



# THE CHEPSTOW SOCIETY

*Members Bulletin*

*JULY 2016*

## Notes from the Chair

On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June the Parliamentary Welsh Affairs Select Committee met in the Drill Hall to discuss the future of the Severn River Crossings. I was unfortunately unable to attend but the Society was represented by Guy Hamilton who gave his report at the June meeting.

Some of the points made by the representatives of the Freight Transport Association present were:

1. That when the bridges are returned to public ownership (in 2017 or 2018) the tolls should be halved and several more toll bands introduced – we have three and the Humber Bridge has six.

2. Toll free periods should be considered. The Dartford Tunnel is free from 10pm to 6am. This might make heavy traffic use the bridges at night and might reduce the use of the A48.

Other points that emerged in discussion were that bridge maintenance should be a national debt and not fall on local people through tolls.

It was thought that toll reduction might lead to increased traffic congestion in Chepstow and area, and there was discussion about a bridge and by-pass between Thornwell and Sedbury.

The future use and cost of both crossings is very relevant to Chepstow and the Society will continue to monitor the situation closely.

*Geoff Sumner*

## *Hon. Secretary's Report*

A Public Local Inquiry is shortly to be held regarding the government plans to build a Southern Bypass around Newport for the M4 motorway. This is in order to divert traffic away from the current bottleneck of the Brynglas Tunnels which cause so much delay. The alternative routes which include upgrading the A48 and or the Southern Distributor road will also be examined. However the Inquiry, which will be held at the Lysaght Institute in Newport, could last as long as five months.

Members may have seen recently a very large mobile crane working on the roof of Peacock's store in the High Street. It was involved in updating the mobile phone apparatus which transmits from there. It is the first of several notifications in the area which will bring us (we are told) a much better service as the new 4G network spreads. Another will be next to the High Beech roundabout on the A466 (replacing an existing installation) and a similar replacement in the Bulwark Industrial Estate.

We are also notified that five flats known as the Coach House along Mounon Road, in the grounds of St Lawrence House, are to be updated. The application reveals that although these have been let for many years that authorisation seems to have been overlooked. However listed building consent to which we can have no objection, should now be a formality.

*Henry Hodges*



## EXCURSIONS

### **Balmoral**

This is the most successful excursion that we have arranged, let's hope the sun shines! We now have 57 members, family and friends booked for the Balmoral boat trip on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August**, leaving Lydney docks at 11.30am. We would suggest that you aim to arrive by 11.00am as parking will be limited. Perhaps car sharing would be a good idea.

### **Liverpool**

We now have 40 members and friends booked for the autumn city break. Final payment is due at the end of August; at the moment we are unable to give you the amounts for this, as it will be affected because of the numbers going and excursions included. More information to follow in July.

As always we welcome members' suggestions, ideas and feedback.

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## **Annual subscriptions for 2016/17** **are now overdue.**

**They remain at £10 per member and can be paid at our monthly meetings, or to our Membership Secretary, Marian Thomas, at 24 Severn Crescent, Chepstow NP16 5EA. Cheques should be made payable to the Chepstow Society.**

## **MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS**

**Weds. 20 July – “ForestLife- The River Severn”**  
*Special showing of award-winning 1981 documentary film,*  
*as part of Chepstow Festival*

**Weds. 21 Sept. –**  
**Pete Strong – Total War: Gwent in 1916**

**Weds. 19 Oct. –**  
**Naylor Firth – Wye Valley Industries**

**Weds. 16 Nov. –**  
**David Viner – The Canal and River Trust**

**All at 7.15 p.m. in the Drill Hall**