The Chepstow Society

Notes of the Executive Committee meeting held on

5th November 2025 at 7pm at the Drill Hall, Chepstow

Present: John Burrows (Chair), Nicky Bailey Guy Hamilton Marion Huckle, Keith James, Sallie James, Angela Middleditch, David Nicholls, Annie Rainsbury,

1. **Minutes of the last meeting, 3rd September 2025**
   Approved as a correct record.
   Noted that Simon Maddision has confirmed that he has resigned from the committee, with immediate effect, but is happy to help the handover to Dave Johnson for Civic and Amenities matters. Simon has also said that he would be interested in assisting with specific projects such as the digitisation of Ivor Waters' works.

2. **Matters arising from the previous meeting agenda.**
   (i) **Executive Committee meeting venue**.
   This was the first meeting in the new venue, which all found to be comfortable and suitable. The promised kettle will be a welcome addition to the room's facilities.
   (N.B at the end of the meeting Matt took us through opening and closing arrangements, using the key/key safe).
   (ii) **Potential new Committee member**.
   ACTION: John to invite David Johnson to the November monthly meeting

   (iii) Excursion Account
   There has been no progress on the addition of new signatories to this account, without which monies owing to the main account cannot be transferred. This was discussed at the September meeting when action was agreed. This matter needs to be resolved urgently, as any further outings will encounter problems if the new signatories are not in place.
   ACTION. David to liaise with Keith and ensure this is completed asap.

   (iv) **'*The Chepstow Story*'.** There has been no further progress on the reprint.
   ACTION: Guy to send the text to Annie for review. John to send 2 pages on Chepstow Bridge.

(v) **Tourist leaflet:** (September 2025 minutes (Officer Reports 3(v) 4) refers. Guy offered to be involved in this project. Noted that the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is still distributing town maps originally produced by the Chamber of Commerce. Also noted the weaknesses of the Town Council's current system for distribution of leaflets around the town. Guy proposed the Society consults the Council and the TIC to determine the key needs for promotional material. Annie questioned if this was within the Society's remit.
ACTION: John to investigate and report back at the next meeting

(vi) **Transport Plan Consultation.** (September 2025 minutes (Officer Reports 3(vi)) refers)
The meeting was attended by several Committee members and feedback on the Plan was submitted by the Society. John expressed concern about the potential traffic implications of some of the proposed new crossings and hoped that this would be 'modelled' by consultants before finalising plans. Some discussion on the lengthy closure of the Old Wye Bridge and the lack of information about what action has been taken and any plans for repairs. Guy recommended re-establishing the formal link between the Society and the Council.
ACTION: John to write to Monmouth and Gloucester County Councils asking for an update on action to date and proposed further action

Officer Reports:

(i) **Chair**.
John reported on his brief conversation with Marg Griffiths during which he was asked if the Society would be willing to help the Town Council with activities designed to promote 'Welshness' at the Eisteddfod in 2026. Subsequently determined that this would be the Youth Eisteddfod, taking place at Tredegar House in 2027. Agreed the Society needs more information to understand the nature and scope of participation being suggested.
ACTION: John to investigate further end report back

(ii) **Secretary**.
Reported the purchase of a range of leaflet racks, recently used at the Chartists Fair in Newport. Marion currently storing the racks. Also recommended the purchase of a pull-up banner that would be light and easy to store/transport.
ACTION: Marion to obtain cost of a banner

(iii) **Treasurer**.

Noted that Monmouth Building Society is reducing interest rates on charity accounts (in common with a number of banks and building societies). David will investigate alternative providers. David reminded the Committee of the need to reduce the budget surplus to meet Charity Commission requirements. David has previously noted his intention to step down as Treasurer at the next AGM: there needs to be action on succession planning. Will be mentioned at the next monthly meeting and in the November newsletter. If any member shows interest in this role, please share this with David in the first instance. Agreed to retain Zoom account subscription pending a planned trial (John and Marion liaising on this).

ACTION: (i) David to prepare an 'advert' (appeal) for a new Treasurer for the November newsletter, to be sent to Guy by (?28th November?).

(ii) John and Marion to liaise in the first instance on a test Zoom talk to selected Society members

N.B Treasure action re-Excursion Account signatories also reported under Matters Arising.

iv) **Membership**. No report. Current membership stands at 168. A further 22 former members remain on the mailing list for the newsletter.

(vii) **Publications and events**.

(a) Income from sale of Ivor Waters books has been donated to The Society. To be announced in the next newsletter.

(b) Urgent need for a rota of volunteers to write up the talks at the monthly meetings. Normally between 300 and 500 words.

ACTION: (i) Guy to include announcement on the income derived from Ivor Waters book sale in the November newsletter.

(ii) Guy/John (?) to draft an appeal for volunteers to include in the November newsletter.

(viii) **Civic Matters.** Noted the vacancy that it is hoped will be filled shortly. No report for this meeting. Discussion on the recent announcement of a consultation on a Cultural Strategy. Meeting agreed that the draft document was weak on detail. Annie, Keith, and Nicky plan to attend the public meeting on November 11th.

4 Chartists Convention 1st November at Riverside, Newport

John and Marion attended, with the Chepstow Stand and reported that a steady stream of visitors had spent time at the Society stand and will provide Guy with photo(s) for the newsletter. **ACTION:** John to send photo(s) to Guy

5 Spending Plan 2025 – 2026

Noted that the digitisation project is likely to be the single biggest spend, due to the cost of professional scanning of publications to place on the website. At the September meeting it had been agreed that a prioritised list of publications be recommended by Annie, Guy, and Simon. Once the list is available, we will be able to firm up on costs.

A discussion on publicity/tourist materials Chepstow is noted under matters arising. This may also involve costs to be met by The Society.

Some discussion on occasional booking of high-profile speakers although the maximum capacity of the Drill Hall (around 200 seated) will need to be balanced against costs of big-name speakers. Mention made of a possible 'Top Up Fund' to supplement ticket sales.

ACTION: Guy, Annie, and Simon to prepare a list of Ivor Waters publications recommended for digitisation. for the next meeting

6 Excursions. Following further investigations Sally recommended an outing to BBC Cardiff in January/February 2026 (avoiding half-term). Alan Speechley (member) has also recommended a visit to the Swindon Science and Innovation Park in April (guided tour) and has offered to take the lead on this. This would be a self-drive event

ACTION: Sally to take forward visit to BBC Cardiff and ask Alan Speechley to take forward a visit to the Swindon Science and Innovation Park

7 Any other business:

(i) Keith confirmed that the deposit for the Spring Lunch has been paid to The Beaufort Hotel and bookings are being made. Andy Tarbert (stuntman and wildlife cameraman) will be the after-lunch speaker. All to promote, please.

(ii) December meeting confirmed for 2nd Wednesday of the month (10t) Dec) to avoid clashing with other Christmas activities. Speaker has been arranged.

ACTION: Marion to include announcement about the December meeting in the reminder sent to members ahead of the November meeting

8 Next meeting: Wednesday 7th January 2026 at 7 pm. Schedule for 2026 agreed

ACTION: Marion to book meetings for 2026 and confirm to Committee.

The meeting closed at 8.29 pm.