

**SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT  
PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

**Minutes of the 88th Annual General Meeting**

**15th April 2025**

Attending: Kevin Chard (Chairman) plus 17 Members.

**Item 1. Chairman's Welcome**

Kevin announced the sad death of member Gerry McGuire. He thanked the attendees for coming and forming a quorum, also thanking the committee, officers and helpers. Steve Blundell informed us that member Anne Roberts is seriously ill in hospital.

**Item 2. Apologies**

Five apologies received.

**Item 3. Notice of Any Other Business**

None

**Item 4. Minutes of the 2024 A.G.M.**

Booklets distributed, minutes accepted and signed.

**Item 5. Matters Arising from 2024 Minutes**

Volunteers did come forward to attend the APBS conference in Southampton.

Alan Blakey thanked the committee for their good work, Kevin appreciated this.

**Item 6. Chairman's Report – Kevin Chard**

As I write my summary for 2024 my mind turns first to Tuesday evening venue, changes to that venue and the challenges faced – no change then to 2023!

Tuesday evening meeting venue changed to Bursledon in 2024 but we were unable to secure any storage space at the venue and attendance figures were low. The venue itself was good, but we have decided to move to Holy Saviour Church in Bitterne for (hopefully) ease of location and because we now have some storage space. The venue facilities are good but we need longer to assess how the change will affect attendee numbers.

The Society is far more than Tuesday evening meetings – our Thursday Chandler's Ford and Zoom meeting programmes continue to flourish and have been far less traumatic. My thanks to Pete Bruce and Malcolm Coe for all their efforts.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend those thanks to all those who contribute to all things that make the Society function – all the committee members and officers but also those that assist with meeting set up, raffles, etc. True team effort. As with all things in life, we focus on the struggles and don't always stand back to appreciate all the good things that are happening. There are a lot of aspects to our Society and it offers much to those interested in our hobby.

That said, we could do with more volunteers for the committee / officer roles in the Society. If you are interested in any aspect of running the Society, please let me know – we could do with more flexibility to cope with what life can throw at us. Steve Gerrard will touch on some immediate issues in his report.

In 2024 we suffered from reduced Auction and Packet revenues – one through dealing with storage issues / clearing a backlog of material, the other from ill health. These concerns are now behind us, although we have reduced the number of evening auctions to 3 to ease the time burden.

We rely on these revenues financially and ran with a deficit in 2024 because of these issues. This is not sustainable. We intend to make changes to the membership fee from 2026. The aim is that the membership fee will cover our running costs.

We can then use any profits made from the Auction / Packet to pay for more exciting aspects – social events, trips, raffle prizes, conferences, etc. The financial proposals will be covered in the Treasurer report.

I have not separated my Auction Manager report as it is entwined with the broader aspects of the Chairman report. I am optimistic for 2025 – our first Tuesday Auction at Bitterne was a success and the room attendance and bidding was good and great fun. Don't miss out on attending in June. We also had a successful Saturday Auction at Chandler's Ford – my thanks to Pete Bruce for organizing another great event.

Kevin also mentioned that the Bitterne church will have its own car park later this year.

#### **Item 7. President's Report – Julian Jones**

Once more I am delighted to write in support of the excellent work of your committee through another challenging year. Firstly Mike Watts and Kevin Chard have worked hard to find a suitable venue that can be reached by more Southampton members who need to use public transport to attend the Tuesday evening meetings. The new venue at Bitterne seems to tick all the boxes. Along with this, Patrick Austin has put together another excellent programme of varied speakers of high calibre. And, for those who don't wish to travel at all, Malcolm Coe has an equally interesting programme of good speakers available live on Zoom and then via YouTube. I urge members to support all of these events as regularly as they can to ensure that we can continue to attract good speakers. Peter and Cathy Bruce, meanwhile, maintain a stimulating Thursday afternoon meeting at Chandler's Ford for those who particularly prefer to drive in daylight. This supports a good audience and plenty of 'show and tell' by the attendees.

So, something, I believe for everyone, including the members who just support the auctions, run by Kevin with member help on the day, and the Raffle run by Mel Bradshaw all on his own. It is a truly team effort. Thanks to everyone

Amendment to final sentence: "Silent auction run by Mel Bradshaw and raffle run by Dave Lewis.

#### **Item 8. Treasurer's Report – Mike Watts**

The balance sheet and revenue accounts are included as part of this report showing the Society's financial position for 2024.

The difference between the 2023 and 2024 venue hire costs needs explanation. We were not invoiced for Bugle Street 2023 room hire until 2024 (despite chasing on our part.) A provision of £1,500 was made in the 2023 accounts for this. Storage costs were higher in 2024 as the logistics of moving material to different sites resulted in the society having more than one site for part of the year, one of which was liable to VAT which added a further £120.00 to the cost.

The other figures should be self-explanatory but I would be glad to answer any questions from members either before, or at the meeting.

Due to printing deadlines the balance sheet does not bear a copy of our auditor's signature however our auditor has agreed the figures and a signed copy of the accounts will be available for inspection at the AGM.

#### **Increase in Annual Subscription Rate**

It has been 19 years since the last increase in our subscription rate. The cumulative rate of inflation from 2006 to 2025 is over 66%.

However circumstances are now such that the committee feels it is right to propose an increase.

Our costs are ever rising. Printing, postage, venue hire, insurance, speaker expenses, philatelic subscriptions, website hosting and more, have all increased considerably over this period. Added to this,

new activities such as our on line Zoom meetings have been introduced. The purchase of a large stock of mint GB stamps at a discount has cushioned us from the recent and regular Royal Mail price increases. This stock has now been exhausted so unless we find another, we will be incurring the full cost of postage.

Our income has been significantly bolstered by our auction and circulation packet activities. We have benefitted from receiving some very good quality material over the last few years but this cannot always be guaranteed. Reliance on income from these sources to break even or produce a surplus puts pressure on those in the roles of auction and packet manager (which are very time consuming jobs).

The committee is therefore recommending that the new subscription rate proposed will be put at a level to cover our basic operating costs. Any income generated from auction and packet activities will be used to increase member benefits such as:-

- Subsidised or completely funded travel to philatelic events (e.g Stampex, Europhilex etc)
- Better quality social events.
- Possibly “star prizes” at our meeting raffles.
- Free refreshments at our meetings.

The committee is asking the AGM to approve the following:-

Full Membership - Includes mailing of hard copy communications such as Postmark, Auction Catalogues etc. £25 per annum

Digital Membership - All communications sent by e-mail. £15 per annum

Associate Membership - For members who only wish to sell through our auctions or packets. £10 per annum

It goes without saying that the committee appreciates members are facing increased day costs in many areas and it is not without much careful consideration that these new subscription rates are being proposed.

**SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY**  
**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Deposit Account – General Account</b>	<b>12482</b>	<b>12670</b>
<b>Cash at Bank and in hand:-</b>		
<b>General Account</b>	<b>8851</b>	<b>6460</b>
<b>Exchange Packet Account</b>	<b>4865</b>	<b>6522</b>
<b>Prepaid Expenses</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Debtors</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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Sub Total	26277	25724
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## CURRENT LIABILITIES

### Creditors:-

2023 St Joseph's Room Hire Provision	1500	0
Subscriptions Received in Advance	260	160
Amounts owing to Auction Vendors	239	433
Sundry Creditors	97	0
Exchange Packet Account	4865	6522

Sub Total	6961	7115
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NET CURRENT ASSETS	19316	18609
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## NON-CASH ASSETS

Library and Equipment after depreciation	468	466
Postal History Collection	1371	1371
Mint GB Stamps for Postage	431	1

Sub Total	2270	1838
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TOTAL ASSETS	21586	20447
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## REPRESENTED BY:-

ACCUMULATED GENERAL FUND B/Fwd	20069	21586
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Add Surplus for 2023	1517	
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Deduct Deficit for 2024		1139
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GENERAL FUND CARRIED FORWARD	21586	20447
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I have examined the books, records and vouchers presented to me by the Society's Treasurer and the Packet Manager. I have carried out such tests and checks that I deemed necessary. I confirm the Balance Sheet, Revenue Account and Supporting Schedules agree

with the records supplied.

Peter Jones – FCMA

**SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY  
REVENUE ACCOUNT TO 31 DECEMBER 2024**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Annual Subscriptions	1574	1457
Raffle Proceeds	588	461
Auction Income	3259	1779
Packet Sales Income	845	446
Interest Received	118	188
Surplus from Refreshments	171	133
Donations	411	339
Income Released from Suspense Accounts	350	172
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>7316</b>	<b>4975</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Venue Hire	848	2848
Transfer to provision for St Joseph's Room Hire	1500	0
Philatelic Subscriptions	290	304
Speakers' and Judges' Expenses	605	342
Postmark	1253	1122
Insurance Premiums	181	194
Engraving	90	30
Copying/Printing and Stationery	227	318
Miscellaneous Postage	25	42
Sundry Expenditure	10	11
Social Events	387	392
Depreciation of Non Cash Assets	6	2
Postal History, Library and Archive Costs	150	0
Website and Zoom Costs	227	189

<b>ABPS Congress Costs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>320</b>
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<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>5799</b>	<b>6114</b>
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<b>2023 Surplus added to General Funds</b>	<b>1517</b>	
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<b>2024 Deficit deducted from General Funds</b>		<b>1139</b>
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	<b>7316</b>	<b>4975</b>
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- The accounts were signed by Peter Jones, his title should be independent examiner rather than auditor.
- Mike proposed a further category of membership, that additional members of the same family should only pay £5. Subscription increases generated a lot of discussion. Reg Shepherd wished it to be Minuted that he had warned Kevin that the fees should be increased some time ago and held him responsible for the delay. Kevin pointed out that the Committee had voted against this. The increase must be put carefully to the non-active members to justify and explain it, Kevin will write an article for Postmark.
- Increase and changes to the subscription rate proposed by Mike Watts and seconded by Kevin Chard, members voted for with one abstention.

#### **Item 9. Secretary's Report – Cathy Bruce**

The APBS had not updated their website with SDPS changes, to request again and withhold payment due soon until updates are made.

Thanks go to Pete for his help and support.

#### **Item 10. Auction Manager's Report – Kevin Chard**

See Item 6

#### **Item 11. Competition Secretary – Alan Whittaker**

No report. No formal competitions will be held due to lack of interest. It was pointed out that as Hampex has also dropped the competition no member can present at National level. Other Federations such as Dorset might accept entries. Discussion was generated on why members did not support the formal competition or respond to Julian's offer of a workshop, conclusion was it was too much effort, or starting a new collection was not wanted.

The informal competitions will continue.

#### **Item 12. Packet Manager – Mel Bradshaw**

The Packet Circuit did not have such a good year as 2023. Only 16 circuit boxes were audited and paid during 2024, compared with 24 the previous year. Sales from these boxes amounted to £6,953.55, with commission payable to the society of £695.57. A further £26.88 was paid to the society as the additional levy paid by non-members who submit booklets. My thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of the packet system, whether by submitting booklets or purchasing from booklets on the circuit. We are fortunate that compared with many other societies the number of members receiving the packets is still around 50, excluding those on the Isle of Wight.

The decrease in income was associated partly with my illness, which slowed down my ability to audit and pass on boxes to the next circuit. The decision was also made to increase the number of boxes which are taken to the Isle of Wight Stamp Club, owing to the good sales generated on the island. This of course means that these boxes take longer between their initial production and final audit for payment.

It is anticipated that results for 2025 will be much improved compared with 2024. Already 6 boxes have been audited and paid, with sales of £2996.22, with commission of £299.69, non-member levy of £15.37 and a donation of £22.34.

Thank you everyone for your support.

Mel was thanked for his contribution.

### **Item 13. Membership Secretary – Steve Blundell**

There are currently 141 members. This is slightly reduced since the last AGM. There have been two new members. A few members have yet to pay their subscription for this year and we have, as yet, not been able to contact them. It specifically excludes some whose contact details are no longer valid. Sadly a very few members have passed and we have sent condolences from the society to their families.

Obtaining subscriptions has been particularly difficult this year, partly because of the more stringent bank security regimes. It would be particularly helpful if members could review their bank standing order instructions particularly if there is a change in the subscription for following years.

Kevin will write an article in Postmark to inform members of the subscription rise and request payment by Standing Order.

### **Item 14. Librarian – Reg Sheppard**

Reg felt he had no role in the society as the library remained in Mike's garage. One cabinet may be allowed at the church for Southampton philately and postal history, the other items to be offered to the members, or to the central library or The Royal. Up to date catalogues are most frequently requested.

### **Item 15. Postmark, P.R.O., Archivist & Curator – Steven Gerrard**

#### Postmark

A big change regarding Postmark is that there will only be 3 issues per year. April, August and December. I was intending standing down, but I have decided to carry on for 2 years and see how my health is going. So, to take some of the strain from me, Debbie Hindson has agreed to proof read Postmark and make changes where she sees fit. She will send a PDF copy to me and also to Mel to send it on to the printers.

#### PRO.

I am standing down as PRO at this AGM. I have carried this role out for 2 years and I have done what I could by sending out emails, letters etc but get very little or zero responses. Hopefully we will get a new PRO with more ideas.

## Archivist

The Archives are up to date until end of 2024. We have a total of (3,800) scanned PDF files. The database is also up to date as of December 2024. Copies of the database will hopefully be available on the website and available direct by email from me.

I am currently continuing work previously carried out by Bryan Hunt. I have created an updated catalogue of Southampton Postal History from 1994 to 2025. Hopefully this will be available by the end of 2025.

## Curator

Postal History Collection stored at Debbie's.

Updated spreadsheet to the end of 2024. Due to access issues to the collection, those items received have been added to the database and are stored at my home address. I receive very little material for the collection. Copies of the database will hopefully be available on the Website and available directly from me.

Members can give Steve a USB to have a list of postal history items available, return postage will be covered by the club. Data protection must be covered carefully when giving details of the archive.

Thanks expressed to Steve from Kevin and attendees.

## **Item 16. Programme Manager - Patrick Austin**

My aim has been to provide a varied programme with a range of topics and countries represented and to have a fair representation of lady speakers. Unfortunately, with regards to the latter, 2024 was not a success, however, 2025 will be different. The difficulty, as always, is that there is a limited pool of willing speakers within an evening's drive of Southampton. Juliet and I host where required, to allow a speaker to travel in daylight the following morning.

I would ask that if there are any topics that SDPS would wish to see presented, then please let me know and I will do my best to accommodate. I had no feedback in 2024, so I would be grateful if an email round robin could be put out to members asking for any suggestions.

I understand that the most interesting evening was "And I Still Don't Know What to Collect!" from Paul Latham-Warde in October. It is a pity that I was not able to attend.

The "thank you" email that is sent out after each speaker meeting is well received and this reflects positively on SDPS in the recruitment of new speakers.

Thank you, Mike, for sorting out expenses.

The 2024 Programme had a few problems with speakers being unwell and not being able to deliver their talk. Thank you to the club for rearranging topics at the last moment. One speaker did not turn up, or even apologise, which led to a cancelled evening. In contrast, the 2025 Programme is running smoothly with no problems to date.

I attended various other Philatelic Society meetings, hearing some good speakers who have displayed topics that I think would be of interest to SDPS. This is where the majority of the 2024 and 2025 speakers were found. This will continue in 2025, ready for 2026.

SDPS had one exchange visit from another club in 2024, being IoW Stamp Club. No visits have been arranged for 2025 as the interest for such appears to be low. I have in mind something different for 2026 that will still involve an exchange visit.

Approximately 20 members come to the Tuesday evening speaker meetings, so my view is that we are able to continue with the full speaker programme that we have had over the past years. If finding speakers becomes more challenging, in view of the increasing age of "stamp collectors", and exchange visits are not able to fill the gaps, then I shall review.



#### **Item 17. Zoom Coordinator - Malcolm Coe**

We have zoom speakers booked for the whole of 2025, but I am very concerned about poor SDPS members attendance. At our last meeting (25 Feb) we only had 10 attendees in total – and only 5-6 were SDPS members, the others were guests. This has been typical over the last few meetings. I find it increasingly embarrassing that I have invited top philatelists to give up their time when there seems to be so little interest amongst our members. A year ago we were having 20-25 attendees on a regular basis.

I don't know why numbers are now so low – I get no feedback from any members despite repeated requests in both Postmark and via email. Maybe the choice of speakers/topics is unattractive, or maybe the time of day no longer appeals (I know several PSs run their zoom talks in the afternoons)? Or are people simply fed up using zoom?

So I have a proposal for going forward. The next financial payment (~£150) is due in June so we should decide by the end of May if we wish to continue. I propose we shut it down if numbers are not back up to 20+ on a regular basis between now and then (we have 3 talks booked in that interval). If this is agreed at the AGM then I will try once more to get feedback from members on topics/times, but based upon previous such attempts I am not optimistic.

I will have done this job for 3.5 years and enjoyed it very much. I have endeavoured to invite a vast range of speakers and, I believe, we have had some great talks. So, if nothing else, if we end this activity we will have built up an excellent video library that all SDPS members can enjoy into the future.

Discussion generated why numbers were dropping and members present promised to watch the Zoom meeting and give their feedback.

#### **Item 18. Facebook Manager -Symon Borys**

No report, The website is not accessed much.

#### **Item 19. Amendments to Society Rules**

None proposed.

#### **Item 20. Officers in post as at 2025 A.G.M**

The President	Julian Jones
Vice President	Mel Bradshaw
Chairman	Kevin Chard
Vice-Chairman	Mike Watts
Hon Treasurer	Mike Watts
Auction Manager and Auctioneer	Kevin Chard
Hon Membership Secretary	Steve Blundell
Minutes Secretary	Cathy Bruce
Chandler's Ford Convener	Peter Bruce
Packet Manager	Mel Bradshaw
Hon Asst Treasurer	Debbie Hindson
Programme Secretary	Patrick Austin
Competition Secretary	Alan Whittaker

Society Archivist	Steve Gerrard
Curator of Society Collection	Steve Gerrard
Hampshire Federation Rep	Steve Gerrard
Postmark Editor	Steve Gerrard
Zoom Meeting Convener	Malcolm Coe

#### **Item 21 Election of Officers for 2025/2026**

The post of Public Relations Officer remains unfilled. The members were all happy with the current committee.

#### **Item 22. Appointment of Society Auditor**

Peter Jones will check the accounts again and Debbie Hindson will change his title to independent examiner.

#### **Item 23. Any Other Business**

- i. Promotion of the club through photographs displayed prominently was suggested.
- ii. A Christmas meal at the City College was requested, Kevin will ask Jim Rankin if he wants to be involved and asked Alan Blakey to get a date.

The meeting closed at 21.15 with Kevin thanking everyone for their contributions.

Signed By:

Position:

Date: