

TAS CHESTER COMMITTEE

Being A Committee Member

This paper gives a brief introduction to the work of the Committee, what the different roles entail and the time commitment involved.

The Committee As A Whole

The Committee meets ten times a year, usually on the Tuesday morning the week before the monthly lectures. (There are no meetings in July and August.) The meetings generally last between two to three hours. We consider the programme for the year, keep the finances under review (including setting membership fees), approve projects for Community Arts and Heritage Volunteers, plan Study Days and Visits, as well as dealing with the more mundane logistical issues involved in running the Society.

In addition, Committee Members attend the lecture days to carry out various roles: meeting and greeting; the raffle; selling tickets for events; and, of course, chairing the lecture sessions. Some of the Committee will be there all day, others will be there for just one of the two sessions. We have a chat over a sandwich lunch with the lecturer between the two.

We all get time off for good behaviour! It is accepted that on occasions (holidays, grandchildren, etc) people will not be able to attend a meeting or a lecture day.

And it's not all work and no play, we do have time to enjoy ourselves and have the odd social event.

All you really need to join the Committee is a computer and a willingness to work with others. The NW Area and TAS nationally provided training courses and support for the different roles, if these are needed, and ex Committee members are always on hand to help out with advice and support.

Chairman

The Chairman has two principal duties – most obviously chairing the monthly lectures, committee meetings and the AGM, but also taking overall responsibility for the functioning and wellbeing of the Society, supported by the Committee. In addition, the Chairman represents Chester at the North West Area and the National TAS meetings, including the AGM in May. These amount to four or five meetings a year. There are also informal meetings with associated local bodies through our Community Arts, Heritage Volunteers and other initiatives. In between there are routine emails, phone calls, cheques to sign, etc taking perhaps an hour or two in a typical week.

Vice Chairman

The Vice Chairman is normally an existing member of the Committee who covers for the Chairman in their absence, for example by chairing Committee meetings or introducing lectures.

Hon Secretary

The Hon Sec prepares the agenda for the Committee meetings, circulates papers to Committee Members and takes the minutes of the meetings. Additionally, they circulate details of the logistical arrangements for the lecture days to those involved, crucial information such as how many sandwiches we need at lunchtime!

Their other main role is in organising the AGM, circulating the papers (which are largely a standard format) and minuting the meeting.

Outside of the AGM, the time involved is around one day per month. This does increase a little at AGM time, perhaps a couple of days over February and March.

Hon Treasurer

The Treasurer's job is to manage the Society's finances. This includes paying the bills by BACs or cheques against receipts, particularly the lecturers' fees and expenses and committee members' expenses, and to bank the cash from the raffle after each lecture day. The Treasurer records receipts and expenditure and monitors the bank balance to check it is correct. They prepare a monthly report to the Committee on the financial status.

The accounts are prepared by an external examiner (not the Treasurer). The Treasurer presents the audited accounts to the AGM in March together with a brief report.

The time involved in the role is about three to four hours a month.

Heritage Volunteer Secretary

Heritage volunteers work on a number of projects to help conserve and preserve existing heritage materials.

The Secretary co-ordinates the regular work at the Record Office (currently one morning a month) and develops additional one-off projects in conjunction with other bodies, which could be the Civic Trust, the Local Authority, the Cathedral, etc. They also complete necessary paper work to ensure projects are properly managed and supported.

They also organise the Heritage Open Days at St Mary's Within the Walls for two days in September.

The work at the Record Office is a half to one day per month (the Sec does not have to attend all meetings and is allowed holidays!). The time spent increases when other projects are undertaken but again this is unlikely to exceed the equivalent of a day per month, except in September for St Mary's.

Programme Secretary

The Programme Secretary plans the Yearly Programme of Lectures for the Society. This is done in consultation with the Committee and working with Visits and Study Day Secretary to ensure a cohesive approach to the year's events. The Secretary normally attends the nationally run Directory Day at which they hear a brief resume from approved lecturers of their talks. From this a programme is developed covering the spectrum of the arts and complementing significant anniversaries and exhibitions. The Secretary negotiates, books and discusses arrangements with lecturers, handles all aspects of the booking process, including the formal legal contract. They also arrange the necessary logistical support for the lecturer on the day.

The time taken varies depending on the time of year but averages one to two days per month.

Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary maintains the Society's membership list using the Arts Society online membership dashboard, and processes members' details in accordance with current Data Protection legislation and guidelines. The Secretary is the first point of contact for potential members, responding to enquiries, sending applications forms and managing requests for guests

to attend lectures. They manage the annual membership renewal process and monitor attendance at lectures, keeping the Committee informed of trends.

General administration takes around two hours per month. May and June are the busiest time when up to five hours per week may be required to process renewal payments.

Visits and Study Day Secretary

This role has been split in the past, but since they complement one other, the Committee are proposing to combine the roles.

In many ways the role is similar to that of Programme Secretary, in that it is identifying the topic for the Study Day or location for a Visit and setting up the arrangements. That will include negotiating with lectures, agreeing venues, making any arrangements for hospitality in the case of Study Days. For Visits, it is arranging transport, admission, guides, refreshments etc.

The secretary agrees the budget with the committee and sets up a system for members to book the visit, normally using Eventbrite.

For overseas visits or longer ones in the UK, the Secretary liaises with a travel company, who do all the hard work!

The time spent is one to two days per month, including time spent on visits or attending Study Days.

Community Arts Secretary

The Community Arts Secretary (formerly Young Arts but now with a broader remit) works to identify arts projects to support the community and to widen access to the arts generally. These may be large or small projects, they can be hands on or be funded to run themselves. The Secretary liaises with existing community organisations, museums, youth groups, schools, etc to identify projects and the support required. The money collected from the raffle at each lecture goes to support this work (as well as the work of the Heritage Volunteers).

The time involved varies depending on the projects being undertaken, it is a flexible role that can easily fit in with the Secretary's other personal routine.

IT Secretary

The IT Secretary is responsible for providing the IT support to the Committee. This involves ensuring the technology is fully operational for lectures either at the venue or via webinar and YouTube. In addition, the role requires the maintenance of the Society's website and the preparation of the rolling information notes broadcast at the start of the lectures.

The time involved is limited outside of attendance at committee meetings and lectures, and is unlikely to be more than two hours per month.