Minutes of the WAS Committee Meeting held on 13th May 2025

Present: Keith (on phone), Alan Beazley, Sarah Brewer, Amie Friend, Theresa Griffiths, Cheryl Hutchins, Liz Lane, John Mills, Connie Shirley, Gill Turner, Donna Wiltshire.

1. Apologies: Vicki Lillywhite, Jennie Williamson.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – to be taken as we go through.

3. As above

4. Updating Committee – adding Sarah's new role as Deputy Surveyor – done.

5. GDPR – nothing to report.

6. Trustees – nothing to report

7. Fieldwork update: Sompting: Connie put a picture from last Friday on Facebook – there may be a well.. This coming Friday, clear new area, taking another metre. Chalk, clay, brick, tile, etc coming up. Clay pipe found – 1660 – 1680.
   Mark is redoing fences on the site, so we'll have to be more cautious once that is finished. Finds being processed as we go.
   Amie asked about sharing updates with Sompting School – at the school – fine.
   Burpham: Donna now has the shed key and will contact folk who can help return kit. Alan asked that when the tent is taken down, the poles all need to be marked. He has used the article in Sussex World, plus another photo, for the Newsletter. John M outlined the theory that the burh was reinforced during the siege of Arundel Castle in the time of Henry 1- needs more research. If so, it would explain why there is almost no trace of the Saxon ditch. It fits better with the pottery too.
   Highdown: Site visit, 11 am on June 4th, meet in car park.
   Keith is discussing with Mike Allen the possibilities of environmental recording. We have consent for WAS to do work in the scheduled area – feeling of the Meeting was that no-one from WAS is qualified to dig where there's a chance of finding human bones. Needs to be thought through.
   Slindon '02, '03: Keith will have more time to work on this after June.....
   Climping – John hasn't visited lately, but met with Esther who asked on WAS gmail about flint finds – from a field behind the beach. Some good ones.

8. Finance: Alan presented the accounts to date – fine so far. Membership (now at £30) may be up by 20% in 2025.

9. Membership: see above. Total Membership now about 170.

10. Newsletter: anything to add, please (e.g. BFF and Highdown) – will go out a bit early this month.
    Journal: Cheryl asking whether Bill Watkins will do an article on the urn – Keith will contact him.

11. ASE Circular: re their involvement more in local Archaeology Groups. WAS (not WAG!) already has a relationship with ASE and we aren't in the Chichester area. Keith to respond. (They could maybe advise us on the scheduled area at Highdown).

12. Insurance: Matt Pope has offered WAS a drone, Connie is investigating Insurance, etc. V costly to go through Towergate, ideally to be operated by one person taking out Insurance and responsibility. It will need to be licensed – both Flyer ID and Operator ID. Connie would like to accept the offer and find a Member who would take it on. ?David Chuter – has all the relevant Insurance.

13. Study Day: Sarah Green on animal bones, Saturday November 15th at Worthing College.
    Donna has been in touch with the Weald & Downland Museum – they have a Library, could help with research – a WAS outing?
    Think about 2026 Study Day topics.

14. Lectures: October 14th David Rudling on Threats to our Archaeological Heritage. November 11th Simon Stevens on the Excavation at the site of a WW1 Training Camp: Cooden. December 9th Connie Shirley and John Mills on Sompting Malthouse Fields: the White House.
    Discussion about our Lecture publicity – established layout 9 years ago, need to use Speaker's Details/photos. Almost now our identity.
    Amie has a friend who might give us a Lecture – historic rather than archaeological – will talk to him.

15. Other events; formal thank you to James Sainsbury for the Clapham walk – very successful.
    Nothing has been heard about the Knepp dig.
    Finds sessions: 15th May, 5th & 19th June, 3rd & 17th July. Post-ex Sompting this week, Forge Field has priority (update: started on the 15th). We'll have to go back to strictly 14 folk by the Autumn – must contact Gill if coming.
    Agreed that the Black Horse, Findon, would be good for our Social Event again.
    Some possibility of a late August BBQ

16. Website: The website will be 10 years old next year. Theresa has put a lot of BFF photos on – must check any that show deep digging!
    Keith asked for his reading list to be put on.

17. AOB: Barbara Shaw has given us a book written by Lawrence on Forestry Archaeology and we also have a South Downs one on looking after Monuments.
    Keith mentioned that James S is looking at going back to Burpham (field behind Church) in late August/September next year. John M said there is a D-shaped enclosure there and a double-ditch trackway.

18. Date of next Meeting: Tuesday August 12th.