



Minutes of the Members' Forum
held on Monday 8th December 2025 at 11.00 a.m.
at the Heritage Hub

Those present were:

Berkeley Local History Group	Margaret Orchard
Blockley Heritage Society	Roger Thornburgh
Chalford Parish Local History Group	Roger Carnt
Charlton Kings Local and Family History Society	Mike Greet, Michelle Greet
Cheltenham Local History Society	Steven Blake, Stuart Manton, David Scriven, Sally Self
Chipping Campden History Society	Judith Ellis, Mary Fielding
Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society	Anne Buffoni
Cotteswold Naturalists Field Club	Peter Cornish, Jane Rowe
Cranham Local History Society	Jan Whitton
Forest of Dean Local History Society	Mary Sullivan
Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum	Martyn Bryan
Gloucestershire Archaeology	Denise Vizer
Gloucestershire Archives	John Putley
Gloucestershire County History Trust	David Aldred
Gloucestershire Family History Society	Vicky Thorpe
Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology	Chas Townley
Gloucester Street History Group (Winchcombe)	Rob White
Leckhampton Local History Society	Anne Gale, Stephen Gale
Maisemore Local History Society	David Jones
Painswick Local History Society	Carol Maxwell, Peter Jackson
Stonehouse History Group	Janet Hudson, John Peters, Vicki Walker
Stroud Local History Society	Howard Beard, Tony Macer
Stroudwater Navigation Archive Charity	Lois Francis
Swindon Village Society Local History Group	Eileen Allen
Winchcombe History Group	David Hilton, Sue Hilton

37 attendees

Apologies for absence:

Birdlip History Group	Harvey Mattinson
Charlton Kings Local and Family History Society	Geoff Bridgman
Churchdown Local History Society	Joan Hughes, Jane Whittaker
Oakridge History Group	John Loosley
Prestbury History Society	Val Porter
Tewkesbury Historical Society	John Dixon

Minutes of the GLHA Forum held 8th September 2025

were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair. Amendment – Michael Greet was representing Charlton Kings, not the Historical Association.

Chair's Report by Sally Self

Members were emailed a written report before the meeting. The Chair drew attention to the following additional points.

GLHA Committee

The situation had improved somewhat since the Report had been sent out.

Progress on the future of GLHA - Position in December 2025

Committee members not intending to stand in June 2026 are Sally Self (Chair), Vicki Walker (Secretary and Website Manager), Mary Sullivan (Website Manager and Speakers List) and Janet Hudson (Enquiries).

Those intending to continue are David Scriven (Treasurer), David Jones (Societies' Events List), John Putley and Peter Jackson. Eileen Allen has volunteered to join the committee.

David Scriven has agreed to stand as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Peter Jackson has agreed to take on the management of the website and of the members mailing list. David Jones has agreed to continue managing the Societies' Events List. Janet Hudson has agreed to continue managing the enquiries that come to GLHA. We have also had some offers of administrative help to be discussed.

This means that GLHA can continue to exist and the GLHA website will continue as a means of accessing information about the Association. Communication will be possible via the maintenance of the members mailing list.

The main function that we have not yet managed to sort out is the Forum meetings. The lack of a Chair and Secretary make these difficult to organise. We hope that a volunteer or two can be found to take on these roles and help to organise Forum meetings. We hope that the Heritage Hub may be able to assist us in some way to enable Society reps to gather together as GLHA has facilitated up until now.

Website

Mary Sullivan had updated the Speakers List. Several new speakers had been added.

David Jones would update the Local Societies Events List for publication in January 2026.

Cheltenham LHS had created a brochure to assist local schools in teaching local history. Although this has a Cheltenham focus it was felt that it would be useful to all societies for ideas and advice.

The brochure is available on the GLHA website <https://gloshistory.org.uk/>

Glosdocs

Ray Wilson had sent a report on the latest additions.

Please visit <https://gloshistory.org.uk/glosdocs/>

The Chair thanked the committee for providing the Christmas refreshments and Eileen Allen for assisting.

Treasurer's Report by David Scriven

Members were emailed a written report and a copy of the Accounts before the meeting. There was not much change in the last 3 months with the balance now standing at £3453.

Membership – We now have 53 paid up members with 3 groups not having renewed their membership.

Update: Following the meeting an application for membership was received from Hucclecote and Brockworth Local History Group, making the total membership now 54.

Report from Glos County History Trust by David Aldred (Trustee)

The report had been sent to all. DA drew attention to the main points, particularly that it was hoped that the Cirencester volume would be published by the end of next year.

Report from Gloucestershire Archives by John Putley (Community Heritage Officer)

Members had received a written report before the meeting. JP drew attention to the next event - 28 January 2026 – *Tarts, Tramps & Toms – the talk of negotiable affection!* As a prequel to the month of love, we'll be looking at the 'oldest profession' in the county.

Congratulations - Gloucestershire Archives - Record Keeping Service of the Year. There will be a celebration on 17th December from 2-4pm.

Green Pledge Project: This project has now finished and has been very well received with it being used as a 'best practice' case study by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Cheltenham Local Studies: The unique and irreplaceable material is going to be moved to Gloucestershire Archives, but a strong local studies centre will remain at Cheltenham. We hope to enhance the library stock that is available for loan in the New Year.

Questions

Local Studies Libraries

Stuart Manton (Cheltenham) asked if the Cheltenham library stock would be on the Glos Archives catalogue. JP replied that most of it has already been catalogued and it is located on the Local Studies tab of the GA catalogue. Stuart commented that the local history groups in the Cheltenham area are keen to be consulted about local studies materials. The present librarian is retiring and will not be replaced.

Chas Townley (GSIA) asked where the materials from Stroud Library have gone. JP replied that anything withdrawn from libraries should be coming to Glos Archives. Members were concerned that local collections are disappearing from libraries and there is no-one to assist students with research. It was suggested that GLHA might produce a guide to researching local history.

Short presentation from Stroudwater Navigation Archives Charity about their website

<https://stroudwaterhistory.org.uk/> Lois Francis and Martyn Bryan explained their work to digitise the large collection of archives concerning the Stroudwater Canal and Thames and Severn Canal. Searching the website can reveal information about a vast range of topics connected with the canals.

Questions

Judith Ellis (Chipping Campden) – Can there be a link to the Stroudwater website on the Glos Archives site? JP replied - maybe on the catalogue front page.

Chas Townley (GSIA) suggested that a grant, for example from BGAS, might be obtained to help with digitising the Archives.

Short break followed by:

Running a Local History Group

Mary Sullivan (GLHA Committee member) presented a summary of the responses to the recent questionnaire. (see GLHA website <https://gloshistory.org.uk/>)

Followed by a discussion among the attendees present:

What forms of extra income do you have?

Stonehouse – calendars

Glos Waterways Museum – ask for donations, charge for talks

GSIA – possible legacies

CNFC – with some income you might be liable for tax (could provide details if required)

Chipping Campden – charge for providing historical information for planning applications

Have you considered selling your publications as electronic versions?

Most groups still sell printed copies and put publications free online after a time. Not many sell online.

Cheltenham – sell printed publications but free online after 5 years

Forest of Dean – New Regard for sale on website after being sent to members.

Leckhampton – produce bulletins for sale which are online after a time. People still buy paper copies.

Chipping Campden have an eshop and an online order form, and Forest
Putting publications online

Stonehouse – online versions provide an opportunity for visitors to search a collection by topic
Forest - have an index to their Journal online. Cheltenham publications are searchable online.
Paying for services

Due to problems with finding volunteers some groups pay for some things.

Most groups pay something for web services.

CNFC - pay a secretary for admin work

Winchcombe – pay people to provide teas and coffees (£30 per session)

How do you attract new members?

Cheltenham - give free membership to students 18-25 and they have contributed.

Chipping Campden - bursary for encouraging students to write about local history.

Forest – obtained a grant for working with schools, annual competitions

Cirencester – have a low membership because of competition from other groups in the town.

Encourage members to join by charging more for non-members. Make events more social and visit the pub afterwards. Committee member responsible for encouraging new members.

Cranham – put a flyer through door to new residents to the village. Also work with schools

Berkeley – don't have their own Facebook but use local Facebook accounts

Maisemore – may soon have to fold through lack of members

Glos Waterways – have some meetings in the day time rather than evening

Cheltenham – better attendance in the mornings

Birdlip – meet on a Saturday morning

(not many groups meet in the day partly due to availability of venues)

GlosArch - run Zoom meetings which saves people travelling long distances

How do you publicise your events?

CNFC – committee arranges events but pays for the admin to send out publicity

Hucclecote – is difficult to get paper posters put up now. Publicity all online e.g. Facebook, or Radio Glos

Stonehouse – attend community events and committee members sell calendars in the Co-op which gets the Group more well-known. Hand out events sheet with contact details and website.

All events are on SHG website. Details also sent to other LH Societies in the area.

(Quite a few groups use Facebook)

How do you decide on your programme for the year?

CNFC – secretary decides on talks but paid assistant deals with admin

Berkeley – prioritise their own local history, members sharing their history

Over half the groups attending organise a summer visit

Does your group work with other community organisations? If so, on what?

Chipping Campden – work with the Campden Society

Cheltenham – work with the local museum

Stonehouse – create information boards and work with nearby organisations to sponsor and contribute to the boards e.g. Town Council, Stonehouse in Bloom, local shops, schools, church

We ran out of time towards the end of the discussion. If your group has any more information or suggestions to contribute please send them to Mary sullivanmary56@gmail.com or Vicki walkeravsj@aol.com and we will produce an update incorporating them. Thanks to all who have contributed so far.

Followed by Christmas refreshments and informal chat

The meeting closed at 1.30 pm.

Agreed at a meeting on.....

Signed.....(Chair)