



Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers' Association Inc.

Date: Wednesday, 8 October 2025
Time: 5.30pm
Venue: Pask Winery Cellar Door, 1133 Omahu Road, Hastings

Present:

Sally Duncan (Chair), Peter Hurlstone (Deputy Chair), Bridget Wilton (Board Member), Emma Lowe (Board Member), Wim Barendsen (Board Member), Oliver Kettle (Board Member), Brent Linn (CE), Richard Brown (Tironui), Xan Harding, Peter Robertson (Brookfields), Fabian Yukich (NZW), Philip Gregan (NZW), Ian Quinn (Two Terraces), Richard Brimer, John Hancock, Andrew Stove (Cbrands), Paul Ham (AlphaDomus), Jenny Dobson (Jenny Dobson Wines), Tony Bish (Tony Bish Wines), Lauren Swift (Swift Wines), Rene Fisch (Whenua Wines), Cairn Coghill (Alchemy), Rod Easthope (Easthope Winegrowers), John Loughlin (Askerne), Stefan & Nadine Loetscher (Oak Estate), Maxim Cavey, Gavin Dalton (Brookfields), Andrea & Phil Cranswick, Vince Labat (Te Mata), Ollie & Rebecca Powrie (Chateau Garage), Nick Buck (Te Mata), Alwyn Corban (AB Corban Wine), Rosie Butler & Rodger Tynan (Lime Rock), Emma Taylor (NZW)

Apologies:

Amy Hopkinson-Styles (Board Member), David Peabody (Craggy Range), Mike Henley MW, Kate Radburnd (Radburnd Cellars)

Sally Duncan, Chair, welcomed everyone, particularly Councillors Xan Harding and Alwyn Corban, and Fabian Yukich, Philip Gregan and Emma Taylor from NZ Wine, and thanked them for attending. Sally also thanked Pask Winery for hosting the AGM.

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at the Hastings Community Arts Centre, are a true and correct record.

Bridget Wilton / Maxime Cavey

2. **CHAIR REPORT**

Sally Duncan read her 2025 Chair Report:

Could the 2025 vintage be the one that defines our legacy? This year's exceptional harvest promises to further reinforce Hawke's Bay's standing on the world stage. It is a time to recognise the collective effort, skill, and dedication that characterise our region. I am proud to present the 2025 Chair's Report for Hawke's Bay Winegrowers, a reflection of a year marked by progress and achievement. This report centres on our core strategic pillars: advocacy, education, collaboration, celebration, and connection. As an Association, our mission is to promote, protect, and enhance the interests of Hawke's Bay's wine industry, solidifying our reputation as New Zealand's premier

wine region and a recognised Great Wine Capital. Our unwavering commitment is to support the Hawke's Bay wine community so that together, we can achieve excellence.

Advocacy

Throughout the year, the Association has championed the interests of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers with steadfast advocacy. Notable progress was made in supporting independent grape growers through a benchmarking workshop, which highlighted significant differences in profitability and encouraged growers to share knowledge and learn from one another's experiences. Our advocacy also extended to representing members on water management issues, particularly the TANK appeal. Special appreciation goes to Peter Hurlstone and Emma Taylor for their tireless dedication, navigating complex legal and political landscapes through countless meetings and appeals. In addition to these local efforts, we have worked diligently to ensure Hawke's Bay Winegrowers have a strong voice at the national level. Our collaboration with other regional wine associations has allowed us to present a united front on issues impacting the broader New Zealand wine sector.

Education

Education remains a cornerstone of our strategy. This year we hosted a series of regional workshops aimed at building both capability and cohesion within the industry. Topics included red blends, storytelling and branding, social media, and export strategies, all of which equipped members with valuable insights and practical resources.

A major highlight was the second Aotearoa New Zealand Chardonnay Symposium, held in September 2024. The event brought together 150 producers, marketers, and business owners from across New Zealand and Australia. Esteemed speakers such as Jasper Morris MW (Burgundy) and Elaine Chukan-Brown plus many others offered international perspectives that underscored our place in the global Chardonnay landscape. Led by Board member Amy Hopkinson-Styles, the organising committee delivered a program that enhanced the credibility of New Zealand, and particularly Hawke's Bay, as a world-class Chardonnay producer.

Having these influential commentators visit the region, engage with producers, and gain a deeper understanding of our unique wine story has been invaluable. Hosting this national event brought significant benefits to our region by enhancing our reputation and fostering greater industry knowledge.

Looking ahead, we plan to host a sparkling wine workshop next month and are developing a new export member initiative for 2026, with more details to be shared soon. Progress was also made on a Te Reo strategy to promote cultural awareness and inclusion among Board members, with the intention to extend this initiative to our broader membership in due course.

Collaboration

Collaboration is fundamental to our work at Hawke's Bay Winegrowers. The Hawke's Bay VINE group has continued its focus on biodiversity, vineyard benchmarking, and grower support, holding several discussion group meetings that received enthusiastic feedback from participants. Our international collaborations have been strengthened through participation in Great Wine Capitals workshops and exchanges. Some of our members were awarded knowledge exchange scholarships, enabling them to learn from global best practices and bring valuable insights back to our region. We look forward to sharing these with you all.

We are proud that Hawke's Bay wines are being showcased at Cité Du Vin in Bordeaux, further enhancing our international profile. The Hawke's Bay Chardonnay Collection, now in its fifth year, is a regionally coordinated initiative involving multiple producers, media outreach, and international promotion. This project exemplifies our collective effort to elevate Hawke's Bay's Chardonnay profile, earning both national and international recognition.

We also initiated several joint projects with EIT and BRI to explore innovative viticulture and sustainability practices. These collaborations have advanced our knowledge and fostered a spirit of cooperation and shared purpose throughout the wine community.

Connection

Fostering connection was a major focus this year, as we welcomed media, sommeliers, and visitors back to the region. The year began strongly with the International Visitor Hosting Programme, which followed Pinot 2025 and generated positive media coverage. It was inspiring to see such esteemed visitors express genuine enthusiasm for our region and wines.

Additional events throughout the year hosted international media and sommeliers, further enhancing Hawke's Bay's visibility and reputation. Visitors consistently commented on the distinctive qualities of our wines and the warmth of our community. Such connections are vital, as they boost our international profile, attract more visitors, and help secure broader recognition for our region.

Celebration

Celebration has been at the heart of this year's activities. Signature events like Taste Hastings, Harvest Hawke's Bay, and the Bridge Pa Wine Festivals drew wine lovers from across the country and beyond. Taste Hastings celebrated its fourth anniversary by welcoming over 1,500 attendees. In October, we marked 40 years of vintages with an event honouring Richard Brimer, pairing Hawke's Bay wines with his photographic artistry in the exhibition "40 Vintages: Hawke's Bay Wine Chronicles."

Another highlight was the Hawke's Bay Charity Wine Auction, which raised over \$370,000 for Cranford Hospice—a testament to the generosity and spirit of our wine community. Just amazing!

Celebration also extends to our people. This year, the Board bids farewell to David Peabody Jr of Craggy Range and thanks him for his valuable contributions. We look forward to announcing a new Board member soon. I wish to acknowledge our current Board members: Oliver Kettle, Chair of the Marketing Committee; Wim Barendsen, Independent Grape Growers Committee; Bridget Wilton, Vineyard Benchmarking; Emma Lowe, Young Wine Maker and Women in Wine; Amy Hopkinson-Styles, People and Environment Committee; and Peter Hurlstone, Vice Chair and Advocacy. Their dedication makes my role as Chair so much easier, and I am deeply grateful for all their efforts.

Special thanks also go to Sarah White for leading marketing and communications, Fiona Rollings for elevating our professionalism, and Brent Linn, our Executive Officer, for his dedication and leadership.

On behalf of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers, we would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors for their unwavering support and dedication to our region. Your contributions have made a significant impact, and we encourage everyone to support these wonderful companies in return. A special welcome to our new sponsor Ukko, whose partnership we are thrilled to have. Thank you for being an integral part of our community!

Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone in the wine community, whose contributions are integral to our region's ongoing success.

Looking Ahead

This year has reaffirmed Hawke's Bay's momentum and upward trajectory. Recognition as a Great Wine Capital, the success of our events and community initiatives, and the strong foundation laid in 2025 all point to an even brighter future. With the Great Wine Capitals AGM to be held in Hawke's Bay next year, we have an exceptional opportunity to further strengthen international relationships and showcase our region to the world. It is worth noting that Hawke's Bay's name will appear on over 32 million bottles this vintage, generating more than half a billion dollars for our region.

As we celebrate the achievements of 2025, whether this vintage will become “the one” remains to be seen. What is certain is that Hawke’s Bay continues to set the standard for premium New Zealand wine, and our best days are still ahead.

3. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

As the Annual Report containing the EO Report had been circulated previously to members Brent did not read his full report but highlighted the opening paragraph:

Looking forward I am optimistic that with a committed HBWG management team in place, expert governance from your Board and the support of you as a member, the continuing success of our region’s wine industry is ours to make.

Brent urged all attending to read the Annual Report (a copy available either as people registered at the AGM or online on the Hawke’s Bay Winegrowers website) noting it contained a review of the year ending June 2025 including the services and support provided to members, along with Hawke’s Bay Winegrowers operations.

4. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The financial accounts for the year ended 30 June 2025 were presented at the meeting. Brent Linn noted that these accounts differed to those circulated previously with a better result than originally indicated.

Resolved:

That the annual financial accounts for the year ended 30 June 2025 be taken as read.

Sally Duncan / John Hancock

Resolved:

That the annual financial accounts for the year ended 30 June 2025 as presented at the meeting be accepted.

Sally Duncan / Peter Hurlstone

5. CHANGES TO HAWKE’S BAY WINEGROWERS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Brent Linn presented the paper containing proposed amendments to the Constitution which had been circulated with the Notice of AGM and which had been approved by the Board. He noted three main changes which would affect members:

1. Membership – the payment of levies to NZW is now no longer a requirement of membership to HBWG;
2. Governance – the makeup of the Board has been extended to include two independent directors. From the next Board election the Board will comprise of:
 - Up to three directors from the grape growers voting group;
 - Up to three directors from the wine makers voting group; and
 - Up to two independent directors elected from the Hawke’s Bay community.
3. The name of the Association will be changed to Hawke’s Bay Wine Association Incorporated.

Other amendments to the Rules were being made to ensure HBWG met the requirements of the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 and to correct minor wording and to reflect current operating practice.

Question from the floor – it was asked why HBWG would still have the wording “Association Incorporated”. Brent advised that Hawke’s Bay Wine Association Incorporated would be the full legal entity but that it would be known as Hawke’s Bay Wine which is currently used in our promotional material.

There was no further feedback received from the floor.

Resolved:

That the members of Hawke's Bay Winegrowers Association Incorporated, having received and reviewed the draft Constitution updated in accordance with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022, hereby approve and adopt the revised Constitution as presented, effective immediately upon ratification at this Annual General Meeting.

Peter Hurlstone / Emma Lowe

6. **MEETING CLOSED**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.50pm.

Guests were invited to stay for presentation of Member Awards and the silent auction of wines donated for the Hawke's Bay Winegrowers Charitable Trust.

Chairperson.....

Date.....