
ANNUAL REPORT 2025



National Institute of Medical Herbalists

January - December 2025

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

This has been a year of putting principles into practice. Where last year we spoke of the need for change, this year we have been delivering it - and in doing so, we have laid foundations that will serve the Institute well into the future. Herbal medicine does not exist in isolation, and nor should we. We are committed to a collaborative future: one in which medical herbalists work alongside other healthcare modalities and practitioners, contributing our distinct knowledge and skills to the wider landscape of patient care. Building and maintaining those bridges ensuring our profession is recognised and respected within them is something I'm passionate about and am aware that many of you are too.

Governance

In late 2025, we implemented significant changes to our governance structure, and Council has spent this year embedding that new model in its day-to-day working. This prompted a broader examination of our documentation and organisational structure. We have created detailed role descriptions for ordinary directors alongside our established President and Chief Executive roles, and we have established new lead roles - compliance, people, and finance - to provide clear pathways and continuity as Council members take on responsibilities. We have renewed our CPD policy and looking forward to putting some excellent offerings on for you all this coming year. We have also updated the formal complaints procedure which really needed to be done. Together, these changes make it far easier for future Council members to step into their roles with clarity and support - a strong foundation, built to last.

Communicating with Members

We recognise that while Council has been heads down on this governance work, communication with Members has not been all it should be. We want to put that right. We are committed to more regular and open communication, and to creating more opportunities for Members to come together - including Members' Day and our Conference this November, which we very much look forward to. The strength of the Institute has always been its Members, and the projects of recent years have shown the immense value of Members offering their skills and knowledge to support the Institute's work. We want to make it easier for more of you to get involved, and to ensure the Institute is a community that models inclusivity, integrity and professionalism throughout.

Looking Ahead

Our 2025–2030 strategy will guide the Institute's development over the coming years, making it fit for purpose for the 21st century and based on an ethos about which we can all feel proud. We value and appreciate your input and ideas as we take this work forward together.

Natasha

Natasha Lloyd
President



YOUR COUNCIL



Natasha Lloyd
President



Emma Barker
Vice President



Nathalie Chidley
Finance Lead



Kamadeep Sidhu
People Lead
Interim Compliance Lead



Willow Murton
Director



Kim Walker
Director

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



2025 was a year where a lot of focus was on governance. Whether the governance of the running of the company itself, or some of the policies and procedures relating to the practice of medical herbism, considerable energy has gone into addressing areas where improvement was needed.

In a world where the wider herbal landscape is becoming more and more competitive with lots of other organisations and individuals within health and wellness becoming more and more engaged with herbs, it is crucial for the profession that we have the best possible governance in place. Whether protecting herbal education, guiding ongoing learning and development or having oversight of professional standards, we must be able to engender trust from the public and other allies. To improve this outward facing governance we have also needed to improve our internal governance, and despite it being a raw and painful journey, we finished 2025 in a far better position than we started.

There has been other work including the publication of a new five-year strategy following two years of work on it, our biggest ever and most successful summer festival and a return to in-person conferences with a fantastic hybrid event in Bristol.

Through 2026, we have already been working through the continuation of the governance improvements initiated in 2025, and balancing this with a return to the member and public facing activity which will drive the profession forward, but which needed this enhanced bedrock of robust governance to be in place.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "James".

James Wiltshire
Chief Executive

STRATEGY 2025-30

A bright herbal future

Our vision:

A thriving community of trusted herbal professionals.

Our priorities

1 Exemplary Standards

We will maintain high professional and organisational standards.

2 Cohesive Community

We will nurture a thriving community with shared purpose. Together, we will embrace the power of our collective strengths.

3 Outreach and Engagement

We will promote the unique contribution of herbal professionals to healthcare, advancing public understanding of our work.

Our purpose:

- To support a thriving community of trusted herbal professionals.
- To uphold high standards of practice by our members.
- To support the practitioner-plant-patient dynamic, which lies at the heart of herbal practice.
- To advocate for the unique value that our members bring to healthcare.
- To increase accessibility to herbal medicine.

Our values

Integrity

We act with honesty and transparency. We are consistent, accountable and trustworthy.

Inclusivity

We foster a respectful community, where everyone feels valued and supported. We empower members to thrive, collaborate and contribute.

Professionalism

We uphold high standards of ethics, accountability, competence and respect. We lead by example in all aspects of our practice.

Strategic priorities progress

With the Institute's work now managed under five categories, two of which cover the behind the scenes work involved with running the company;

- Finance
- Governance

And three derived from the strategic priorities in our new 5 year strategy;

- Standards
- Community
- Engagement

We will be making some changes to how we present the Annual Report from next year, where as well as the finance report there will also be a compliance report and a people report, each presented by the three lead directors looking after these areas. Because Finance Lead was the only role which has been in place across the whole of 2025, that report is included in this Annual Report and governance is covered in this section.

Governance

- **Strategic planning:** We have developed and implemented a new organisational strategy to guide our future growth. We have consolidated the number of strategic priorities down from five to three to make it easier to prioritise activity, and the strategy aims to support the highest possible standards across our profession, a strong, supportive, collaborative community community and raising the profile of medical herbalists.
- **Process formalisation:** We have done a lot of work on formalising and documenting the way that Council operates including meeting planning, collaborative working, record keeping and action tracking to ensure consistency, transparency and accountability.
- **Governance tools:** We have introduced tools including a shared Google Calendar for governance deadlines and a live workflow tracker to provide directors with clear visibility and oversight of ongoing activities.
- **AGM:** Our AGM is now tracked by shared tracker detailing all tasks, owners and deadlines, including regular reviews by the Compliance Lead, backed up by monthly ExCo reviews and quarterly Council Meeting reviews.
- **Role clarity:** We have documented all Council and employee roles using templated profiles and updated our recruitment pack to improve transparency around the director role.

- **Legal:** A significant long-running legal case involving the Institute was finally resolved at the High Court, reaching a resolution that protected the cost of insurance cover for our members. The findings from the case highlighted the significant role, unfit historical policies and procedures had played in creating this risk to the Institute.
- Several other complaints against members have also been managed through to conclusion.
- **Policy management:** We have created a proforma policy document template to ensure all organisational policies are tracked and updated on schedule.
- **Executive oversight:** We have re-established the Executive Committee with regular, structured meetings and centralised documentation, bringing back a clear route to escalate issues to the directors and to improve operational oversight.
- Main responsibility for operational management of the Institute has been moved back from Professional Standards Committee Chair to Council.
- Key contacts for all external services (accountants, legal, HR, website etc) have all been documented on the Council shared drive for transparency.
- **Financial management:** We have appointed a dedicated bookkeeper and established a comprehensive financial timetable to ensure robust financial reporting and oversight.
- **HR:** We have reviewed and formalised the performance management process and implemented exit interviews to capture institutional learning and create opportunities for improvement.
- We have also reviewed the implications of the Employment Rights Act 2025 to ensure that directors are in a position to meet their obligations as employers.
- **Workload:** We have initiated regular reviews of workloads and working hours for staff and Council members to ensure operational sustainability.

Community

- **Events:** We have successfully delivered our first hybrid conference, with 60 people enjoying the two day event in Bristol, and hundreds more joining online. This added another opportunity for face to face interaction, and is now planned as a hybrid event for the foreseeable future.
- **Subscriptions:** We have introduced rolling subscriptions, something which members have been asking for for many years, and which will have a huge impact on the operational efficiency of managing memberships. We have also updated the fee structure for new graduates to better support those entering the profession.
- **Member engagement:** We have created a director-led rota for the Community Space and introduced a new member welcome pack to improve engagement.
- **Digital presence:** We have removed any link between the Institute and the private facebook group.

- **Awards:** We have approved new Fellowship criteria for consistency when assessing nominations.
- **Membership categories:** Membership categories were reviewed and updated, including creating a new category for students at accredited schools, to make the benefits of choosing to study at an accredited school even more direct.
- A full membership definition review was initiated following confusion highlighted in the articles of association.

Standards

- **Accreditation:** The Accreditation Board worked extensively to support a school to demonstrate that they met the standards set out in the Accreditation process, but unfortunately the school is no longer accredited, leaving three accredited professional courses. Lincoln College moved from EHTPA accreditation, with an agreement to accept graduates as Institute members, to being fully accredited by the Institute, following a successful visit by an accreditation board panel.
- We have also addressed several issues in the Accreditation Board Handbook, including interpretations on how clinical skills relate to clinical hours, and how we determine the eligibility of clinical supervisors.
- We have also launched a password-protected webpage providing a single, downloadable version of the Accreditation Board Handbook
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD):** We have fully reviewed the mentoring process and updated the CPD policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- We planned the delivery of a Men's Health Symposium in May 2025 (similar to our Menopause Symposium in 2023), however members who began work on curating this day were unable to commit to seeing it through, so the event was cancelled.
- **Entry standards:** We have initiated a working group to review entry standards for rejoining members.
- **Fitness to practice:** A review of our Complaints and Fitness to Practise procedure was initiated.
- **Interaction checkers:** Following member feedback discussions were initiated to explore the options regarding providing Efficasafe v NatMedPro databases to members.

Engagement

- **Festival Planning:** We have secured a three-year contract for the Power of Plants festival from 2027-2029. Based on the feedback from members and the wider herbal community, which highlighted the importance of the festival, we have allowed a fallow year to improve and refocus the event, and created the three-year agreement to allow more consistent planning and to realise the cost benefits of not working from year to year.
- **External representation:** We have appointed a representative to the Global Alliance for Integrative Health and Medicine (GAIHM) to strengthen our external relations.
- We have also developed relationships with bodies such as the Royal college of physicians and health and medicine schools at universities to create opportunities to talk about herbal medicine to other healthcare professionals.

OUR COMMUNITY	
MEMBERS	599
STUDENTS	407

as at June 2026

FINANCIAL REPORT

My thanks go to Camilla who has taken on a larger role within the office, and Janet Gilbert our new bookkeeper.

Revenue report

At our last AGM, in 2025, I noted that an overhaul of the accounts process, and improving our budgeting and finances would be a key focus for the Council this year.

In November 2025 we appointed a bookkeeper who has worked closely with office staff to improve and streamline all bookkeeping processes. The work of reconciling the bookkeeping took until the end of November to fully complete, and we were able to submit our accounts in good time.

I am pleased to be able to report that our deficit has reduced to c£12k. Whilst not ideal this is a significant move in a positive direction.

Working with our CE and colleagues on the Board, I have updated the Finance Lead role and key responsibilities, instituted an annual financial calendar so that key dates and responsibilities are clear, and updated our financial control documents. I have also set to work on the SOP although this has been hampered by somewhat having to learn on the job myself - this should be ready in time for an orderly handover to my successor.

The Executive Committee was reconstituted in August 2025 with monthly meetings. I have attended these as Finance Lead and was able to produce a budget for our last Council meeting. Our budget currently projects another, smaller loss in 2026, but with another successful conference and PoP festival we should see a return to profit by 2027.

Subscription changes

The decision was taken in the final months of 2025 to put members onto a rolling subscription, which automatically enrolls members each year. One of the issues identified by our office team was that members unintentionally lapse and only discover this later in the year when they cannot access services, as well as expressing some irritation at having to sign up each year. After some initial hitches this system appears to be working well.

New Members discount: this was previously 40% in the first year, 20% in the second and 10% in the third year. Limitations in the software meant that these discounts had to be manually changed and applied each year taking up time and allowing room for mistakes. We took the decision to apply the discount over 2 years, with a 40% discount rate applied automatically in each year. Our reasoning was that the first two years are likely to be the most difficult financially and thus these are the years when a discount has the most benefit.

Member services

The decision was taken this year to continue with the NatMedPro database and following robust discussion with membership it was agreed that we should run a comparison with Efficasafe. This process is being managed by Kate Huet with office and Board support. The results of the comparison will be available in time for us to make a decision ahead of the renewal of our subscription.

Member Assistance Programme (MAP): used by 40 members in 2025. Our MAP currently offers confidential support and guidance from experts 24/7, 365 days of the year on subjects stretching from legal to finance and personal. The decision was taken for this year to continue with our MAP but I am recommending that we review the utility of this before renewal next year, we may want to seek member views on this.

PoP Magazine

Currently there are 32 non-member subscribers, the magazine is stocked in 3 shops with 51 single issue purchases. The magazine currently costs approximately £2.4k per issue to produce. Over the coming year, we may wish to review its long-term viability. While financial considerations will be an important part of that assessment, the discussion should not be limited to income and expenditure alone. We should also take into account the magazine's value in promoting NIMH, its wider publicity benefits, and the views of members.

Power of Plants Festival

The figures for PoP have been provided to members, herewith a reminder of that data. It's clear from the figures that PoP may be valuable to generate a modest income as well as publicity and increasingly important face to face contact amongst our students, new graduates and members. With last year's site secured for the 3 years we will be seeking the views of the membership on ways to improve the offering.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
INCOME	£13,700	£41,687	£67,825	£72,371
EXPENDITURE	£38,426	£48,672	£66,014	£63,403
PROFIT/(LOSS)	£(24,726)	£(6,985)	£1,811	£8,968

Report on the reserves

A reserves strategy is at the draft stage, our major focus last year was to ensure the bookkeeping and accounts ran smoothly. Our savings account has a balance slightly in excess of £40k, no funds have been transferred out of our savings account since December 2024.

Institute Finances

Figures have been generated using the formula below using figures from the unaudited accounts prepared by our accountants.

Income = Turnover + other operating profit + interest

Expenditure = Admin expenses + cost of sales

Operating profit/(loss) before tax = Income - expenditure

	2023	2024	2025
Income	229,251.00	282,430.00	272,403
Expenditure	288,239.00	309,406.00	284,579
Profit/(Loss)	(58,988.00)	(26,976.00)	(12,176)

Our accounts are included in the papers for this AGM, if you have any queries, please do contact us on info@nimh.org.uk. We will be prioritising pre-submitted questions for the AGM and are happy to share the answers in full to Members on the day.