

# Victoria County History Shropshire

## A scoping study for a new history of Newport



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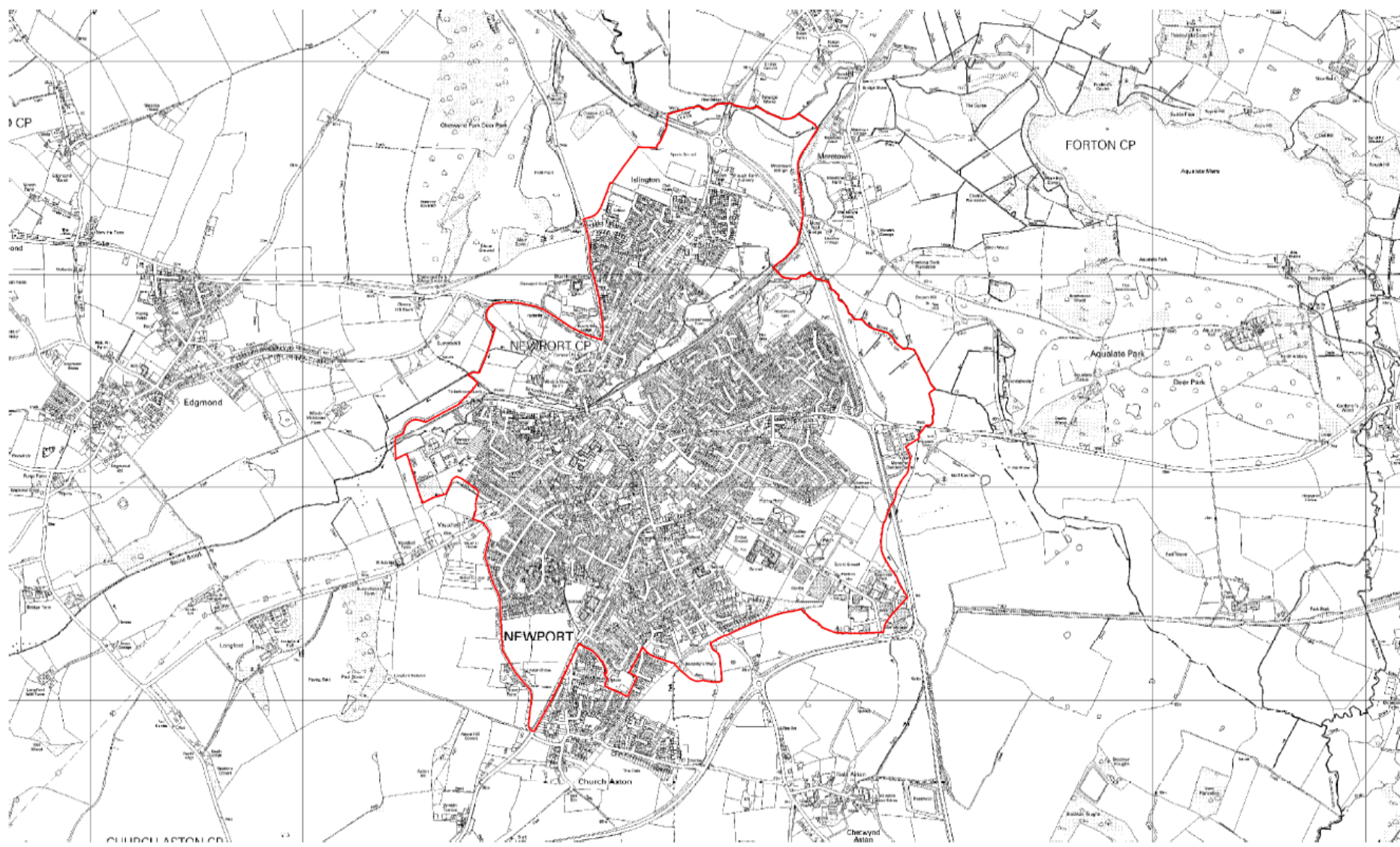
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LSPHGraphics & GIS Library/Live Project/Newport Town Council

## ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library, London.
<i>Charity Commission Report</i>	<i>Report of the Commissioners concerning Charities in England and Wales</i> (House of Commons, 1821), ‘Newport’, 409-35.
Cox, <i>Nonconformist chapels</i>	Janice Cox, <i>Shropshire’s Nonconformist Chapels</i> , <a href="http://www.users.waitrose.com/coxfamily">www.users.waitrose.com/coxfamily</a>
Eyton, <i>Antiq. Shrops.</i>	R. W. Eyton, <i>Antiquities of Shropshire</i> , 12 vols (London, 1854-1860).
Hill map	SA, 81/599/7-8: survey of [part of] the manor of Newport with tenants’ holdings inserted, and ‘Map of Salters Hall and other lands in Newport, together with five meadows lying in Edgmond, with a Discription of ye Towne and poole of Newport Done by W. Hill’.
Mercer, <i>Shropshire experience</i>	Eric Mercer, <i>English architecture to 1900: The Shropshire experience</i> (2003).
Moran, <i>Vernacular buildings</i>	Madge Moran, <i>Vernacular buildings of Shropshire</i> (2003).
Newman and Pevsner, <i>Shropshire</i>	J. Newman and N. Pevsner, <i>The buildings of England: Shropshire</i> (2006).
NHS	Newport History Society (Newport and District History Society).
NHS acc.	NHS archive and collection, accession number.
<i>PN Shropshire, I.</i>	M. Gelling and H. D. G. Foxall, <i>The Place-Names of Shropshire, I. The Major Names of Shropshire</i> (English Place-Name Society, Nottingham, 1990).
<i>PN Shropshire, VI.</i>	M. Gelling and H. D. G. Foxall, <i>The Place-Names of Shropshire, VI. The Hundreds of Brimstree and Bradford South</i> (English Place-Name Society, Nottingham, 2012).
Prentice, <i>Newport</i>	Rob Prentice, <i>A History of Newport</i> (1986).
SA	Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury.

SNAP Archive	Shropshire Newport Archive Photos: <a href="http://www.newportsnapproject.org.uk">www.newportsnapproject.org.uk</a>
<i>TSHAS</i>	<i>Shropshire History and Archaeology. Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society; formerly Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.</i>
TNA	The National Archives, Kew.
VCH	Victoria County History.
Cox, 'VCH Newport'	'Newport' in 'VCH Shropshire XII, Newport and the Weald Moors, part 1' (incomplete and unpublished draft, University of London, 2002), by D. C. Cox, with contributions by Janice Cox, available at <a href="http://www.vchshropshire.org/Cox_Newport.html">http://www.vchshropshire.org/Cox_Newport.html</a> .
Warner, <i>Newport</i>	Ann Warner, <i>Newport, Shropshire, Past and Present</i> , (1983).

## Summary

There can be no question of the historical interest of Newport and the need for a new history of the town. The ambition to make it the centrepiece of a Victoria County History (VCH) Red Book covering Newport and the four adjacent parishes is long established, but has also been in abeyance for around 15 years. We now propose to revive this venture.

The aim of this study is to suggest how a Newport history might be achieved in conditions which no longer favour the writing of large-scale histories. The study describes what needs to be done, the records which will need to be consulted and the role that volunteer researchers might play in the process. Likely word lengths and the costs are established.

Our recommendation is that there should be three, possibly four publications. The first is a study of medieval Newport which we envisage as being a VCH Short. This might also be accompanied by a volume of documents illustrating the medieval history of the town. Second, a book about Newport's buildings and townscapes. This would be richly illustrated and accessible to Newport residents. We do not see this as fitting into the stable of VCH publications but may be attractive to a local publisher. Third, the Red Book itself. This will draw on the research presented in the previous two publications. Whilst we would prefer it if the Red Book were to go to immediate publication, this will have to be deferred until the other parishes are completed. It will therefore be published on the web as an interim measure.

Attention is also drawn to the problem for Newport historians of the records of the defunct Newport solicitors Liddle and Heane at Shropshire Archives whose variable cataloguing (some is not catalogued at all) makes it largely inaccessible to researchers. Ideally we will undertake the comprehensive listing of this archive before starting to write the text of the Red Book.

Other problems are described (and solutions advanced), but chief amongst them is the raising of funding to support a professional staff. Funding will have to be drawn from a variety of sources: the options are considered. Key is the appointment of volunteer co-ordinators who can manage the volunteer effort and the researchers who can write up the research they undertake.

# 1. Introduction

Our aim is to write a new history of Newport which will form a contribution to the Victoria County History of England (VCH). A generation ago VCH was active in a number of English counties, of which Shropshire was one, publishing works of deeply-researched local history in large volumes with red morocco binding (the Red Books). In doing this it was able to draw on generous and open-ended local authority support to employ trained, professional historians to undertake the research and writing. That support has now come to an end and VCH has to make its own luck, relying on donations from individuals, charities and businesses, drawing to a much greater degree on volunteer fundraisers, researchers and writers. But the overall aim of VCH – to write the history of every English parish or settlement to a standard template – remains a good one even at a time when individually-researched and privately-published local history proliferates. The great assets possessed by VCH are its reputation for quality, international recognition and reach.

In this new environment, VCH has to be much clearer about how much its research will cost and how soon it might be delivered. It also has to look towards achieving a much greater level of accessibility in both language and writing and the ease with which its results can be accessed by local people.

This offers the justification for the present scoping study. In it we try and define what needs to be done, anticipate what records need to be consulted and the likely cost of the writing. VCH needs a strategy into which donors can buy with outcomes which they can see as a reward for their money. It is no longer possible to say that we will begin, and finish at some time in the future.

This scoping study is not only a pitch to donors. It is also a call for volunteers who wish to become involved in the project. (Volunteers might not only be researchers and writers: we have room under the umbrella for fundraisers, publicists, people who are willing to make the tea and cut the cake.) Whilst volunteers are integral to the economy of VCH as it exists today, they are not without costs. Volunteers need to be managed, trained, supported and encouraged. For many volunteers, the fun is in doing the research, in handling the documents, interrogating online newspapers or measuring the buildings and not in the writing, and it is for this reason that so much local history is researched but never written. The VCH style of writing is laconic and disciplined: it does not always come naturally. Hence the need for a salaried figure who can offer leadership to the volunteers and bring their work to a conclusion.

The prize is a Red Book account of Newport. This will eventually form part of a larger volume of Newport and its environs, about half of which will be devoted to Newport. The completed volume is some years away. The text of the Newport section of the Red Book will, as it is prepared, be published on the website as a public resource. We also envisage two other publications, both of which can be achieved relatively quickly if the funding can be found: a study of medieval Newport and a study of its buildings and townscapes.

## 2. VCH: aims and objectives

The Victoria County History is a national project whose ambition is to write the history of every English parish and township. The VCH 'red books' are familiar to archaeologists, local historians, genealogists, planners, heritage professionals, anyone who is interested in the history of a place. Most are now available online through [www.British-history.ac.uk](http://www.British-history.ac.uk).

VCH is administered by a Central Office based at the Institute of Historical Research (part of the School of Advanced Studies of the University of London) which ensures consistency between counties and the quality of their work. It also undertakes the publication of the completed research of the counties as either 'red books' (covering larger settlements or geographical areas) or 'shorts' (single-place studies). For a long period VCH existed as a series of partnerships between the Institute and local authorities. Most of these have now come to an end and VCH has now been reinvented as a voluntary movement. In some counties committees fundraise to support salaried or contract researchers; in others the research is being almost entirely undertaken by volunteer researchers. VCH now also places a much greater emphasis on the rapid dissemination of research through paperback publications (the VCH 'Shorts') and through its websites.

Shropshire had an active VCH Office funded by Shropshire County Council (and latterly by Keele University) but VCH activity in the county went into abeyance about 2004 with the retirement of the last salaried researcher. The warm reception given to the publication of the first of two volumes on the history of Shrewsbury in 2014 encouraged us to re-launch VCH in the county as a volunteer-led project. A launch meeting in October 2015 attracted over 200 people. Since then we have put in place a county committee, secured charitable status and obtained funding from a number of local trusts. Our annual meetings and lecture have continued to attract large crowds. An early decision was taken to work on the small town of Wem and our 'Wem days' there in two successive years have attracted most of 100 people a piece. The first publication of the re-launched county organisation, a 'short' on Wem, will appear later this year. Meanwhile we continue work on Shrewsbury and the townships of Wem rural. The speed at which we proceed depends on our capacity to find funding: there is no pot of local authority funding for which we can bid anymore and all charities and private donors are under pressure, often to support more immediately-pressing social projects.

At the time that the old VCH office was wound up, its staff were engaged in researching a history of Newport and four nearby civil parishes (Chetwynd, Edgmond, Longford and Sheriffhales). The VCH staff had collected a considerable amount of material on Newport and these villages and had begun to write up their findings. (The text that they prepared has now been added to our website where it is available to readers.)

There is a VCH style. Of course, ultimately VCH is an encyclopaedia of the history of individual places. It is written according to a template to ensure that all subjects are covered. Where much local history writing follows the weight of the documents and revels in the idiosyncratic and the peculiar, VCH writes the history of places with a steady tread. The use of a template though forces it to deal with subjects that many local historians find unrewarding for lack of documentation whilst it often passes lightly over the human interest stories. It is therefore not the last word in local history writing, nor does it invariably replace

what has been written before or prevent new writing in the future. Indeed, the writing of history is never done.

There is, of course, vastly more material available to us than was accessible ten and more years ago through more archives coming into the public domain, improved cataloguing and perhaps most importantly the digitisation of newspapers and so. It is now our intention to pick up this work starting with Newport, leading to the publication (we envisage) of a new history of Newport and, along the way, other publications on the history of the town. In this ambition we have the willing assistance of the Newport History Society and the support of the Town Council.

Our objective is to prepare the VCH 'Red book' history of Newport. As has been indicated, this is the gold standard in history writing. The organisation of this is indicated in section 4 below and in greater detail in Appendix I. We also envisage two additional publications which will use a mixture of material gathered for the Red Book but unlikely to be used for it. This is particularly the case with buildings where a publication on the buildings alone can offer accounts of more buildings (and in greater depth) than can be contained within the Red Book, and offers the opportunity to provide local people with a revised and fuller walking guide than has been available so far. It will also offer some guidance to the planning authorities to buildings of significance which fall outside the scheduling lists.

In preparing the Red Book text, we want to involve as many people as possible in achieving an understanding of the place in which they live. Some will be active participants and will welcome a role in researching and even writing about the place they call home. Others will be more passive but will still welcome the opportunity to learn about their town. VCH Shropshire, within its limited means is concerned to communicate the fruits of its research through lectures and history days, believing that it has both a mission and responsibility to do so.

### 3. Newport

For us as historians, there is an obvious challenge in Newport. Even on first sight it has an interesting townscape. We recognise a town which was prosperous in the middle ages and eighteenth century, but in some respects by-passed (figuratively as well as literally) since. This has allowed the survival of the medieval streetplan, a good range of eighteenth-century buildings and much more. We also see a town which is undergoing rapid expansion and change on its fringes drawing a new population to Newport, and it is this, the survival of the old and the arrival of the new, which perhaps makes it an opportune moment to contribute a new history of Newport to the town's knowledge of its past and present.

#### Previous histories

Newport has been the subject of extensive research by local historians, only a fraction of which has been published. C. W. S. Dixon, the manager of Barclay's Bank, purchased the title of lord of the manor in the 1920s, seemingly just to get his hands on the large collection of title deeds that went with it. Dixon's papers (SA, P207/V/4/2) contain many transcriptions, translations and notes from the deeds, yet Dixon does not appear to have published anything beyond some articles in Newport parish magazine in 1928.

In the 1880s, Edward Jones published 'Historical Records of Newport, co. Salop' as a series of articles (*TSAS*, ser. 1, 7 (1884), 349-82; 8 (1885), 229-68; 9 (1886), 117-70; 10 (1887), 96-123), cumulatively forming a book-length survey of documentary materials 'from the earliest times' to the 19th century. No single-volume history has been attempted apart from Rob Prentice, *A History of Newport* (Chichester, 1986), and D. Taylor and R. Taylor, *Mr Adams Free Grammar School* (Chichester, 2002). Prentice's book is lightly researched and unreferenced, but a good introduction to the history of the town through to the time he wrote it. It is long out of print and hard to secure.

Instead, short studies have appeared on particular topics. C. C. Barrow published the church guide and later *A Short History of the Parish Church of S. Nicolas, Newport, Salop* (Gloucester, ?1968) (28 pages). Malcolm Miles published collections of detailed and carefully researched essays, including *Newport People* (Newport, 2004) and *The Inns and Outs of Newport's Pubs* (Newport, 2007). Newport History Society has had a policy of producing booklets of single, or collected, pieces of research by its members.

Finally, in 2003 the then county editor of VCH Shropshire, Dr David Cox, wrote up in classic 'VCH style' parts of the parish histories of Newport and the Weald Moors parishes, ready for publication in a proposed red book. The topics covered are: descent of title to the manor; institutional history of the parish church; clergy houses; and religious nonconformism, totalling nearly 4,000 words. This draft is available at:

[http://www.vchshropshire.org/Cox\\_Newport.html](http://www.vchshropshire.org/Cox_Newport.html)

There remain considerable amounts of unpublished – but well catalogued – material in the archive of Newport History Society to be explored, and in the papers of local historians including C. C. Barrow, C. W. S. Dixon, the late Malcolm Miles and more.

## Assets and problems

The evidence for English historical communities varies from community to community. Some places, because of their institutional arrangements, create more documentary evidence. That is the case with estate villages where landlords often accumulate considerable archives. It is also true that towns with borough governments create rich documentary sources. Against this must be weighed the accessibility of archives and their destruction. Some archives remain closed to researchers because they remain in private hands. More often archives which one hopes to find have been destroyed, either deliberately or by accident. At Newport the early records of the borough appear to be an almost total loss. This is locally explained by the Great Fire of Newport of 1665. However some of them can be recovered by a fortuitous archival discovery.

Overall, Newport is well documented.

- Besides the expected sources in the National Archives, including extents attached to Inquisition post mortem, the town has a sizeable medieval archive including a large number of charters from the archive of Lilleshall Abbey. There are also large numbers of medieval charters in the borough archive, and more can be recovered from transcripts made in 1648 before the Great Fire. We have found a fair number of 16th-century court rolls. This cornucopia offers great possibilities.
- There are good eighteenth-century local government records including churchwarden's accounts and borough minutes (but only one volume of poor law accounts).
- There is a substantial body of material from the Marsh Trustees, established by statute in 1764 to undertake the drainage of Newport marsh. The income from the enclosed land which replaced the marsh was used for public purposes in the town.
- Newport also has the advantage of an active local history society which has tried over many years to gather Newport materials. The society also maintained an active Vernacular Architecture Group which provides us with a big body of material on buildings in the town, both standing and demolished and we propose to take advantage of this.

There are problems which we anticipate we will encounter

- The first is the archive of the defunct Newport solicitors Liddle and Heane held by the Shropshire Archives. This amounts to 323 boxes, catalogued to varying degrees but with about 20 boxes which are not catalogued at all. Obviously we wish to take advantage of this collection and this project makes provision for its cataloguing.
- We understand that there is an archive for the Newport Market Company which remains in private hands but to which we would hope to gain access.
- Newport has a newspaper from 1854, the *Newport Advertiser* (from 1871 the *Newport and Market Drayton Advertiser*), the files of which are held by the *Shropshire Star* at Ketley in Telford. So far the British Newspaper Archive website has only digitised and placed on its website (under the apprehension that the paper is for Newport, Isle

of Wight) the newspaper for 1855, 1871-7, 1879-80 and 1889. More will surely follow but it may be worth subscribers to the site having a write-in to encourage the company to accelerate its digitisation of the paper. It will be necessary to use the twentieth-century paper in its original at the offices unless alternative arrangements can be made.

- Ideally we would have Building Control Plans which would serve to give us plans of new buildings, both residential and industrial, submitted for approval from the 1890s onwards. They would also give us information on who applied for the permission and the name of the architect. It is not clear that the plans survive for Newport. It is possible that some information can be gleaned from the committee minutes of the local authority which may enable us to give dates to some buildings and identify the builders.
- Finally, on an entirely practical point: in common with other post-1834 local government records, the Newport Borough Records are outhoused by Shropshire Archives. The Archives have agreed to bring some key series of the records (especially the minute books) on-site for the duration of this project to expedite progress.

## 4. Outcomes

### 1.

#### *The Red Book:*

#### a comprehensive account of the history of Newport

VCH histories are written according to a template to ensure that the same questions are addressed in all histories even if the sources for some of them may be poor. In this it differs from much local history writing which follows the sources. The template used here is based on that for Chippenham (Wilts.) but with a greater recognition of the importance of buildings and townscapes than is found there and, of course, the template is customised to allow for the peculiarities of Newport; so we will describe at length several institutions which took some of the roles that in other places would have been exercised by the Borough. Some text, which will form the basis of sections 2.2.1 and 5.2, has already been prepared by David Cox and Janice Cox.

### Summary contents<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. Introduction**

##### **1.1 Boundaries** (1000)<sup>2</sup>

##### **1.2 Landscape** (1000)

##### **1.3 Communications** (3500)

###### 1.3.1. *Roads* (1000)

###### 1.3.2. *Bridges* (500)

###### 1.3.3. *Canal* (500)

###### 1.3.4. *Railway* (500)

###### 1.3.5. *Carriers; Public road transport* (1000)

##### **1.4 Population** (750)

##### **1.5 Settlement** (500)

##### **1.6 Buildings and townscapes** (3000)

[Total for this section, 9,750]

#### **2. Newport Town**

##### **2.1 Origins, Growth and Development**<sup>3</sup> (3000)

###### 2.1.1. *Medieval town, 11th–16th centuries*

###### 2.1.2. *Early modern town, 16th–19th centuries*

###### 2.1.3. *Modern town: 19th century to present*

##### **2.2 Government and Politics**

###### 2.2.1. *Newport manor (ownership)* (1,000)

###### 2.2.2. *Manorial government (courts and officers)* (500)

###### 2.2.3. *The Borough* (4000)

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<sup>1</sup> For the full synopsis, with indications of the records to be consulted in writing each section, see Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers in brackets are *indicative* word lengths for that section.

<sup>3</sup> The chronological divisions adopted for this and the following sections are left deliberately vague. They can be refined once the relevant important dates appear from the research.

- 2.2.4. *The Bridge Trustees* (750)
- 2.2.5. *The Town and Marsh Trustees* (2000)
- 2.2.6. *Newport Market Company (1858)* (750)
- 2.2.7. *The dissolution of the Borough and Newport Local Board, 1886-94* (500)
- 2.2.8. *Post-1894 Local government* (2000)
- 2.2.9. *Post-1974 Local government* (1000)
- 2.2.10. *Parochial government* (1000)
- 2.2.11. *Civic buildings* (2000)

### **2.3. Public services and utilities** (4000)

- 2.3.1. *Police*
- 2.3.2. *Fire*
- 2.3.3. *Water, sewerage, and refuse*
- 2.3.4. *Streets (paving, lighting, etc.)*
- 2.3.5. *Post, telegraph, and telephone*
- 2.3.6. *Gas and electricity: private gas production.*

[Total for this section 22,450]

## **3. Economic History**

### **3.1 Agriculture** (1500)

### **3.2 Mills** (750)

### **3.3 Fisheries** (250)

### **3.4 Trade and Industry**

- 3.4.1. *Markets and fairs* (2000)
- 3.4.2. *Crafts and trades* (1500)
- 3.4.3. *Manufacturing* (1000)
- 3.4.4. *Transport services* (500)
- 3.4.5. *Retailing* (1000)
- 3.4.6. *Visitor economy* (500)
- 3.4.7. *Financial services: banking* (1000)
- 3.4.8. *Legal profession* (1,000)

[Total for this section 11,000 words]

## **4. Social History**

### **4.1 Social Structure** (incl. families such as Boughey) (1000)

### **4.2 Social Welfare**

- 4.2.1. *Medical provision: practitioners and hospitals* (1000)
- 4.2.2. *Poor relief*
  - 4.2.2.1. *The Old Poor Law* (750)
  - 4.2.2.2. *Newport Union* (1500)
- 4.2.3. *Charities for the poor* (other than borough lands) (1000)
- 4.2.4. *Almshouses* (500)

### **4.3. Community Life**

- 4.3.1. *Law and order* (incl. crime and riots) (500)
- 4.3.2. *Inns and public houses* (500)
- 4.3.3. *Benefit and friendly societies* (500)
- 4.3.4. *Recreation* (incl. parks) (1000)

4.3.5. *Cultural life* (libraries, cinemas, theatres, concerts etc.) (1000)

4.3.6. *Societies and events* (incl. festivals) (1000)

4.3.7. *Sport* (1000)

4.3.8. *Allotments* (250)

4.3.9. *Cemeteries* (500)

#### **4.4. Education** (5,500)

4.4.1. *Educational charities*

4.4.2. *Schools*

4.4.3. *Schools post-1880*

#### **4.5. Housing** (2,500)

[Total for this section, c. 19,450 words]

### **5. Religious History**

#### **5.1 The Established Church**

5.1.1. *Church origins and parochial organisation* (500)

5.1.2 *Church Fabric, building history* (2,500)

5.1.3. *Advowson* (500)

5.1.4. *Endowment* including value of living (500) including Glebe and tithes and Rectory house

5.1.5. *Charities (for church fabric)* (500)

5.1.6. *Religious life* (2,000)

5.1.7. *Chantries* (500)

#### **5.2 Protestant Nonconformity** (2000)

#### **5.3 Roman Catholicism** (1,000)

[Total this section 10,000]

The total number of words in this scheme is 72,450. This is an approximation: some sections will prove to be shorter than the number of words allotted them and others longer. It would be advisable to think of the Newport history as being between 70,000 and 75,000 words in length. Whilst we would like this to appear as a VCH Short, we acknowledge that the book is too long for that series as presently constituted.

## 2. *Medieval Newport*

by Judith Everard

Newport has an unusually large quantity of documentation for the medieval period, starting with an Anglo-Saxon charter. Hundreds of medieval documents survive in several different collections: mostly title deeds recording the transfer and ownership of land, some as original charters, others as antiquaries' transcripts. As with the architecture, a typical VCH-style parish history would not enable the bulk of this material to be utilised to its best effect, for instance, to demonstrate an active land market. For example, a rental of c.1250 lists 11½ burgages possessed by Lilleshall Abbey, with the names of the donors and current tenants. Remarkably, and unusually, Lilleshall's estate archive survived the Reformation and other potential misfortunes relatively intact. It is now deposited in SA, including over 100 original charters concerning Newport from the 12th century to the Dissolution.

Another important source is the deeds of Newport corporation, now deposited in SA (SA, NB series). Larger numbers survive in transcripts made in 1648, before the Great Fire of Newport: BL, Harley MS 1985.

There are also large numbers of medieval title deeds concerning property in Newport from the former estates of the Newport family, now in the possession of Lord Barnard at Raby Castle, co. Durham. Additional Newport manorial documents and title deeds from the Leveson Gower estates in the Duke of Sutherland collection are held at Staffordshire Record Office and supplement to those deposited at Shrewsbury Public Library by C. W. S. Dixon.

In the 'Hundred Rolls', a royal inquest into land tenure first held in 1255, Newport (with Edgmond) was represented by a separate jury from the rest of Bradford hundred and the return is unusually detailed. Other medieval sources include a manor court roll of 1337 (SA, 6000/19296); and extents prepared on the deaths of lords of the manor and others holding in chief of the crown in Newport.

It might be possible to publish the key documents in a volume of the Shropshire Record Society and this might prove attractive to some funders.

Archaeological evidence that should be investigated include: finds of medieval material held by NHS; the Guild Hall; the lay-out of the burgage plots; the former moated site on the west side of Upper Bar.

The proposed book would follow an adapted version of the structure of the recently published VCH short, *Medieval Basingstoke* (2018), which is turn based on the template of the Red Book, but limited to the period prior to c.1550 (the dissolution of the College of St Mary).

This project would be led by Judith Everard. Volunteer contributions could involve:

- Desk-based research into the town's medieval archaeology.
- Fieldwork to explore the medieval topography.
- Transcribing onto computer the abstracts of medieval charters from various antiquarian manuscripts.

- Creating a database of individuals named in the medieval charters and other documents, both as property holders and as jurors and witnesses, which could be used for the prosopography of the burgess and gentry families.

## *Medieval Newport*

Projected Contents (with proposed word lengths, total 30,000)

### **1. Introduction (5,000)**

Growth and development of the town, *c.*1000-*c.*1550

### **2. Land and Government (5,000)**

Landownership

Local Government

### **3. Economic History (6,500)**

Agriculture and the Town

Feeding the Town

Crafts and Industries

Consumer Goods and Services

The Town's Distant Trade

Town and Countryside

### **4. Social History (5,000)**

The Social Structure of the Town

Inns and Innkeepers

Social Life

### **5. Religious History (6,500)**

Parochial Organisation

The Parish Church of St Nicholas

The Chapel of St Mary Magdalene

The College of St Mary

### **6. Epilogue (2,000)**

Newport after *c.*1550

### 3.

## *Newport buildings and townscapes*

by Wendy Horton

In the Red Book account of Newport, only limited space can be made available for an account of buildings and this, by definition, must exclude all but the most prominent ones, both standing and demolished. The wealth of standing buildings in the town means that many, especially houses, will have to be omitted. The built environment and individual houses form one of the most accessible means of entry for people into local history. Hence we envisage the publication of a much fuller (and more richly-illustrated) account of the buildings and townscape of Newport than can be presented in the Red Book as a stand-alone publication, which might even serve as a walking guide to the town and develop understanding and appreciation of its built heritage. Freedom from the constraints of the Red Book would also allow some consideration of the Newport firm of architects J. and J. Cobb.

We have identified a large number of buildings within the boundary of Newport Town Council which would be worthy of consideration in such a study. The range of buildings falls into the following categories: Religious; Civic; Hotels and Commercial; Entertainment; Schools; Industrial; Transport; buildings connected with welfare provision; Agriculture; and Significant Houses (vernacular and polite). A discussion of townscape and its development will include a sub-section on workers' housing. Both standing buildings and those demolished will be considered in this project.

It was found that some building types in Newport are better preserved than others. Churches and chapels, schools, workhouses and hospitals, and transport structures are well represented, whilst few industrial premises survive, most having been cleared away and the sites later redeveloped. As the town council boundary tightly encircles the built-up area, there are few surviving farm buildings.

One section of the text could also form the basis of a new church guide if this was welcome.

#### **Sources:**

Having selected buildings for possible inclusion in the main project, a list of further sources requiring consultation is provided. Many of these come from Shropshire Archives (SA), the Staffordshire Record Office (SRO), which holds the Diocesan records, and data-sets and detailed records of the Newport History Society (NHS). General printed and archival sources for this project are listed Appendix 3. Regarding specific research into building development, it will be necessary to consult a range of maps, including the historic Ordnance Survey, the Tithe map and its apportionment, and those by Rocque and Greenwood. Particularly significant for Newport is a map of 1681-2 by William Hill (SA 81/599), and an Ordnance Survey drawing of 1814 by Robert Dawson. A particularly fine watercolour by Henry Bryan Ziegler depicts the High Street from the south in 1838. The full Shropshire HER will be required for this project, including shape-files, and an allowance should be made for the cost.

Historic England records include their archive in Swindon, as well as digital data-sets such as NHLE (National Heritage List for England).

### **Illustrations:**

The strategy for illustrations will be to include a variety of types (maps, plans and drawings, current and historic photographs) in order to engage the reader and demonstrate particular points. Some of these will come to light during the research. The NHS has a valuable archive of historic and current photographs (SNAP), suitable for use in publication, whilst current photographs may be taken by the author or volunteers. It is hoped that funding will allow for colour plates to be included.

### **Volunteers:**

Opportunities will be sought to involve local volunteers, and a discussion of their potential contribution is discussed at the end of this report. It is envisaged that a VCH database will be established, into which all research material can be input (see p. 22 below).

### **Timings:**

This project would be led by Wendy Horton. It is considered that approximately nine months will be required to carry out this buildings project, but the programme will be dependent upon the overall project timetable and the availability of volunteers.

### **Publication:**

We do not see this book fitting into the national VCH stable of publications. We will therefore be looking either to self-publish (perhaps as a joint venture with the NHS) or with a regional publisher like Logaston.

## **Summary of projected contents<sup>4</sup>**

### **Religious Buildings**

Church of St Nicholas

College of St Mary

St Peter and St Paul's Roman Catholic Church (incorporating Salter's Hall)

Non-conformist Chapels

Former Independent Chapel, Beaumaris Road

Trinity Independent (Congregational) Chapel, Wellington Road

Former Primitive Methodist Chapel, Stafford Road

Primitive Methodist Chapel, Wellington Road

Former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Upper Bar

Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Avenue Road

Cemetery Chapel

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<sup>4</sup> For the full synopsis see Appendix 2.

## **Civic Buildings**

The Guildhall  
Former Market Hall (demolished), The Square  
Former Butter Cross (demolished), High Street  
Town Hall and Market Hall  
Puleston Cross, High Street  
Former Lock-up and Police Station, Stafford Road  
Cottage Hospital, Station Road

## **Hotels and Commercial Buildings**

Royal Victoria Hotel, High Street  
The Bridge Inn  
Lloyds Bank, 95 High Street  
53 High Street (formerly Barclays Bank and before that the Red Lion Inn)

## **Entertainment**

Former racing grandstand, Audley Villa  
The Newport Literary and Social Institute, Wellington Road

## **Schools**

Adams' Grammar School  
Newport Girls' High School, Wellington Road  
Junior School, Avenue Road  
Former British School, Wellington Road  
The Royal Free English School  
Castle House School/Merevale

## **Industrial**

Site of Former Mill, River Strine  
Windmill, Broomfield Road (demolished)  
Tan Yard, Tan Bank (partly demolished)  
Audley Engineering Works (demolished)  
Masseys Iron and Brass foundry, 2a Lower Bar

## **Transport**

Station Cottage, off Wright Avenue  
The Canal Lock and Roving Bridge, Shropshire Union Canal, Newport Branch  
Turnpike House, Stafford Road  
New Bridge over River Meese, A519 (by-passed)

## **Welfare Institutions**

Former Almshouses, High Street  
Almshouses flanking entrance to Adams Grammar School  
Poorhouse, 32-36 Vineyard Road  
Almshouses, 24-30 Vineyard Road

Newport Union Workhouse, Audley Avenue

### **Agriculture**

Quarry Farm Cottage, Stafford Road

Grain Silo, Audley Avenue

### **Significant Houses (Vernacular and Polite)**

There are many significant houses in Newport, and this selection is by no means comprehensive. Information may come to light during the course of the project which may require additions.

Moated Site, Station Road

Site of Mansion House, off St. Mary Street

King's Head, Chetwynd End

18-24 St Mary Street

Boughey House, 60 High Street

9-11 Upper Bar

67 High Street

Former Star Inn, 30 High Street

87-89 and 91-91A High Street

Ivydene, Lower Bar

34 St Mary Street

45 High Street (Davies, White & Perry)

Beaumaris House, 125 High Street

Old Hall, Station Road

131 High Street

25-27 Chetwynd End

St. Mary, 36 Station Road

1 Station Road (former Station-master's house)

### **Townscape (Summary)**

### **Workers' Housing**

## 5. Volunteer contribution

In our earlier comments on volunteers, we have said that volunteers are both essential to VCH as it exists today but also come in many shapes and sizes, some with high levels of existing expertise, others willing to learn and a few happy to undertake entry level tasks such as transcription. We reiterate the need for a volunteer co-ordinator to offer training and support and to ensure that the right material is being collected (and not too much of it.)

It should also be mentioned that the work we undertake here will be of lasting use to local historians and genealogists and serve as a resource for the future.

### Fieldwork

- Much of the information relating to historic buildings in Newport requires updating. The list of buildings of architectural and historic interest (Historic England) was compiled approximately 35 years ago, and only a few revisions and additions have been made since. The former Vernacular Architecture Group of the NHS produced significant and often detailed reports of particular properties, but many date from the 1980s-1990s. An important task would be to update building records through observation and survey, as well as by referring to newly available on-line resources (such as newspapers). New studies of individual properties would be informative if access can be obtained. A new sub-group of the NHS could be set up for this purpose if there is sufficient interest.
- For those willing to travel to Shropshire Archives, there are sources which may provide evidence of historic owners and occupiers, particularly the Newport Town and Marsh Trust, which leased many buildings in the town centre from the 18th century onwards (SA, NTM). The Corporation of Newport records (SA NB/E) also require searching. This would complement existing data-sets, such as the census, trade directories, hearth-tax records and inventories (available variously at SA, NHS and SRO).
- A measured survey of burgage-plot frontages (of the sort we undertook at Wem) would help elucidate the medieval development of the town. This will require a number of volunteers and could be undertaken over a series of Sundays when there is less traffic. NHS has previously undertaken research on the yards of Newport, which housed some of the working class. Measured survey could record surviving structures (see townscape section, in Appendix 2 below). Free-standing walls have been found in cellars in some properties in St. Mary Street, which are thought to relate to the former college. Taking measurements, including their location in relation to existing buildings, would be useful if access can be obtained.

### Transcription

- Inventories: inventories of the goods of testators were delivered to the probate court as a part of the process of granting administration. They have been used by historians in a variety of ways: to look at industrial and commercial activities and the standard of living through housing and furnishings. Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century inventories are often made by the room, allowing the layout of buildings to be deduced. Newport inventories and the wills to which they attached are held by the Staffordshire Records Office but are available on the Findmypast website. Newport inventories for 1660-1750 were transcribed by a group led by Dr Barrie Trinder in the 1980s. A set of the transcripts is lodged in the archives of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. There is a project to be done to make them more widely accessible. The earlier inventories remain to be transcribed, together with their associated wills: this

could be undertaken by people living at a distance or who cannot, for whatever reason, access Stafford.

- The building project in particular would find it useful to have a listing of sale notices (in newspapers) and sale particulars, many of which can be connected to existing buildings. This might run through to 1914.
- The Valuation Office Survey, c.1912-14 was made to enable the implementation of the taxation of land values enacted by the 1910-11 Finance Act. The individual surveys are keyed to maps which allow individual properties to be identified. The records are in the National Archives at Kew although they are easily photographed. (There is no expectation that the transcribers will have to use the originals.) There are, however, a little over a thousand properties in Newport. The survey gives details of ownership, tenancy, a description of the property including its state of repair. In some cases plans of internal layouts are given. There is also, of course, a valuation. Transcription could take place at several levels starting with a simple index of the properties (the books are not in topographical order) and going right through to a full transcription of the documents.

#### Listing documents

- The major challenge here is the Liddle and Heane (solicitors) archive. The needs here are described separately.
- Building Control Plans: if these can be discovered and made available, they may well need listing. Otherwise there may be important work to be done working through the local authority's minutes and extracting the minutes conferring (or denying) permission. This will give the date at which houses and other developments took place.
- There are numerous other possibilities including making lists of the contents of local authority minutes.

#### Research

- All the sections of the Red Book, and especially the modern sections, could be assigned to volunteers to collect additional material and, possibly, write up the material. They would require access to the files of the NHS and perhaps add to these.
- We have access to a bespoke cloud-based database (which can be used from home, by multiple users) which we propose to use, and the Victoria County History Trust have given us a small sum of money for it to be customised for our use. We would wish at least some of the material already collected by the NHS to be entered into this. The writer of the Red Book text will be able to draw down on this data and potentially as volunteers to undertake additional research where gaps in it appear. The database could be ideally used to collect material from newspaper etc.

## 6. Costings

VCH Shropshire has an established relationship with Dr Judith Everard and Ms Wendy Horton. They have both been our researchers on the forthcoming VCH Short on Wem and serve as co-authors of this scoping study. Dr Everard has spoken to Newport audiences about our plans for a new history of the town.

Both Dr Everard and Ms Horton are engaged by VCH Shropshire as freelance consultants. We pay them a fee calculated on an estimate of a reasonable time to undertake the task at a date rate of £175 per day to include their NI and any pension contributions they may wish to make, and we generally do not pay (in-county) local expenses.<sup>5</sup> Other than setting deadlines, we do not instruct them as to how to proceed but leave it to their judgement (although we do review drafts and meet with them regularly). It is our practice to pay in instalments, starting with a down payment at the commencement of the work, an interim payment at an agreed milestone, a payment on the receipt of the finished text and a final payment on its approval.

### Medieval Newport sub-project (Dr Everard)

We see little opportunity of a volunteer contribution to this part of the project due to the problems of handwriting and language (Latin). If people emerged who already had the requisite skills or were willing to learn, then the possibility of incorporating them into the scheme would be considerable. The medieval part of the project would therefore be largely dependent on a research assistant with previous appropriate experience, which Dr Everard has in spades. The book would ideally appear as a VCH Short.

It is impossible to come up with a close calculation of the time it would take to review and digest the documentation, not least because it is entirely possible that additional materials will emerge during the course of the study. It seems reasonable to allow four months (FTE) to prepare an account of medieval Newport suitable for publication as a VCH Short. An academic funder might find an additional output in the form of an edition of Newport medieval materials, notably the charters, the extents and the sole medieval Newport court roll presently known to survive, in which case allow a further two months (FTE). Allowance also needs to be made for out-county expenses and for the cost of proofreading and indexing the book.

- Allow four months FTE for a book suitable for publication as VCH short (so 16 weeks = 80 days @ £175 per day) = £14,000.
- Add two months for additional editing work (8 weeks = 40 days @ £175 per day) = £7,000.
- Allowance for out county-expenses = £1,000.
- One week for proofreading and indexing the Short = £875.
- One week for proofreading and indexing the volume of medieval Newport records = £875.
- Produce short text for Red Book, 10 days at £175 = £1750.

Total for this part of the project, £25,500

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<sup>5</sup> This is calculated as being roughly the day rate implied by a bottom of the scale university research assistantship (£32,000) plus an addition of 20 per cent for the employers NI and pension contribution which they would receive if employed by a university.

### **Newport buildings and townscapes sub-project (Ms Horton)**

We see possibilities for a big volunteer contribution to this part of the project, but some training will be required.

There is a mass of information in the files of the NHS Vernacular Architecture Group which needs to be updated and possibly elaborated and corrected. This will entail inspection of the buildings - inside and out if possible - and possibly re-photographing and re-measuring some of them. It would also be desirable to thicken our knowledge of the history of them from sale particulars, earlier photographs (where Newport is well endowed) and, if they survive, building control plans. The Valuation Office survey (c.1912-14) will give descriptions of the buildings as they then existed.

There will be opportunities for volunteers to make a contribution in building recording and thickening out the history of individual buildings from documentary sources including inventories (for earlier properties), sale particulars and building control plans (if they survive).

#### **Duties**

- Convene sessions on building history, offer training on building recording and analysis: say six sessions at £175 a session = £1050.
- Manage volunteer group to manage the NHS Vernacular architecture group and Shropshire HER, liaison with Newport Civic Society: 20 days at £175 per day = £3500.
- Produce short text for VCH, 10 days at £175 per day = £1750
- Long text for publication, including allowance for design work, proofs etc: 45 days at £175 per day = £7875.
- Church guide: 5 days at £175 per day [the church to stand the cost of printing etc], £875.
- Expenses including £200 + VAT for access to the HER from Shropshire Council (£240), travel and one night's accommodation to search archives at English Heritage (Swindon), £300; general expenses including travel, cost of purchase of tapes, photography etc., £500, total; £1040.

Total for this part of the project, £16,090

### **Post-medieval Newport sub-project (Dr Everard)**

This needs to be divided into two posts as the duties are somewhat different (although the same person could undertake them).

#### **(i) Volunteer coordinator**

The chief duty here would be to gather a small team of volunteers and commission from them research which will feed into the Red Book account. This would include gathering material from Shropshire Archives, selective newspaper searching, analysis of trade directories, inventory transcription etc. The choice of areas to pursue must, in part, depend on the interests and aptitudes of the volunteers. It would be desirable for the volunteers to draft out some sections of the final text, but this may be more than most are willing to do. The volunteers will need some training and then support and reassurance that what they are doing is correct and useful. It is important to ensure that they do not collect too much: it is easy to over collect. There will need to be regular meetings to maintain momentum. Material gathered will be entered into a bespoke cloud-based database. This may also include taking material from the files of VCH Shropshire (at Shropshire Archives) and the Newport History Society and incorporating them into the database.

It would be desirable if this post could be in place at the beginning of the project. Suggested 0.2 FTE for a year (One day a week for 45 weeks over a calendar year = £7875 plus £1000 for volunteer travel expenses, £1000 and £450 for the volunteer coordinator's travel expenses = £9325).

(ii) Researcher/writer

We would need an experienced historian to take the research notes prepared by the volunteers and add to them where necessary and write up the final account of Newport. Where volunteers have already written text, then it will almost certainly be necessary to edit the text into VCH format. Dr Everard has all the necessary experience and would be our first choice for this role.

It is difficult to estimate how long this would take. In part it depends on the success of the volunteer project (i) above but a reasonable estimate would be six months FTE. At the end of this we would expect to have a fully-prepared text. We would prefer that this should go immediately for publication as a VCH Short, but a work of this length (70-75,000 words) does not fit into the Shorts series as conceived by VCH Central Office, so the alternatives would be publication by a third party (which would produce its own problems) or web publication until such time as the remainder of the red book is completed.

Indicative cost: 160 days at £175 per day = £28,000, plus £2000 expenses = £30,000.

### **Liddle and Heane cataloguing sub-project**

The problems posed by this exhaustive collection from the defunct Newport solicitors of that name have already been mentioned. It is desirable that we know what is in this collection before major work starts on the modern (post-1550) history of the borough or else we will be constantly rewriting text in the light of new discoveries. It is also proposed that this be a volunteer project, but again there will need to be some supervision, first to offer training to the volunteers, second to assist with problems as they arise and third to ensure the quality of their work

The outcome would be (a) a proper catalogue available through the SA online catalogue and (b) key information from the archive entered into the VCH database if only at the level of giving document references which need to be looked at a later date.

Costs: again it is impossible to arrive at entirely secure figures. There are 323 boxes of Liddle and Heane archive with varying levels of description so the time needed to spend on each box will not be a constant. It will also be noted that whilst a Newport firm, the records do not exclusively concern Newport and so whilst a comprehensive catalogue is a desiderata, some boxes will be looked at in greater details than others. Assuming 40 weeks and two parallel groups of two volunteers each doing four boxes a day, then a basic list is well within reach with time to return to boxes of records which might need to be listed in greater detail because they are identified as holding especial interest for the project. I suggest one day per week for 12 months at £175 per day plus an allowance for travel for volunteers who might otherwise feel that they cannot take part in the venture. Car sharing might be possible of course.

Total cost at one day a week for 45 weeks over a calendar year with a small allowance for expenses = £7875 plus allowance (£1000) for volunteer and coordinator expenses, £8875.

An alternative approach to the problem posed by Liddle and Heane would be to seek money for one or two interns - perhaps young people between school and university - who would be interested in gaining some work experience in the Shropshire Archives. Again, there would be costs of supervision and the Shropshire Archives might not be able to make

adequate work space available for several days a week over a period of some weeks. We would need to provide at least some travelling money.

Cost of the interns project per person, say 4 x £200 per week (= £50 per day) makes £800, plus £50 per week for travelling, makes £1200 per person, plus supervision and training costs, £1,000. For two interns, say £3500. A variant on this would be offer a post to a slightly older person wishing to gain some archival experience before proceeding to a postgraduate qualification in Archive Administration. Mary McKenzie of Shropshire Archives suggests that £10 an hour would be appropriate level of remuneration, so roughly £1200 a month (given that Shropshire Archives only opens for four days per week).

It should be noted that there are other Newport collections at Shropshire Archives which need cataloguing, including the papers of the Newport Methodist circuit and twentieth-century papers of Newport Grammar School.

Smaller grants or donations (of £1,000-£2,000) would allow us to make considerable progress with volunteer projects to assimilate the probate inventories transcribed under Dr Trinder's direction or the transcription of the Valuation Office surveys. (The latter would probably be the more expensive project due to the computing work required to underpin it.)

### Summary of costs

Medieval Newport sub-project		£25,500
Newport buildings and townscapes		£16,090
Post-medieval Newport		
Volunteer coordinator	£9325	
Researcher-writer	£30,000	£39,325
Liddle and Heane cataloguing sub-project		£8,875
Total		£89,790

## 7. Timings

Assumes a start in July 2019				2019							2020												2021														
		July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec						
	commitm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						
Medieval town sub-project	0.5 or 1.0								1.0					if 0.5					publication																		
Buildings and townscapes sub-project																			publication																		
post-medieval town sub-project																																					
Volunteer coordinator		0.2																																			
Researcher/writer	0.5													1.0					if 0.5																		
Liddle and Heane cataloguing sub-project	0.2	0.2																								red book text finished in month 24 followed by web publication											
All timings are dependent on funding being secured																																					
Revision 27 March 2019																																					

## 8. Funding

Our best estimate suggests that the Newport project can be delivered for about £90,000. This could be trimmed back to the Red Book element alone, which would come in at about £50,000 plus the costs of cataloguing the Liddle and Heane archive at Shropshire Archives.

The full project breaks down into the following packages:

(i) Medieval Newport sub-project	£25,500
(ii) Newport buildings and townscapes sub-project	£16,090
(iii) Post medieval Newport project	
Year one, Volunteer co-ordinator	£9,325
Year two, Researcher/writer	£30,000
(iv) Liddle and Heane cataloguing sub-project (if using volunteers)	£8875

It is possible that the writing up of the post-medieval town sub-project could be split into several funding packages of £6-£10,000 each.

In an ideal world, the money would be there for the asking. But we have only the one world, and have no expectation that funding on this scale would come from either a single individual or corporate donor, and certainly not local government (although if one were to think of it as £40,000 a year for two years, with some additional funding from other sources, a single donor might find the project more attractive). The hope must be that donors will find individual packages within the whole attractive, and the entire project can be achieved with help from several quarters.

The first problem is finding funding for the volunteer coordinator posts, for which we require about £15,000 in the first year.

We are therefore open to offers and suggestions although we are not without ideas.

### *Smaller individual donors/crowd sourcing*

Fifty individuals offering us £10 a month a piece for two years would generate £6,000 a year, on which we would be able to claim gift aid. If a small number were willing to offer £25 a month over two years, then we would be able to proceed correspondingly faster. Showing that we are able to mobilise local support in this way is very helpful to us: it will almost certainly unlock other sources of funding, including the HLF.

In return for the donations of individuals, we would send them email updates on our progress, invite them to our history days, to the launch and publish their names in the publications. They would also be entitled to pre-order the publications at cost (or with a substantial discount). With their permission, we would also publish their names on our website as a token of public thanks.

### *Corporate donors*

We would be delighted to hear from companies, businesses and public institutions who wished to support some or all of our activities. Equally we would welcome suggestions as to who we might approach. In return, we can offer

- The company's logo on our publications as a permanent record of their contribution
- Local press publicity (including the presentation of cheques etc) and on our website

- Invitations to the launch. A sole donor would be able to display their corporate logo and we would invite the managing director or their representative to make the formal presentation (again, a photo opportunity for the company)
- Copies of the publications at cost to supply to customers, place in reception areas etc.

There may be some interest amongst corporate donors in supporting the internships to work on the Liddle and Heane archive as mentioned above.

#### *Local authorities*

There is little money in the local authority sector. CIL [Community Infrastructure Levy] money, which would seem to be a logical source of funding for projects such as this, appears to be unavailable for heritage initiatives. We would hope that Newport Town Council, to whom we are already grateful, would feel able to support us further. They may find the funding of one of the volunteer co-ordinator's posts attractive although we would not doubt that a single post could be a major charge on their finances.

#### *HLF*

Some VCH projects have had funding from the HLF, but the HLF approach is fundamentally at odds with professional history writing. The HLF might support a volunteer coordinator to manage the work of volunteers, whether cataloguing or researching, on the basis that these activities amount to personal development for those involved, but they will not, apparently as a matter of policy, fund the writing up of the material gathered by the volunteers. In addition the HLF will require at least some matching funding

We are bound to try the HLF and configure aspects of our project into forms which they will recognise as falling within their remit.

#### *Charitable trusts*

There are a number of charitable trusts in Newport which may be able to offer us some assistance, notably the Boughey Trust, but we recognise a mismatch between the scale of their income and the demands that we could place on them. This is true of trusts in the county generally.

There are a number of trusts who support work in local history nationally. Again, we will have to tailor parts of the overall project into packages that they would find attractive and be happy to support.

We will investigate the possibility of securing grant-funding for researching historic buildings from Historic England, the Vernacular Architecture Group and other organisations listed in the Heritage Funding Directory. It is difficult to know exactly what the sources would be at this stage, but there are certainly a number worth investigating.

#### *Academic funders*

More than most, the research councils and the Leverhulme Trust are overwhelmed with applications. It seems unlikely that we could make a compelling case to them for support, except perhaps for the study of medieval Newport. A study of a small medieval town has an element of novelty where a study of a nineteenth-century small town does not. The writing of an encyclopaedic account obviously lacks the research questions that would be expected by an academic funder and they may well feel that any discussion of Newport would not have sufficient 'impact'.

We conclude that most of the support for a history of Newport will come from local people, local employers and to a degree, local authorities. We hope that they will find this project to

be appealing and that their pride in place will encourage them to take it to their hearts and open their wallets.

## 9. Beyond Newport

This scoping study has concentrated on Newport. We have already said, that the Red Book was envisaged as covering a bigger area (and Newport alone would be too short to form a Red Book on its own). Newport was to be one five modern parishes, of which the others were Chetwynd (including Sambrook), Edgmond (including Cherrington, Chetwynd Aston, Church Aston and Tibberton), Longford (including Stockton) and Sheriffhales (including Woodcote). As with Newport, some text has already been prepared by David Cox and Janice Cox.

We have, as of yet, done no work to assess what needs to be done to write the history of these parishes in VCH style. It seems likely though that smaller parishes will take about three month's work (15k) and larger ones (Edgmond for instance) twice that, depending, in part, on the degree to which previous research has taken place and the contribution volunteer researchers are able to make.

Volunteers from outside Newport who wish to make a contribution to Newport History before turning to their own or another parish are very welcome to join us. Alternatively we welcome approaches from existing local groups who wish to work with us on the history of their parish and generate text which can form part of the future Red Book. Donations will obviously accelerate the writing of these histories but before we can advance very far it will be necessary to have a volunteer co-ordinator in place. Initial donations will be directed towards that objective.

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