

Minutes of the WAS Committee Meeting 16th January 2024.

Present: Keith (by telephone), Connie, Alan, Theresa, Liz, Patricia, Vicky, John, Gill, Jennie, Donna.

1. Apologies Cheryl

2/3. Matters arising from the Minutes of last Meeting: Thank you to Donna for organising a very enjoyable Social in November.

Lancing Prep: pending – waiting for Finds to be washed.

Gill has been in touch with CDAS about Martins' Report in the WAS Journal.

Congratulations to Cheryl for doing a marvellous job with the 2023 Journal.

The Open Day, which replaced a Study Day, was very successful.

4. a) Malthouse 2024 dig - 21st July to end of 1st week in August. Currently there are sheep there, not harming our trenches. Layton – heavy-horse man – is coming back. Connie not sure where he'll be put. Our area to be electric-fenced. The hard standing has to be changed – the toilets should get a better site. Mark will find us somewhere to put our equipment. Intend to leave '23 trench, but extend to South and West. Probably only 1m to go to East (augured last year). Intend to open the big pit properly - do a box section? We may not need the digger. Finds tent to be above the WW2 shelter?

Western hedge – need a walkover to see what's in it.

History of Malthouse – Jennie to join the group when she can. Next meeting 23rd Jan at Bayside, and 20th Feb. John M is researching a pub – has some good stories.

b) Slindon Finds – Sompting '23 on hold until the Fieldwalk is done. Report needed by the end of March for Mike T to submit in May.

Should we go back to the top West corner? – should be a recommendation in the Report.

WAS has done 10% coverage, found no sign of the Roman road, but a lot of Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Finds.

Rampion did a very good job. So we can quote their report.

Gordon will check Finds for anything Roman.

Flint ongoing – not a full flint report, will form part of overall Finds report.

(Throughout the winter the 14 people limit at Finds will continue.)

c) Climping – John was there on Sunday. He walked west to the Elmer rock groyne - nothing was showing up in the cliff section. Back east he found 2 small scoops with Med pottery – John has washed it, passed to Gill.

Bill W found a cremation urn? in late October, near the car park. Reported to Coroner and Police. Possibly late Iron Age/early Roman. Coroner recommended X-raying – and micro-excavation (which is expensive). Feeling was that WAS should fund X-rays?

Fishbourne. Keith to talk to Rob Simmons. If X-raying finds any metal, then micro-excavating more vital. The FLO is involved, but funds not easy, nothing offered from the B.M.

Gordon will do a report on the pot, once emptied. May be linked to some from a Chichester site and one at Westhampnett.

Area where it was found was washed away a couple of days later.

Keith has talked to Matt Pope re grants – Margary Fund no longer formal. SAS would consider if we put it to them. John Funnell – S.E. C.B.A. – Keith to approach.

Pot still belongs to the Landowner, but is currently being safely stored.

WAS should get involved as no-one else is.

WAS did have a Rescue Fund – up to £2500 – before PPG16 – in general funds.

(Patricia reports that £2310 was transferred into the General Fund in December 2012)

John went with Bill to see the pit where pot was found – John cleaned it back and found it was in the fill of a pit. James Kenny has seen it, thinks it was in the Atrebatian overlap period.

There are no current visits planned to Climping.

d) Fieldwalk see a)

e) Bignor – has been an outline for work on the field North of the villa. Dave Staveley to do more geo-phys. Keith sent a list of places to investigate to the villa – they haven't got back to him so far. James Kenny would like to discuss this further...

Geo-phys done in the camping field and car park was inconclusive.

Probably no digging there in 2024 – need the geo-phys first.

f) Sullington Warren - The National Trust approached WAS last Autumn. Parch marks had been seen on the 'green', outside the scheduled area. A mown area, not near the barrows. Portsmouth Uni. did a GPR survey, which shows linear features.

A week/ long weekend dig planned, possibly in early May.

Keith has a draft project design, sent to the Committee. He is talking to James Brown.

The N.T. will provide a digger, and some volunteers to help. The parch marks may be the foundations of a Post-Med building. Joy Ede did work on it, there's no indication of anything earlier.

(Keith has circulated the initial draft of the Project Design for comment.)

(James S looked at the Lidar, not very much to see.)

g) Burpham – is James Sainsbury's project. The aim is to undertake an 8/9 day period in August – test pits in gardens – over 20 offered so far. Each house to be responsible for washing their finds? As far as possible.

Keith to visit June 1st, with James S., to undertake a training day – Alan B will go too.

WAS role – Finds, monitoring, recording? Help to co-ordinate, organise, give help and advice. Base will be in the Village Hall, kit to be stored in a local garage.

h) Lancing Prep – Finds not yet washed – Gill discussed with Sarah on Flint day. This year Sarah doing a test pit – her own project, no WAS involvement.

i) Patching barrow – no progress.

j) Barrow at Highdown – there will be a fieldwalk, possibly end of Feb/beginning of March – James's walkers to do it, a first for most of them. WAS to help – mainly with finds?

5. Finance – Patricia supplied draft end-of-year accounts Current A/C £2457, £9236 overall. This year's deficit of £633 will come down a bit. These are draft figures at present, Bob to sign them off before AGM, Patricia and Liz to sign on behalf of Trustees. Patricia will do another year on the Committee to induct Alan.

Room hire cost is up, meetings have to be paid for. Field unit expenses "Gill is quite thrifty".

Alan and Patricia to do a Budget profile in February. Insurance to be organised.

6. Charity Commission – nothing to report.

7. GDPR – nothing to report.

8. Membership. Figures not exact, as the statement is issued up to Jan 22nd.

Members paid 2024: 20; paid 2023, not yet in 2024: 92; Life Members: 15; Hon.

Members: 19. Total is 144.

Increase the Membership fee to £30? Other Societies have lower Membership fees, but charge by the day for digs. Will be on the AGM Agenda, to have effect in 2025.

We also have a hardship fund – folk only have to ask.

9. Newsletter – anything for this, by 26th Jan, please.

Journal – the Committee repeated it's thanks to Cheryl.

10. Study Days – Bob's half day at Slindon in February – now 7 people.

March Day cancelled – Museum won't charge.

Bob's 'Artefact Illustration' Study Day on Saturday April 13th – to be advertised.

Possible Photography on-site experience, with half day at Slindon shed, photographing Finds.

9th November – Simon Stevens on Post-Med Sussex towns.

John M to do his Day on desk-top research early in 2025.

Luke Barber – Med/Post-Med pottery?

Training to be discussed – Feb session.

Other ideas – Surveying. Dropbox training.

11. Actions from WAS Training Day – mentoring new Members - On-site training?

Need a website sub-group – give Richard some help with this. Alan has been helping. Where to file documents. Chris Wild might get involved?

Discussion about filing books and documents in the shed – Donna, Alan and Keith to discuss.

Health and Safety Field manual needs checking and updating – Vicky offered to do this.

First Aid training and list of First-aiders needed.

(Donna's summary from the day sent round.)

12. Flint Assessment Sessions at the Museum – the first one was very successful.

Dates have been sent round for the February meetings.

13. Walks – Henry Wakeford to do a Petworth walk on Saturday 27th April.

James Sainsbury offering one in the Autumn. (can't do July/August now)

Simons Stevens – Lewes – 21st September.

14. Lectures – David Millum, January – didn't ask for a fee, donation made to the Culver Project.

Dr Richard Nevell, Feb – asking only for expenses

March – Connie and Bob, following the AGM – on EPIC.

April - Mark Phillips on the search for the B44

Next series – Geoff Mead, James Sainsbury on Highdown,

Without Nigel we need someone to introduce the Speaker – Jennie will do this.

15. WAS Facebook – nothing to say.

16. WAS garments – by the end of the month. Liz W paying, we'll refund her.

17. WAS Books storage – discussed in 11.

18. Worthing Heritage Festival – 8th – 23rd June. Liz spoke to James, their input will be a couple of days on Highdown, walks, Finds etc. Gerry at the Museum happy for WAS to have a stall there on one of the Saturdays. – 8th, 15th, 22nd. Need to let him know soon.

19. Other events – July Binsted Strawberry Fair – WAS to have a stall.

20. Website research area – Keith to discuss in future.

21. AOB – Gill – Nigel has been recording digging day numbers – Donna offered to take this on. Gill proposes to step down in 2025 – will do a job description.

Sarah Brewer will stand for the Committee at the AGM.

22. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 19th March.