



The Chepstow Society

Notes from the Executive Committee meeting held Wednesday 8th January 2025

1 Present: John Burrows, Marion Huckle, Guy Hamilton, Simon Maddison, David Nichols, Sallie James, Keith James, Patrick Gale, Nicky Bailey, Angela Middleditch, Annie Rainsbury,

Apologies for absence: There were none.

2 Minutes of the previous meetings held on 6th November 2024:

Approved as a correct record

3 Matters arising: no matters arising that are not on the agenda

4 Officer reports (reports follow the minutes)

(i) Chair:

It is now clear that it is not feasible for Geoff to attend a meeting or event for presentation of a plaque. Angela to write to Geoff to discuss another option and report back. .

John to meet Ned to discuss The Rifles plaque on 10th January. John will then contact Monmouthshire CC listed buildings team to (agree?) the location for the plaque

No further action on Zoom talks is possible without people to operate the equipment

ACTION:

- John to obtain the Duchess of Beaufort's contact details so that she may be invited to become Patron of the Society
- Angela – to contact Geoff Sumner
- John to contact MCC to confirm the location of The Rifles plaque

(ii) Secretary: Confirmed that Executive Committee meetings for 2025 have all been confirmed.

(iii) Treasurer (Accounts follow these minutes):

Income is up, thanks to an increase in sales at Chepstow Museum, an increase in door ticket sales and some free of charge speaker sessions. Noted that income from Chepstow 500 is a one-off. Overall income is healthy, albeit slightly down on last year.

(iv) Membership: No change since the previous report. Agreed that all past members would be added to the newsletter mailing list: this might encourage some re-joining. Also agreed that the Duchess of Beaufort be added to the distribution list for the newsletter.



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ACTION:

Angela to add past members to the newsletter distribution and include the Duchess of Beaufort on the newsletter mailing list

(v) Events: Patrick is awaiting a response from Lloyds Bank about his letter concerning possible transaction charges. Noted that the correct date for the Bristol medieval tour is June 3rd, not June 2nd. Avon boat trip dates proposed: 23rd or 26th June.

Patrick proposed that the Society makes the 80th anniversary of the ending of WWII (8th May 2025) the focus for events this year and suggested that the VE 80 website be mined for ideas. Other ideas discussed were a possible reprint (or e-book reprint) of Wartime Memories (currently out of print) with the addition of an index. Noted need to obtain costings for a paper reprint. Other ideas are an exhibition, a social event (possibly a picnic) and other digitisation projects.

ACTION:

- Patrick agreed to find out how other local organisations plan to mark the anniversary and report back
- John B to ask Town Council about plans for the anniversary.

(vi) Publications:

Noted low stock of The Chepstow Story (2011) and suggested the Society consider a reprint rather than a new edition (100 copies remain in stock). Some discussion about potential digitisation of certain Ivor Walters publications. Noted that Chepstow Society does not own the copyright for all of Ivor's publications: some are owned by Ivor's estate and permission would be needed to digitise and re-publish. Simon proposed that key texts for a digitisation project be identified plus an investigation of costs and process. Some discussion whether digital texts should be free or paid for.

ACTION:

Guy to investigate reprint costs and identify copyright holders of Ivor's publications.

(vii) Civic matters:

Simon has submitted the Chepstow Society response to the Local Plan. Noted that Paul Griffiths, Deputy Leader, Monmouthshire County Council is keen to speak at a public meeting to discuss civic affairs and strategy. Discussion on timing, venue, format etc. Committee agreed that a weekday meeting would be preferred in early February.

Simon is also chasing up the outcome of the Transport Plan

ACTION:

John to check Paul's availability (later confirmed for Monday 10th February 2025).

4. Feedback on the Charter 500th Anniversary event Monday 2nd December 2024



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Agreed that although the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort went well and was enjoyed and appreciated by attendees. The event didn't get sufficient advance publicity and suffered from being on the Monday immediately following the Council's 'Christmas Lights Switch On' event weekend which was a key focus for the Council. It was agreed that the Society needed to be more active with its own publicity for joint events with the Council as sufficient Council publicity couldn't be guaranteed.

5. AGM 2025

Agreed to discuss at the March meeting

6. Further discussion on Zoom meetings and alternatives

Covered in Chair's report

7. Any other business

- Spring lunch 18th January 2025. 53 attendees have paid. The event will break even with a very small cash surplus that will contribute towards the speaker's fee (£50). Committee agreed to cover the deficit from funds. Deposit has been paid. Committee to actively promote. Also agreed that proceeds from the raffle would be passed to Chepstow Archaeological Society for use on the Roman Bridge project. Confirmed that this meets the Charities Commission's criterion that permit the transfer of funds to another charity.
- British Association of Local History Journal.
ACTION: Guy to investigate possible digital subscription and possibility of sharing content when directly relevant to our area,
- Society has been asked by Cranham Local History Society, Gloucestershire, to host a history walk on 22nd June. Agreed to charge £3.00 per head.
- Committee expressed shock and disappointment at the news that the post of Museum Curator is being deleted. A Part-time Collections Manager role is being created. Liaison with local societies will not continue. Despite being instrumental in setting up the Museum the society has not been consulted or given advance notice of this unwelcome development.
- **ACTION:**
Chepstow Society Chairman to write to Dr Ian Saunders, Director of MonLife (CC Peter Danes, Acting CEO and Cllr Paul Griffiths) and express strong concern about the impact of this decision on a key cultural asset.
- Trustees
ACTION:
Geoff Sumner and Harry Middleditch to be removed and Marion Huckle and John Burrows to be added to the list of Trustees (Now completed)



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8 Future committee meeting dates and arrangements:

Next meeting Wednesday 5th March, 7 PM at the Drill Hall.