

VCH Shropshire

Annual report for the year ending 31 August 2018

The VCH county committee has pleasure in presenting its report for the year.

The year has seen VCH Shropshire launch new initiatives and develop others. Some of its activities have made less progress than we hoped and will only come to fruition in 2018-19. In turn this has led us to defer some of the initiatives that we planned for this year.

The committee and officers of VCH Shropshire have remained unchanged over the year.

Funding

Accounts are attached. Receipts this year amounted to £18,039.33. The major funding came from the third and final tranche of money from the Jean Jackson Trust (£10,000). Smaller donations came from individuals including a substantial donation to advance Shrewsbury part two from Mrs Penny Champion (see below). The grant from Newport Town Council has not yet been claimed and so does not appear in the accounts. The Victorian Garden party in Newport organised by Mrs Fletcher raised £1,084 to advance our work there. The Committee also has £6105 at its disposal which is the unspent balance of a grant made to the Institute of Historical Research by the Marc Fitch Fund for work on Shrewsbury.

We are grateful to Mrs Champion and other individual donors for their considerable assistance.

Whilst the end of year balance looks healthy, most of this money is already committed and some of it is ringfenced for the advancement of particular projects.

Wem Urban

The text of the Wem 'short' was returned to VCH Central Office in a revised form in November 2017. At Easter we received a second report on the volume requiring further expansion to cover areas which had been lightly treated in the previous version. New research was commissioned and the text resubmitted in May. In June we were told that it was now too long to be considered. The text has been reduced from 90,000 words to 75,000 words: this too is still not acceptable to Central Office and at the time of writing the text remains to be reduced further. It is hoped that a shortened short can appear during 2018-19. The committee has also considered other options for moving forwards.

Wem Rural

Dr Everard started collecting material for the townships of Wem rural during the year. By the end of the year the first drafts were being circulated within the committee. It is envisaged that this work will continue into next year and the typescript drafts posted on the VCH Shropshire website as they are completed and approved by the research committee. It is not envisaged that these will be, in the first instance, published in print form.

VCH Shropshire VI (ii), Shrewsbury Part Two

Through the kindness of Mrs Penny Champion, Richard Hoyle reviewed the late Bill Champion's notes and unpublished materials at the family home in Lewisham during the winter of 2017-18. Mrs Champion has made his notes available to VCH. As a first step the typescripts that Bill had completed before his illness have been added to the VCH Shropshire website as drafts. As reported earlier, Mrs Champion has also most generously made a donation to VCH Shropshire to advance Shrewsbury Part Two.

Towards the end of the year we also recovered copies of incomplete draft accounts for some of the Shrewsbury churches which had been prepared some years ago. These give us a basis from which we can proceed to finalise this part of the Part Two, and we hope to do this during the next year.

It is proposed to commission new research on Shrewsbury during 2018-19.

Throughout the year the Nonconformist group has continued to gather material on the chapels and congregations of Shrewsbury and we hope that this will be drawn together and published on our website in 2019.

VCH Shropshire XII (i) Newport and the Weald Moors

There have been developments to report on the volume formerly called Newport and the Weald Moors but which is perhaps better described as 'Newport and its environs'.

It was decided to proceed by way of a scoping project which would identify the areas which needed to be covered by the volume and the archives which needed to be consulted. This would then form a framework, parts of which could be allocated to volunteer researchers and writers.

An application for funding for the scoping project from Newport Town council was made at the very end of last reporting year. Happily this was successful and we received £4500 to be spent in the current local authority year on the Newport part of the project. Our 'war chest' also contains the proceeds of the Victorian garden party which Linda Fletcher kindly organised in June (see below). An application to the HLF for co-funding was not successful: news of this was received in the last days of this reporting year. To anticipate discussions, the committee is looking for ways to make up the shortfall in funding to take forwards the Newport part of the project (which needs to be completed by the end of the local authority financial year).

Publicity and activities

Two Newsletters were circulated during the year.

The VCH Shropshire stand was a central feature of the Newport Guildhall heritage open day in September 2017, thanks to Linda Fletcher and members of Newport History Society.

Our annual meeting on 28 October 2017 attracted a good crowd to hear Richard Hayman speak on 'River Histories: Exploring the Past on the Severn and Wye'.

Several committee members also gave up part of a Saturday to run a VCH Shropshire stand at Local History Day at Shirehall on 21 October 2017.

Presentations on VCH Shropshire have been made to various organisations during the year. Judith Everard gave an after-dinner talk to Wem Rotary Club in November 2017 and was the speaker at the April 2018 meeting of the Shropshire Archaeological and History Society. In August, Judith Everard and Wendy Horton gave a presentation to Church Stretton History Society.

The committee is enormously grateful to one of its members, Linda Fletcher, for holding a Victorian garden party at her house in Newport in June to raise money for the VCH project in the town. VCH has always had royal patronage, but we were especially grateful that Her Majesty Queen Victoria attended and gave our work her renewed blessing.*

Final text approved 27 October 2018

* We were also delighted that the garden party was the subject of a page of photographs in the October edition of *Shropshire Magazine*.

Income and expenditure to 31 August 2018

Income

Sale of Goods and Services

Donations from individuals	6,280.33	
Donations from local organisations	675.00	
Donations from major contributors	10,000.00	
Events Income	1,084.00	
Other Income	0.00	
Total		18,039.33

Expenses

Expenses on Items for Resale

Licences and Fees	10,900.00	
Total		10,900.00

Running Expenses

Bank Charges and Interest	72.00	
Events Expenses and running costs	72.80	

Total		11,044.80
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<i>Net Profit/Loss</i>		6,994.53
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Balance Sheet as at 31 Aug 2018

Capital & Reserves

Profit to date	24,870.50	
Total		24,870.50

Owner's Capital Employed:	24,870.50	
Capital Employed:		24,871

Current Assets

Unity Trust Bank	24,870.50	
Transfer	0.00	
Subtotal		24,870.50

Current Liabilities

Subtotal		0.00
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Working Capital:	24,870.50	
Assets Employed:	24,871.00	