The Chepstow Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on
18th March 2026 at 6.30 PM at the Drill Hall, Chepstow

N.B (i) This meeting was arranged to confirm recommendations made at the inquorate meeting of 4th March.

(ii) Approval of the meeting 7th January will be on the Agenda for the May meeting

(ii) Marion to contact Lucy James (Chepstow TC) about the problems accessing the Drill Hall

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

Apologies: Steve Spokes

Steve Spokes was formally coopted to the Committee.

Richard Lemmon was welcomed as an observer. Richard will also attend the May meeting as an observer.

1. **Matters arising from the inquorate meeting 4th March 2026.**

Zoom: Marion still awaiting dates from Matt Kouba to arrange a meeting with Marion, John, and Sallie.

Treasurer: (i) Approved proposal from David N to transfer some funds from the Ordinary account at Monmouthshire Building Society to a higher rate account.

(ii) David to investigate cost of a new card reader to enable payments for Excursions to be recorded separately (Sum Up machine is linked to the Ordinary account). Noted that CHACE uses a Square card payment machine that may be appropriate.

Digitisation: Approved a budget of £5,000-£6,000 for the project.

Town Walks: Approved a budget of £150-£200 for publicity material. Noted that as majority of attendees are local resident, often new to Chepstow, our publicity may need to be placed in additional venues, such as putting posters in doctors' surgeries. Guy agreed to look after the publicity for the Town Walks programme 2026.

13 St. Ann Street: Monmouthshire County Council has replied to residents and to The Chepstow Society, confirming that Monmouthshire Housing Association has withdrawn its planning application. Mon CC advised that de-listing must be discussed with CADW, the body responsible for listing in Wales. Members will be updated at the monthly meeting.

Old Wye Bridge: John has received a letter from Mon CC that includes a lengthy timetable for the investigative work. This will be shared with members at the monthly meeting.

Excursions: Steve has circulated his think piece, as requested, and has asked for feedback from Committee members

Meeting closed at 7 PM

Next meeting: Wednesday 6th May 7 PM, Drill Hall Chepstow (rear meeting room)

Notes from the Executive Committee meeting held on 4th March 2026 at 7pm at the Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow

Present: John Burrows (Chair), Guy Hamilton, Marion Huckle, David Nicholls,
Apologies: Annie Rainsbury, Angela Middleditch, Nicky Bailey, Sallie James, Keith James , Dave Johnson
Steve Spokes was also welcomed and introduced himself to Committee members. (Steve has expressed interest in becoming Excursions Officer and has already had preliminary discussions with Sallie and other Committee members.)

The meeting was not quorate (six members absent). The Chair suggested that those present used the agenda as a framework for an informal discussion, which would help introduce Steve Spokes to the work of the Society. Agreed that any urgent business be dealt with by email following the meeting and that all Committee members be asked to arrive early (6.30PM) on Weds 18th March to approve the January meeting minutes and to ratify decisions and recommendations made on 5th March

ACTION: All

2. **Minutes of the last meeting, 7th January 2026**
   There were no corrections. Minutes will be put to the Committee for formal adoption 18th March as noted above.

3. **Matters arising from the previous meeting.**
   (i) '*The Chepstow Story*'. Covered in the publications report

   Chepstow Bridge: MCC was unable to provide a speaker to provide an update ahead of the February monthly meeting, as requested, and John is chasing this. Noted that this matter requires a proper debate. Unclear about the nature and extent of Chepstow TC in any discussions. Some speculation that it may be more helpful to liaise with Gloucester CC on the future of the Grade 1 listed structure

   ACTION: John

   (ii) Zoom: in hand. Marion arranging a meeting with Matt Kouba (formerly Drill Hall caretaker) who is now offering his services as a freelancer. John and Sallie to be involved.

   Agreed that the Society needs to know immediately who will be providing practical support for the forthcoming meeting on 18th March, following Matt's

resignation. Need assurance that the Drill Hall will be opened, chairs and tables put out, kitchen opened etc.

ACTION: Marion

(iii) Chepstow Society banner: defer to next meeting as Dave J and Marion have not had an opportunity to discuss this.

ACTION: Marion and Dave J

(iv) Change of signatory to the Excursion Account. Completed

Treasurer: To date, there has been one expression of interest in taking on the role of Treasurer (Dave N standing down at AGM). Agreed that the AGM will be advertised in the April Bulletin with a call for nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and 'Committee members.'(see below)

3 Officer Reports:

(i) **Chair**.
John will circulate the final version of his follow-up letter to MCC on the Old Wye Bridge, addressing the key issues and suggesting proposed action. The letter complements the thorough and well-argued case made by residents, objecting to the proposed demolition of 13, St. Ann Street.
ACTION: John

(ii) Secretary
Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere in the discussions.

(iii) **Treasurer**.
Report circulated in advance attached to these notes.

iv) **Membership**.

Membership is continuing to increase steadily and now stands at 184!! Some of these live some distance away and it is pleasing to note that they still wish to retain their links with Chepstow. I think in view of this, I need to review our signing in and perhaps for people to sign themselves in, as they do at u3a, which I can then transfer to a more formal record.
Of these (i.e 184 members) 45 have already rejoined for the forthcoming season, which is pleasing, plus those who are non-paying members. I have only had one reply to my emails from someone no longer wishing to rejoin but asking to remain on the mailing list in order to be informed if or when we can provide access to meetings via Zoom.

(iv) **Publications and events**.

Report circulated in advance attached to these notes.

(i) *The Chepstow Story* Sections including the Old Bridge to be completed, for the revision

(ii) Digitisation. Noted that there are 6-8 titles that are a priority for the first phase of digitisation. Agreed that the project should be taken forward by a small group (Guy, Annie, Simon, John). Also agreed that a budget of £5,000 - £6,000 be earmarked for the project

ACTION: Guy to convene working group

(vi) Excursions

Noted that the proposed February visit to BBC Cardiff had not taken place ed but this and an outing to Swindon Science and Innovation Park remain in hand. Steve handed out a 'Think Piece' on the nature and scope of the Excursions role setting out ideas for potential future activities and outings. Steve will solicit the views of Committee members to produce a 'Top Three' list of Excursions to offer to members at the next full meeting (?and by email). Steve hopes to arrange one event in late summer and one in the Autumn of 2026.

In discussion we noted (i) the need for a distinct offering, (ii) the value of working with local coach companies (who offer excursions) and also with the Archaeological Society (iii) need to avoid duplicating Chepstow U3A's Away Days programme, (iv) have an appreciation of budget considerations amongst members

ACTION: Steve to circulate a digital copy of his paper to all Committee members, inviting members to vote on their Top Three activity choices.

(vii) **Civic Matters.**

Briefing/scoping paper deferred to the May meeting

ACTION: Dave J

4 Welsh Festival 4th July 2026

Guy offered to provide a talk for this event and will liaise directly with the Town Council

ACTION: Guy

5 AGM 2026

Agreed that the AGM will be advertised in the April Bulletin with a call for nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and 'Committee members' (other roles are decided at the Executive Committee meeting immediately following the AGM. There is no limit on the size of the Committee).
Nominations must be received no later than 14 days before the AGM, which takes place on 20th May.
Agreed that a timed note of AGM procedures be produced and circulated

ACTION: Guy/Marion

6 Any other business:

(i) Town Walks. Agreed Keith's request to spend more money on promotion.
ACTION: Marion to investigate if DBS clearance is required for members running talks

(ii) British Association for Local History Insurance Certificate 2026 has been received

7 Next meeting: 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.8.45 PM