The Chepstow Society

Notes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 7th May 2025 at 7pm at the Drill Hall, Chepstow

Present: Nicky Bailey, Guy Hamilton, Marion Huckle, Keith James, Sallie James, Angela Middleditch, David Nicholls, Annie Rainsbury

Apologies for absence: John Burrows (Chair), Simon Maddison.

The meeting was chaired by Sallie James, Vice-Chair, in the absence of John Burrows (Chair)

The meeting started by acknowledging the recent unexpected death of Patrick Gale, Excursions Officer. The committee expressed shock and sadness at the sudden loss of a well-liked and valued committee member. Agreed to invite members to remember Patrick at the start of the AGM.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting, 5th March**
   Noted that item 7 needed correction as Marion will be at the AGM. Following this correction the notes were approved as a correct record.

2. **Matters arising from the meeting of 5th March, not on the agenda**
   Minute (2) Geoff Sumner presentation. Angela will circulate possible dates to Committee members and then offer dates to Geoff Sumner, to meet at Hanley Farm Shop Café for coffee and cake and the presentation of the plaque.
   ACTION: Angela to progress this.
   Minute (3) Paul Griffiths meeting. Some surprise at the comment about poor attendance as around 70 people attended, although there were very few younger attendees. Agreed that publicity could have been better.
   John has suggested the following possible future events: Paul G to speak on some specific aspects of MCC policy (e.g. Town Centres, Community Facilities, Economic Strategy). Other speakers could include a senior representative from CADW on their strategy and objectives, or from the NHS on how the NHS plans to respond to the increasing population in the County.
   Minute (4(i)) Agreed to send the Chepstow Society Bulletin to the Duchess of Beaufort, via the published email for Badminton House, and see if it generates sufficient interest to pursue closer links. If it does, we can then consider the issue of a Patron.
   ACTION: Guy to send the latest Bulletin to the Badminton House general email address FAO the Duchess of Beaufort.
   Minute (5) VE Day. Noted that John had established that there was little scope for the Society to work with the Town Council on any VE Day events. John had approached the Museum about photos but there was very little available.
   Minute (9) Drill Hall fees. John will discuss figures with the Treasurer in the first instance. No discussion with the Town Council yet. Agreed that the Society should request details of the hire fee for the back room, which we believe will shortly be available. The Beaufort Hotel has been

identified as a possible alternative location for the Exec Mtgs. Following further discussion later in the meeting Dave has agreed to investigate the elements of the hire fee for Cttee Mtgs and ensure that no kitchen costs are included.
ACTION: (i) David to check the basis of the invoice.
(ii) John and David to discuss hire charges
(10) Zoom mtgs. John is working on this. Despite overcoming the password issue John had not been able to convene a Zoom meeting. John will make time to work on the system: must have a functioning system before Zoom talks can be planned and delivered to members.

3. **Officer Reports:**
Chair: John's report and update covered in Matters Arising
Secretary: no matters to report not on the agenda
Treasurer: working on the accounts to send to the Auditor (David Phillips) for independent examination ahead of the AGM. These will include the Excursion accounts. Noted a healthy surplus at the end of 24-25 (deficit in 23-24 attributed to one-off Festival costs). Door receipts have declined but Subscriptions have increased. David will recheck the Subscriptions figure, which appears rather high.
ACTION: David to recheck accounts and submit for examination.
NB Noted the tight timeframe for the completion and audition of accounts.
Membership: Membership currently stands at 162 of which 26 are new members. Angela will re-check the 62 people who appear not to have paid as this figure may be out-of-date. Noted that some of the new membership money for 25-26 was received in the 24-25 financial year with new members benefitting from the subscription offer (payments from January run to the end of March of the following year). No mechanism to split this money over two financial years.
Events: nothing to report
Publications: Guy and Annie have not yet met to identify a priority list of Society publications for digitisation and a project brief. Simon has offered to assist.
Reprint of *The Chepstow Story* . Options for a reprint are:
A minor edit to bring the booklet up-to-date before reprinting OR
A full rewrite/new publication.
Agreed that this was not the right time for the larger project. Guy will contact the printer (to check printer still has digital copy) and to obtain quotes for a reprint requiring some text amendments and report back.
ACTION: Guy to contact the printer

4. **Civic Matters**
No report from Simon at this meeting. Keith James reported on a local press campaign (*The Forester* and *The Review*) for a Chepstow Bypass. To note only at this stage

5. **Arrangements for AGM, 21st May**

Reviewed the Agenda and agreed:

Refreshments to be served from 6.45, AGM to start at 7 PM. (Earlier start in 2025 was to allow time for cutting of the 75th Anniversary cake). There will be a minute's silence in memory of Patrick at the start of the meeting. Marion will ensure Guy has the AGM papers in good time for email distribution on 16th May. Audited accounts to be sent to Guy.

Existing Committee members have agreed to continue, if nominated. Noted that new members would be welcome, whether nominated at the AGM or coopted later in the year. In particular, we Committee members hoped that there would be volunteers to continue with an excursions programme. Also, discussed how best to try and ensure that there was continuing liaison between the Museum and the Executive Committee

ACTION:
Marion to amend AGM papers and send to Guy
David to ensure audited accounts are sent to Guy for distribution 16th May

6. **Excursions**
Patrick had passed records and information for the Avon Cruise 24th June to Marion. Marion will contact the Bristol Packet Company to inform them of Patrick's death and to advise the company that she is the key contact for the excursion. Marion to ask the Company to confirm if our allocation will still be available at the discounted price if less than 16 people book the event. The cruise had been promoted in the May bulletin but need more publicity, which would be via the e-mail meeting reminder sent by Guy and also at the AGM. Marion to revise and correct the poster ready to display at the AGM, with a sign-up list.
NB David will contact Lloyds to notify the bank of Patrick's death and check any implications or requirements.
ACTION:
Marion to contact the Bristol Packet Company and to add the following Cttee members to the excursion list: Nicky Bailey, Angela and Harry Middleditch
David to contact Lloyds Bank

7. **Summer walks**
Tim Ryan, Jackie Neal, Keith James, Simon Maddison and Guy Hamilton are all willing to offer walks. Fee will remain £3.00 per person. Noted that the majority of attendees are local, i.e. not visitors as originally anticipated when the programme was first planned. Also noted that Saturday walks had not been popular. Guy to recommend the best days for evening walks in July and August 2025.
ACTION: Guy to propose a timetable for walk leaders to populate.

8. **Any other business**
There was none.

9. **Next meeting:** Wednesday 2nd July at 7 pm.
NB Please check the agenda in case the venue changes
The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.