



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the period from 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022

- 1 The Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the United Kingdom Charity Commission under registration number 1183397. Its governing document is a constitution dated 8th May 2019.
- 2 The Society's registered address is 18 Thames Street, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3HZ.
- 3 The Society was registered as a charity on May 14th 2019.
- 4 The objects of the Society are:

For the benefit of the people of Abingdon-on-Thames:

- To promote high standards of planning and architecture
- To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, culture and architecture of the area
- To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features or areas of historic or public interest

Examples of the ways we seek to achieve these objects are:

- Organising events and projects and publishing articles to foster civic pride and promote the civic life, heritage and environment of the town
- Monitoring and commenting on planning applications and lobbying the relevant authorities to encourage high standards of historic conservation, planning and development worthy of the town's civic tradition and character
- Contributing in whatever way we can to help make Abingdon a great place to live, work and visit

- 5 The Trustees who served during the period were:

Hester Hand (Chair)	Appointed May 8th 2019, re-appointed 7 October 2020
Caroline Bullock	Appointed May 8th 2019, re-appointed 16 June 2021
Keith Butler (Secretary)	Appointed May 21st 2019, re-appointed 16 June 2021
Sue Killoran	Appointed March 1 st 2022, re-appointed 7 June 2022
Bobbie Nichols	Appointed May 8th 2019, re-appointed 7 June 2022
Olga Senior (Treasurer)	Appointed June 11th 2019, re-appointed 7 June 2022

The Trustees are supported by a wider Committee whose members work on our various activities and projects.

6 Summary of the year's activities

6.1 Governance – The Committee met on five occasions during the year and the Trustees held one additional meeting, with all but the last two meetings of the year being held via videoconferencing owing to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.2 Finance - The bank balance at the end of the period was £10,389: full details are in the accounts.

6.3 Membership and members' meetings – the Society has *c.251* members, with over half being life members. The Committee has continued to engage and inform the membership of the Society's activities, via regular e-newsletters, and were pleased to be able to hold two in-person members' meetings during the year.

6.4 Public Benefit

Planning – the Committee is fortunate to have members with extensive experience of planning issues and the Society has monitored planning applications in the area and made submissions and commented where appropriate, with the aim of preventing developments which we believe would be detrimental to the town's character or vibrancy or to the wellbeing of residents in general.

Conservation – Society members have continued to make a major contribution to the Conservation Area Appraisal for the Albert Park area. The Committee has also continued to work with local residents to press the District Council to resolve problems over the derelict Upper Reaches hotel site.

Local consultations: the Society was involved in stakeholder consultations for the District Council's CARF (Central Abingdon Regeneration Framework) project. Members were informed about this and other local consultations and encouraged to respond.

6.5 Projects

As reported in 2021, the Trustees have decided to put more focus on our projects, with a view to encouraging more members to take part in them.

Heritage Open Days – as part of the national scheme, the Society took a leading role in organising the town's Heritage Weekend. The theme was "Innovation and Invention", which was well-suited to Abingdon's position as a centre of science and technology, and there was a wide range of events in the Market Place, St Ethelwold's House and elsewhere. Feedback on the event was excellent and well over 500 people took part.

Photographic archive – a small group of volunteers has started work to create a publicly accessible digital archive of historical images of the town. Appropriate software has been purchased.

Walks project

Funded by a Town Council grant and a legacy from a former Society member, the Society produced a suite of 10 themed trail leaflets guiding people around interesting parts of the town. These have been made available via the Information Centre, Museum etc and can also be downloaded from our website. They were also used at the Jubilee Bank Holiday and Heritage Weekend as part of a programme of guided and self-guided walks. They were very well-received and it is hoped to expand the series.

7 National Organisations

The Society is a member of Civic Voice, the national organisation for Civic Societies, which gives access to the experience of other similar groups and to information about national developments in the areas of planning and development. It is also a member of the Historic Towns and Villages Forum. Both bodies arranged a number of low-cost streamed events during the year which proved very useful and informative.

Hester Hand

On behalf of the Trustees of The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

May 2023