average print run of 4,000 posted to IWAI members and a significant number of stakeholders.

### **Reasons to Write a News Release**

It is important for IWAI as an organisation to remain visible to its members and to the public in general. Branches can utilize the tool of News Releases to enable the general public the opportunity to learn about events, issues and information relating to the waterways.

In essence News Releases achieve the following;

- Place a subject on the public agenda
- Garner public support
- Deliver complex information and messages (which cannot be delivered by an advertisement)
- Offer the media an opportunity to publicise something different/interesting for their particular publication
- Present information to a wider audience than just IWAI's members
- Create awareness in the public of events that they may otherwise not be informed of

Further detailed information is available at

[http://www.iwai.ie/org/policies/IWAI\\_Public\\_Relations\\_&\\_Communications\\_Handbook.FirstEdition2010.pdf](http://www.iwai.ie/org/policies/IWAI_Public_Relations_&_Communications_Handbook.FirstEdition2010.pdf).

Having an active dedicated resource in Branch acting as Public Relations Officer (PRO) or someone who will take on this role is very important. Branches are planning most events and activities well in advance, sometimes up to a year away. Your January meeting is the best place to plan your news release campaign. Several reasons for this include - planning news release patterns for the year, having an overall picture of what you would like publicised on an annual basis, designating responsibility to a team, and making sure the news machine still works for you when you are all rafting on a nice quiet lake far from the worries of media, business etc.

The Association PRO ([PRO@iwai.ie](mailto:PRO@iwai.ie)) is also available to assist Branch PROs in their duties.

## Chapter 7 – Managing Meetings

This section of the Branch Officers Handbook is designed to help Branch Officers run effective meetings to allow efficient running of business and achieve results.

There are five key steps to running successful meetings.

1. Plan
2. Prepare – Agenda
3. Notify
4. Record – Attendance – Key points – Actions
5. Running the meeting

### 1. Planning the Meeting

A meeting has to have: a **Purpose**, an **Agenda**, and a **Timeframe**.

You should be able to define the **purpose** of the meeting in 1 or 2 sentences at most. "This meeting is to plan the restoration campaign" or "this meeting is to review the Association's new policy for handling Health & Safety." That way everyone knows why they are there, what needs to be done, and how to know if they are successful. Most meetings within the Association are usually general meetings with a variety of items to be discussed and planned.

### 2. Prepare your Agenda

Set an **agenda**. List the items you are going to review/discuss/inspect. It may help to assign a time limit to each agenda item and identify the person responsible to speak or moderate the discussion.

Set a **timeframe**; at the very least set a start and end time. It may help by setting the duration for each item on the agenda. These should total to the overall meeting timeframe.

You can avoid the pressure for 'Any Other Business' at the end of the meeting if you circulate a draft agenda in advance of the meeting, and ask for any other items for consideration. ('Any Other Business' often creates a free-for-all session that wastes time, and gives rise to new tricky expectations, which if not managed properly then closes the meeting on a negative note.

### 3. Notify

The Branch Rules (available at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie).) describe the notice periods which should be given to members. To ensure that you reach all of your members obtain an up to date membership list for your Branch from the on line 365 membership section on the IWAI website or by contacting the National Membership Secretary.

#### **4. Record – Attendance – Key points – Actions**

##### **Attendance at meetings should be recorded**

The Secretary or another person nominated by the Chairperson should keep minutes of the meeting. If you set an agenda in the first place, as you should have, the note taker can use that as an outline. The minutes should record who attended, what was discussed, any agreements that were reached, and any action items that were assigned.

Soon after the meeting the minutes of the meeting should be distributed, usually by email, to all who attended, any invitees who did not attend, and anyone else effected by the discussion. Distributing the minutes informs those not at the meeting of the progress that was made and reminds everybody of their action items.

The minutes should be retained in a safe place either in paper or electronic format. The minutes should be agreed and signed at the next meeting.

#### **5. Running the meeting**

##### **Don't Wait**

Start on time. If someone arrives late, don't go back and review what has already been covered.

##### **Stay Focused**

Sometimes a meeting may stray off topic, a "topic keeper" may help in such situations. The topic keeper's job is to interrupt whenever the discussion strays from the topic under discussion. These new topics can either be tabled until later or scheduled for their own meeting.

Ask attendees to turn off all mobile phones and other personal electronic devices. If appropriate, have attendees introduce themselves when speaking.

The Chairperson should make sure that speakers are not interrupted by anyone while they are speaking, even if they disagree strongly. Members should be encouraged to wait until the proper time and be acknowledged by the chairperson to speak.

Be clear and concise when speaking and be sure what you are saying is relevant to the topic being discussed. Maintain all requested confidences relative to the meeting.

#### **6. Branch AGM**

The above guidance applies equally to the running of an AGM. The following is a sample AGM Agenda with items that should be on the agenda.

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
3. Matters Arising

4. Correspondence
5. Chairperson's Report
6. Hon. Secretary's Report
7. Hon. Treasurer's Report & sign off of accounts
8. Election of Branch Officers
  - Chairperson
  - Vice Chairperson\*
  - Hon. Secretary
  - Hon. Treasurer
  - Webmaster\*
  - PRO\*
  - Branch Executive Members\*
  - Child Protection Officer(s)
9. Nomination of 2 Branch Representatives to IWAI Council
10. AOB

Items 2, 7 & 9 should be proposed and seconded.

\*The branch can determine and fill these roles as they determine best, they can also be shared. AGM must elect a Chairperson, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.

## **List of IWAI Policy Reference Documents**

These are all available at [www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie).

- Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association (Constitution)
- Child Protection Policy
- Member Protection Policy
- Branch Rules
- Health & Safety Statement
- Cruise in Company/Events Guidelines
- Branch Account Forms
- IWAI Public Relations & Communications Handbook
- IWAI Safety Rules for Work Parties

END.