



## ***Chair's Report to the 2025 AGM***

My 2025 has been dominated by unfortunately snapping my Achilles tendon in the last run through of the last rapper practice before DERT... Not to let anything stop me, I did DERT as a musician in a wheelchair while I was waiting for surgery, and was delighted that Mabel Gubbins could still muster two sets without me dancing for the showcase. DERT, hosted by our very own Rockingham Rapper, was fabulous, and my congratulations go to them again for putting on an excellent event.

I'm now back dancing again, albeit gently – hopping is a bit of a problem but I'm back doing rapper, step clog and a bit of gentle Cotswold, hopefully the rest will follow as I continue to recover.

Before my accident, I was pleased to attend the Morris Ring's ARM in Cannock in March, where I was delighted to see Emma Melville dance in as the first female Squire of the Morris Ring. It's been a pleasure working with Emma so far, and my thanks as ever to the Ring for their hospitality.

I also attended the Morris Federation's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day of Dance and AGM in Sheffield, where it was a privilege to see President Pauline Woods-Wilson's EFDSS gold badge presentation event – even if the role of the badge was played by a small gold duck! The Morris Federation put on a fantastic event to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and I'd like to thank them very much for their hospitality, and their friendship over those 50 years, too.

Wallingford BunkFest had a great year, despite marking the sad death of my father Dave Newson, who was one of the founders of the festival. Due to my injury I have been at less events this year than normal, but I still feel like I've been able to get to lots of things and have seen lots of OM teams dancing.

This year we bid farewell to Liz Scholey in her role as Treasurer of Open Morris, and I'd like to thank Liz for her excellent work, devotion to duty, and friendship over the years. She will be missed on the committee, but I'm delighted that she'll remain involved with OM as our new EDI representative. The JMO EDI panel has enjoyed a great success this year with our 'Morris For All' badges, which are selling like hot cakes – don't delay if you want some for your team!

Thanks always as ever to the rest of the OM committee and officials, and to my compatriots on the JMO Committee, who continue to be a delight to work with.

It just remains to wish all in Open Morris a great practice season, and looking forward to a good year in 2026!

***Jen Cox***  
Chair  
Open Morris

*October 2025*