The Chepstow Society

Notes of the Executive Committee meeting held on

7th January 2026 at 7pm at the Drill Hall, Chepstow

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

Apologies: Annie Rainsbury,

John started by welcoming Dave Johnson to his first meeting. Dave introduced himself to Committee members.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting, 5th November 2025**
   Minutes were approved with a correction to the name of the speaker at the Spring Lunch (Andy TOrbert, not Tarbert) (Min 7 (i)).

2. **Matters arising from the previous meeting agenda.**

   Min 2(iv) '*The Chepstow Story*'. This is in hand.

   Min 2 (v) Tourist leaflet. John to consult the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) for advice on what is needed in terms of a new tourist leaflet to promote Chepstow and the surrounding area. Noted that the old Chamber of Commerce Chepstow map is still being distributed by the TIC.

   ACTION: John

   Min 2(vi) The Old Wye Bridge. Concern that the bridge (an important heritage asset) remains closed with little information about the state of the bridge. John will write to Mon CC again (Mon CC has lead responsibility for the bridge). Noted that the closure is causing considerable inconvenience, and congestion in Chepstow at peak times. Also want to find out what action the Town Council is taking.

   ACTION: John

   Min 3(ii) (Secretary report) Chepstow Society banner. Agreed that Dave J and Marion will take this forward and resent a draft design to a future meeting. Noted that Guy has custody of the leaflet racks.

ACTION: Marion and Dave J

Min 3 (ii) Change of signatory to the Excursion Account. This is still outstanding and must be resolved as a matter of urgency as no monies can be received for planned excursions until the signatories are updated to provide access to the funds.

ACTION: David and Keith

Min 3 (vii) Meeting write-ups. Dave J to write up the January meeting (Anglo Saxons) for the newsletter. Guy advised that the write-up should be around 300- 500 words (maximum).

3 Officer Reports:

(i) **Chair**.

Zoom meetings. Angela reported that current investigations at the Drill Hall into Zoom may help the Society going forward. Marion to ask Matt for more information. John and Marion will arrange a trial session, using the Society's Zoom account once they have revised the use of Zoom.
ACTION: John and Marion

(ii) **Secretary**.

Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

(iii) **Treasurer**.

David reported potential interest in taking on the Treasurer role, following the advert in the recent newsletter. The increase in visitor numbers has contributed to an increase in the cash balance in the Society's account, further exacerbating the challenge of meeting Charity Commission guidelines on budget surpluses. Recommended that monies be allocated to the Digitisation Project (and an IT Project) on the grounds of enabling access and improving inclusivity. David confirmed that he was willing to continue managing Excursions monies and to support a new Treasurer.

iv) **Membership**.

Angela expressed concern that a significant proportion of members do not benefit from their subscriptions as they are unable to attend meetings. Introducing Zoom would be a positive development for these members Angela also floated the idea of a 'Friends' category of membership and experimenting with occasional afternoon meetings, to attract members who cannot attend evening meetings.

(iv) **Publications and events**.

John Waters has many Ivor Waters documents, proofs, and drafts, in addition to printed books, and is keen to assist the Digitisation Project. Guy is meeting John on 23rd January.

(vi) Excursions

Thirty people have expressed interest in a visit to BBC Cardiff. A maximum of twenty people can attend a tour at a cost of £14/head. Date to be confirmed (provisionally 4th February). A trip to the Swindon Science and Innovation Park would be a self-drive event: members would join a regular scheduled tour. Suggested as an activity for late spring.

ACTION: Sallie to confirm visit to BBC Cardiff and advertise to those who have signed up. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

(vii) **Civic Matters.**

Dave will prepare a briefing/scoping paper for the next Committee meeting.

ACTION: Dave J

4 Welsh Festival 4th July 2026

An article in the latest Chepstow U3A magazine has provided helpful information about the nature of the festival, which will be a taster for the Youth Eisteddford, in Newport in 2027**.** The focus of the festival will be music, dance, written and spoken word, crafts, food and drink. In discussion we agreed that the Society could offer a talk or sponsor a speaker/event. Suggestions included a talk on 'The suppression of Welsh' or a performance by Eelsh Theatre Company 'Daughters of Bala.'

(Marion does not have a note of agreed follow-up action)

5 AGM 2025

This will precede the May meeting at which Prof. Ron Hutton will be speaking. As Ron Hutton always attracts a significant number of visitors, we may need to manage the voting process more thoroughly than normal (possibly issue voting slips). The meeting will start earlier than normal. Members will be reminded about the early start time in the April newsletter and in the email reminder to members ahead of the meeting.

6 Any other business:

(i) Dave N proposed moving the Monmouth Building Society account to a high interest account. This was agreed.

(ii) Keith proposed that The Society pay for the meals of both Keith Underwood and Ivor Cavill at the Spring Lunch. Agreed

7 Next meeting: Wednesday 4th March at The Beaufort Hotel (first floor meeting room).

Meetings for the remainder of the year are as follows:

Wednesday 6th May, Wednesday 1st July, Wednesday 2nd September, Wednesday 4th November.

These meetings are all booked to take place in the rear meeting room at The Drill Hall, starting at 7PM.

The meeting closed at.8.29 PM