

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MASEFIELD MATTERS PROJECT BOARD HELD ON 19 MAY 2026

PRESENT: Philip Errington (PE), Tim Keyes (TK), John Holmes (JH), Amy Howard (AH), Caroline Magnus (CM), Nick Morris (NM), Justine Peberdy (JP) (Chair), Christine Tustin (CT)

ALSO PRESENT: Emma Clowsley (EC) (Project Coordinator), Angela Price (AP) (Town Clerk), Honor Holton (HH) (Minute Taker)

69. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None were received.

70. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE NOTES OF MEETINGS OF (ALL) THE MASEFIELD MATTERS BOARD HELD ON 24 MARCH AND 21 APRIL 2026

NM brought forward an amendment on the 21 April 2026 minutes, minute number 57, that "Visitors to come down Church Lane" be amended to "Visitors to come down Chapel Alley."

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Masefield Matters Board Meetings on 24 March and 21 April be approved and signed, subject to the amendment.

71. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ACTION SHEET

Action 25/MM23(5) JP noted that this is an ongoing project, and made the board aware that this action is something she is constantly advertising and pushing out and encouraging other board members to do the same. TK suggested that in March for the upcoming school event, an element could be Masefield's life in Sea Shanties.

25/MM25.2(2) it was agreed that this will be picked up by the Comms Subgroup. **AH to investigate whether anyone has picked up from Bethan and is leading on the project.**

25/MM29 there is a plan to return to this item, with board members to come to a future meeting with suggestions. **Board Meeting date of October be updated to October 2025 on action sheet.**

25/MM37(2) JP said the **Comms Group is to add this onto their agenda for the next meeting, to decide whether to wait until the commission is awarded or whether there is a use for the leaflet to hand out sooner** in which case they should provide EC with an update,

so it becomes valid now. CT enquired about a cost, which is around £30. AH suggested that if this was completed by the Poetry Festival then more leaflets could be circulated. JP suggested that the leaflet be completed by 26 June 2026. Comms Group to tweak the text for leaflet and EC to turn into a PDF and arrange printing.

25/MM38.2(1) JP noted that a response has still not been received. AP suggested using Ledbury Town Council contact lists, as well as Herefordshire BID, for national coverage. JP noted that AH will give the Project support from the new marketing and communications role who at LP. This item will be put on hold and be reviewed at a later date. AP noted that a board discussion will need to be brought to Council. EC to update schedule and to ensure that Ledbury Town Council, Council Meetings will note cause a delay on this. AP suggested that an extraordinary meeting can be made, if necessary, with the Chairman's permission, to avoid delaying for three weeks.

25/MM38.2(2) EC and HH to spend time updating Masefield Matters Events on the Ledbury Town Council website.

25/MM44(1) AP provided an update on this, she recently spoke to Ian Wilson (Treasurer of JMS), there is currently around £8,000 in the JMS bank account. Ian Wilson is to let AP know the exact figure of donations received, LTC to invoice JMS will pay that invoice to LTC, the gift aid is to be worked out through a similar invoice process towards the end of the year. CT added that Ian Wilson will need to know who the donations are from, in case any are not available for gift aid, AP assured that this will be made clear in the application.

25/MM44(3) **JP noted to bring a draft to the next fundraising meeting to be addressed.**

25/MM44(6) JP suggested to place this on hold until some marketing expertise are sought.

25/MM44(9) TK asked JH how often something could be sent out to parents. JH replied that he emails parents every two weeks, JH has written to parents about joining the Masefield Matters Board. JP said that responses have been received from this. JH proposed it is better to talk to children directly; the offer is open whenever the board requires it to send out information. **This item is to be removed from the action sheet.**

25/MM45(2) JP has received a response back, JH sent this out to parents, JP has sent out information about what the Board does and the dates for the next three meetings, unfortunately they are not able to attend the next three meeting dates, however they are still open to joining later. TK suggested that once a person is approved, they can go straight onto a subcommittee. JP added that the process would be the candidate sends in a short CV to be shared with board members,

members would have opportunity to meet them before they are approved.

JP to put together a communication to the core consultation group, which invites their ongoing support of the project following the end of their official role. NM, congratulated EC on finding the core group of individuals, suggesting that perhaps the board could embrace them and involve them more within the project.

A social event was suggested to get to know members more, with more engagement and group feeling, but to wait until their role has ended first. For this be discussed further on 18 July, to ensure enough time to communicate before their role ends. AH suggested an event in early September. TK proposed **Friday 11 September at 6pm, in the Ledbury Town Council offices**, with a further meeting proposed in October by AH. **JP and EC to create a formal invitation with help from Ledbury Town Council staff.**

25/MM59(1) CT said the Burgage Hall will be open on Saturdays. EC enquired if space in the Market House could be utilised, which AP has agreed to.

25/MM61.1 This item has been passed on to NM. EC asked TK if he could scan or photocopy a copy of the paper version on the Ledbury Town Council printer and provide a copy to NM.

25/MM61.2(1) EC has shared some designs with the Comms Group and has received some fantastic feedback from AH. AH said that the designs EC has presented are fantastic.

72. PHASE 3 PROGRESS UPDATE

EC told the Board she is working on a draft commissioning brief, which is going to be sent to JP on Tuesday 19 May 2026, ready for the board to review. The evaluation is still underway; Janine and Andrew are speaking with members involved in the project and getting feedback, as well as ensuring the timeline is on track. Upcoming engagement events include, Community Day 6 June, Celebration Day 5 July, Masefield Marathon 4 July, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 1 June, taking 20 GCSE and A Level students to this event, one other school is getting involved in the Clay Memorial Plaque making in Colwall and an upcoming Carnival event on 31 August.

NM asked TK if we could do a flyer for the Masefield Marathon that could go into the website, put into shops and windows for advertising, EC is updating the flyer that went out to possible participants, now to advertise it to the public. JP suggested that JMS members would be interested to hear about this too.

CM commented that she does not have email distribution facilities or unlimited funds to do mail outs, a newsletter was sent out recently, with a journal coming out in the next couple of months. The JMS has an annual general meeting on 1 June 7pm at the Masters House, after which CM will be giving a talk about Masefield's son Lewis. AH, to corral some poets, Simon Armitage and other poets if they are around on the day. TK to provide other items, a theme for each hour. AH, Simon will not be arriving until early afternoon.

JH to plan an email to parents, provided by the board, AH suggested an update from MM with upcoming events to avoid parents becoming desensitised to Masefield, this email to include the Marathon, talk, theatre show and event in March 2027 and for TK to put this together for JH.

Actions:

MM72 (1) JH to plan an email to parents, provided by the board. TK to put this together for JH.

73.

TO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF EACH BOARD MEMBER ONCE THE PROJECT STAFF CONTRACTS ARE COMPLETE

JP pointed out that there are another two years of this project, and a new phase has been reached lead by EC in getting the brief together. TK is leading on forthcoming big events this year. The Board will be asked to look at their roles and how they can best contribute, how the board maintains momentum, publicity volunteers etc. JP in leading up to 2028, is to ensure that the Three Choirs Festival are focusing in JM settings in 2028 happening in Hereford for the 300 year anniversary, JP to work on this and continue to update the board with progress, JP to ensure the new director, CEO etc are informed of this coming up.

AH to try and enquire about this to the Hay Festival, AH to have a meeting with their CEO and artistic planner to ensure they are aware of this project, with possibility they will not get involved in this project. EC has recently been in contact with the Quilter Association, for each member building a square for when the memorial is unveiled and would be beneficial if the board could contribute to this as another piece of engagement around the project, to be stored in the Market House with designs still being drawn up. JP noted that this project will be ongoing after EC has left and is encouraging other board members to become a liaison for these projects. JP on NM suggestion investigating who makes the toppers for post boxes, and for these to be Masefield themes by 2028, art groups to be contacting, number of large events upcoming, finding connects with other people and driving this forward is essential, CM to focus on more talks around Ledbury about Masefield.

CT talked about upcoming events at the Civic Society, this is advertised through newsletter and there will be a talk in New Year. JP spoke on

about how the Civic Society can tie into Masefield Celebrations and themes, particular in 2028. CT noted that the Civic Society is a small organisation, under a great deal of pressure, CT can push forward on Masefield with newsletter and talks, 2028 as many organisations however they can to celebrate Masefield. JH to focus on Masefield in the 2028 academic year.

TK has various contact lists from past events, to be ready to mobilise these lists as well as other board members personal contact lists in preparation for events first starting the Masefield Marathon.

Actions:

MM73 (1) JP is to ensure that the Three Choirs Festival are focusing on JM settings in 2028 happening in Hereford for the 300 year anniversary, and continue to update the board with progress.

MM73 (2) AH to make Hay Festival aware of the Masefield Matters project and to enquire about possible involvement in the festival.

MM73 (3) Board members to become a liaison for smaller engagement projects running after EC has left. All Board members to consider which they could assist with.

MM73 (4) Board to investigate who does toppers for post boxes, and to enquire about Masefield themes for 2028.

MM73 (5) CM to focus on more talks around Ledbury about Masefield.

74. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE SUB GROUP UPDATES:

6.1. FUNDRAISING

6.2. COMMUNICATIONS

6.3. RISK

6.1. APPENDIX A: THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FUNDRAISING SUB GROUP ON 14/05/2026

TK providing an update on fundraising. There have been some discussions with Emma Russell Trust, who support ongoing education training for young people aged 16-25 in the Ledbury area, TK to encourage them to align with idea for annual scholarship, creative writing or arts course aimed at John Masefield.

A date for JH event at JM High school, 23 March which is now confirmed. TK congratulated JP over Bosbury House which has resulted in a expanded contact list.

One idea is to put on a Masefield reading event on in Ledbury to get more people involved. AH suggested that there is a group that meet at the courtyard to read plays, AH to approach them to ask if they would make a Masefield play to access a new audience who may not currently be aware of Masefield. PE and TK both suggested that they perform a play such around Easter time in the church.

TK has made contact with people in regard to theatre events, with a group of people working on this, and has been in contact with the Market Theatre with early progress being made. TK is very happy to be part of the planning for the upcoming school event in March 2027, however he is out of the country in January/ February and has asked if others could come forward and be part of a group with JH to put together a programme, which includes Primary schools, JH suggested that the best way to engage with Primary Schools is to specifically tell them how many children are needed and what they will need to do.

AH informed the Board that a Winter Poetry Festival will not be held this year, AH is happy to be part of this group and become involved as previously mentioned about Toni Cook. AH informed that the board will need to be direct in asking what events she is needed for, to also be noted that TC's daily charge. TK proposed meeting in early Autumn to provide more progress. JP to join this group. AP suggested, with EC leaving in January, CEO Olivia Trueman may be a good fit for this group.

EC to work on gifting donors something at the end of the project showcase the project's successes. Any ideas for attracting new donors would be welcome. CM possibility of special edition of Masefield poems for donors, PE suggested a special edition or press, for this a limited number of books to be gifted to donors. **NM to speak with Tilley's printing press about creating a special edition book**, which would be their contribution to the Town and project.

6.2.

CM spoke on the communications update, firstly that it is clear the Board will benefit when Ledbury Poetry's marketing person can support. CM congratulated everyone on their efforts. In regard to the brief, the board will need to work with what they have which at the moment, the amount is £60,000. Deadline for advertising commission is 5 June, expressions of interest to be extended to the end of July, Core Consultation Group will create the long list in the first week of August and the Board to shortlist in mid-August. £1,000 budget for advertising to note and £1,000 more available as more job applications are to be advertised yet. All members of the Comms to help with publicity and responsibility to write press releases in the short term, AP to assist with this.

6.3. EC and AP reviewed the risk register, with one new risk added, with no significant risks to be mentioned at the meeting.

Actions:

MM74 (6.1) 1) AH to approach **Powerhouse Productions** to ask if they would make a Masefield play to access a new group who may not currently be aware of Masefield.

MM74 (6.1) 2) PE and TK to explore organising a play around Easter time in the church.

MM74 (6.1) 3) Group to be established to support upcoming school event in March 2027. TK to set a date in early Autumn to provide an update on progress. JP to join this group.

MM74 (6.1) 4) NM to speak with Tilley's printing press about creating a special edition book, which would be their contribution to the Town and project.

MM74 (6.2) 1) All members of the Comms sub group to help with publicity and to assume responsibility for writing press releases in the short term. AP to assist with this.

75.

DATE OF NEXT TWO MEETINGS

Next board meeting: Friday 11 September 11am

Next extraordinary meeting: to be an online meeting Friday 14 August 10:30am

The meeting ended at 3:30pm

Signed.....

Dated.....