



## **Welcome and Introduction**

As the newly appointed Chair, I'm thrilled to introduce myself at our Annual General Meeting. I'm Steve O'Brien, proud resident of Usk since 2018, and previously honoured to serve as Mayor. My involvement with local organisations has deepened my appreciation for our town's heritage. As Chair, I look forward to leading Usk Castle Friends towards new opportunities and memorable experiences.

## **Acknowledgements**

I extend heartfelt thanks to Elizabeth Baker, whose exemplary leadership has guided Usk Castle Friends with dedication and warmth. I aspire to follow her excellent example.

## **Remembrance**

Let us pause to remember the late Rosie Humphries, owner of Usk Castle and tireless supporter. Her legacy and generosity will inspire us as we move forward.

## **Reflections on the Past Year**

Over the past year, Usk Castle Friends have supported The Castle and contributed to initiatives enhancing our town's

charm. These achievements highlight our group's dedication and camaraderie.

### **Highlights of Recent Events**

March's History Day featured Nathen Amin and David Collard, offering fascinating insights into the Tudor dynasty and Henry's reign. The summer welcomed back Opera at the Castle with "The Magic Flute", enchanting audiences and proving ever popular.

### **Looking Forward: Upcoming Events and Initiatives**

This year's opera, "Pirates of Penzance", promises laughter and music. Act quickly when tickets are released to avoid disappointment. We're also planning new lectures and a Community Singalong to unite our community through music.

Preparations are underway for a special event marking the 700th Anniversary of Elizabeth De Berg's "Great Christmas Feast", promising festive cheer and family activities.

### **Community Engagement**

We aim to reach all residents of Usk with our events, welcoming new faces and forging friendships. Your ideas are invaluable—please share suggestions for future activities, as our strength lies in our members' enthusiasm and creativity.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for your continued support. Let's make this year at Usk Castle our most memorable yet.

Steve O'Brien

Chair, Usk Castle Friends