

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

TRUSTEES REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

for the YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2013

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

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THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

CHARITY INFORMATION AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2013

Trustees
Dr Kevin Bond
Ian Prosser (resigned 13 March 2013)
John Scampion (appointed 13 March 2013)
Ian Fradgley
Jonathon Craig (appointed 13 March 2013)
Paul Mackey (appointed 13 March 2013)

Charity Number 251182

Correspondence Address

Treasurer Jonathon Craig

Bankers
Barclays Bank
Market Cross
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 0EA

CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME 19 4JQ

Independent Examiner
J N White FCA
4 Mansell Street
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 6NR

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2013

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2013.

CONSTITUTION, OBJECTS AND POLICIES

The Society is constituted by Trust Deed dated 19th January 1966 and is registered with the Charity Commission, Registration Number 251182.

Appointment of Trustees is governed by the constitution of the Charity. The Board of Trustees is recognized to appoint new Trustees to fill vacancies arising through resignation or death of an existing Trustee.

The Trustees comprise the officers of The Stratford-upon-Avon Society and are responsible for managing the business of the Society according to Charity law.

The Charity is established for the public benefit which through its objects and principal activity is to stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the town and its surrounds. To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest. To pursue these ends by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, other forms of instruction and publicity and promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Chairman's Report

We, the residents of the town of Stratford upon Avon are being consulted by our planning authority –Stratford on Avon District Council, on the latest version of the New Core Strategy. This Core Strategy will apply until 2028, although the Council is currently considering whether or not to extend the Plan period until 2031, and will set the parameters for much of the development which will be undertaken throughout the District. Some of this development will be within The Town of Stratford and much around The Town but all will have direct or indirect impact. Due to increasing housing demand a substantial number of new living units; houses and apartments will need to be provided. The direct impact on our Town will be somewhere between an increase of 25% and 50% in the resident population.

The Town Council sponsored Neighbourhood Plan for The Town is intended to address the finer detail of local development through the expression of local views of those resident within The Town. This Neighbourhood Plan will be voted on and when adopted become a part of The Planning Authorities remit when considering planning applications. The two documents will become the local planning guidance.

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

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Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2013

The whole process of coming to a view on what should happen to The Town in development terms has engaged the local population and our Society over the past few years. Whilst government have changed the rules for planning on a number of occasions the fact remains that we have a planning authority which is one of the 50% or so of all such authorities in the country without a valid set of planning policies due to the delay in agreeing the new strategy. This has left Stratford upon Avon at the risk of developer led ad hoc development assessed, not according to local considerations but within a set of National Rules set out in The Government's National Planning Policy Framework. In the past two years or so the local planning authority has failed on all substantial appeals they have made due to this lack of a valid local plan to the financial cost of residents and the long term loss to the community of developments not within a locally agreed and consistent plan.

This situation must be brought to a sensible conclusion as soon as possible. We are still living with the awful planning approvals of the 1960's and 70's and the prosperity of our Town and the local communities relies on our Town being an attractive place to visit and thus producing the income to support the services we all want.

Having spent quite some time considering these issues with colleagues I would like to suggest that the key issues for us to consider are:

1. The design of what is built rather than the number of accommodation units.

The debate all too often is about numbers and not design or quality. We cannot substantially impact numbers as this is largely driven by demand within the market place. To a lesser effect, we have some, but not a lot, of impact on location in terms of within the boundary of Stratford or elsewhere. We know that both government and developers prefer to build in and around the town to ensure transportation hubs reduce unnecessary travel and that market sale is at the an attractive price. What we are beginning to suffer from is poor design of both the housing units and their environs. We need to ensure that the units are of sufficient size to ensure room for families to grow. Boris Johnson has addressed this specific issue and it would be easy for our planning authority to take the London standards and apply here. We also want to see variety of design within developments and some variety in colour to avoid large anonymous estates. Road width to accommodate vehicles and local play areas and community centres incorporated into the whole design. Public transport routes run through these estates so width of road to allow for buses and car parking is essential.

Stratford District Council's existing planning design guidance is out of date and not consistently applied or enforced. This must change and we must ensure that the council's apply their policies on our behalf. Let's start by ensuring the design guidance is updated and adopted.

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2. We must ensure that the new developments incorporate within them educational and community provision adequate for the population and for existing standards to be maintained. To some extent this means that we have to accept substantial development as the economies of scale mean that the cost of new schools and community centres require developers contribute to these assets and this requires large scale development. Our mistakes in the recent past have been to allow developers to build inadequate designs and not incorporate community infrastructure.
3. We must ensure that the planners -- at both District and County level ensure that the new communities link to existing communities through a well thought out network of roads and spaces adequate for 21st century living. Recognising that each new house/accommodation should be provided with at least two car parking spaces. Similarly, many people wish to ride bikes or move in motorised wheelchairs. The linking roads within our community must accommodate mixed mode transport. It is not too difficult to ensure that such transport links are also monitored in real time to ensure that road traffic management methods are active and not passive as currently within our town.
4. Finally, we must be rigorous in working with our elected members to the various authorities to ensure that we support good development – well designed and linking with other developments through connectivity and oppose vigorously bad development.

In conclusion, let's focus on Design and be Demanding. Let's support planners and encourage them to be rigorous in protecting our future but also hold them to account if they do not live up to these exhortations.

Kevin Bond
Chairman

Planning Report

The major planning issue of the past year remains that of determining the number of dwellings to be included in the District's draft Core Strategy. At the time of writing it appeared that land for a considerable number of houses might be allocated on the southern fringes of the town. If this is to occur, the Society considers that it is essential that the District Council should develop a planning framework within which any such large development should take place. Such a framework would need to address not only issues of estate planning – including provision of open space and gardens – but also major questions such as transport and schools provision. With one or two exceptions, the piecemeal development of the past few years has done little to enhance the town. If the town is to be further expanded, far better that new build should be undertaken to the highest modern standards.

In parallel to work on the Core Strategy, work on a Neighbourhood Plan has been progressed by the Town Council. Emerging from this are sensible proposals for relocation of industrial development within the town boundaries and further housing development within walking distance of the town centre. However, until the Core Strategy is settled – which may be more than a year ahead given that a draft of the Strategy has to be examined by a Government Inspector – the Neighbourhood Plan cannot be put in place.

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As to the town centre, it remains in better shape than those of many other towns. Tourism is clearly relevant to the retention of shops but so too would be any increase in population as a result of new housing provision. Town Square however remains a problem. Planning permission for a cinema etc was issued to London and Regional during the course of the year and it remains to be seen whether the company exercises the permission within the 3 year period which applicants have to start work once permission is granted. Also within the town centre, it is disappointing to note that whilst Redrow has started work at the former cattle market site, progress has been slow. The number of cases on which the Society has been consulted continues to be significantly lower than the numbers which were coming forward prior to 2010. Of the 20 cases, three have related to large estates and the others to small schemes within the town, including one entailing conversion of a disused shop into flats, a process which the Society views as sensible as a way of ensuring that no buildings in the centre remain empty.

Peter Burgess

Programme Report

Speakers during 2013 included:

11 February: Mairi Macdonald: Putting Us in the Picture.

18 February: David Ubaka: Cars versus Pedestrians – Sharing our streets

18 March: Lucy Musgrave, Publica: Places and Spaces - Designing for people

15 April: Carole Longden, Heart of England Forest: A Forest in the making.

13 May: AGM followed by a presentation by Mark Haselden: Neighbourhood Plan

16 September: Cllr Diane Walden Mayor Stratford upon Avon followed by Peter Studdert: Meeting the Challenges of Growth

21 October: Geoff Noble: Reinventing the High Street.

18 November: Mark Armstrong, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust: New Place - New Vision

Heritage Open Days 13 - 15 September 2013

The Society's display '**Wining and Dining along the Historic Spine**' was chosen to fit in with the Town Hall's theme of '**Brewing and Feasting**' which coincided with the Food Festival. Old photographs of eating and drinking houses along the Historic Spine were displayed alongside photographs of how the buildings look today.

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Visits and Social Events during 2013 included:

- Visit to Ettington Park Hotel
- Visit to Broughton Castle
- Visit to Burnt Norton
- Chairman's Summer Party at Honington Hall
- Visit to Tewkesbury Abbey & Alleyways
- Visit to Wroxton Abbey
- Visit to Thenford Gardens and Arboretum
- Society's Christmas Lunch at the Swan's Nest Hotel

I have thoroughly enjoyed the role of Programme secretary for the past four years and I would like to thank the committee and Society members for their support and encouragement during that time. It has been very much appreciated.

Jean Clymer

Membership Report

Below is a table which describes the Society membership movements in 2013 split over the various membership categories.

2013 Membership	Renewed 1/1/2013	New In 2013	Total 31/12/13
	3		
Individual	73	12	82
Joint/Household	69	7	75
Corporate	7		8
Corporate Web Sponsors	3		3
Honorary	2		2
Life	2		2
Schools	2		2
Total	158	19	177
Total Members 2013	227	26	253
Total Members 2012			249
Total Members 2011			273
Total Members 2010			287

In the final total the joint/household figure counts double.

Where a partner in joint/household has passed away the membership is transferred to individual.

Ian Fradgley

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Schools Report

Members of the Stratford Society visited Stratford Primary School and Bridgetown Primary schools during 2013.

Bridgetown School – 6th/ 7th June 2013

Year 6 pupils at Bridgetown Primary School pupils were given their first introduction to the Historic Spine. The Historic Spine is the old route from the Birthplace, along High Street, Chapel Street and Church Street to Holy Trinity Church.

Members of the Stratford Society, Dick and Anne Prior and Jean Clymer, gave a slide presentation of all the Grade I and Grade II listed buildings along the Spine and talked to the pupils about their history and their importance to the town.

40 pupils, aged 10 – 11 years, were later given templates of various shop fronts along the Spine. They were asked to design their own shop front and to add their reasons for choosing each type of business.

The following day the Society arranged a “schools’ walk” so that the pupils could study the buildings in more detail.

Following the Society’s visit, pupils made a selection of 2D and 3D shop front designs ranging from library, bookshops, cafe, pet shops, architects office, sports shops and bakeries. They used this work as an inspiration for the scenery and back drop for their Year 6 end of year production. Five shops were used in the design, painted onto a large backdrop and then made to fit in with the ‘Cinderella theme’ of the musical.

Stratford Primary School - 10th/ 11th July 2013

Jean Clymer and Dick Prior joined forces with Shakespeare Birthplace Trust on a visit to Stratford Primary (Broad St) School on Wednesday, 10th July 2013.

Dick gave a slide presentation of all the Grade I and Grade II listed buildings along the Historic Spine and talked to the Year 6 pupils about their history and their importance to the town. He also gave a brief presentation of some of the shop fronts in Stratford and pupils were asked for their comments which proved very entertaining.

We were later joined by Mistress Peters of the Birthplace Trust, who was dressed in Tudor costume and ran a mini Petty School within the classroom.

The following day Dick & Anne Prior and Jean took the children, their teacher and helpers on a guided walk of the Historic Spine. En route they were also given a guided tour of the Town Hall. Later they visited ‘The ‘Elizabethan Tower’ (now known as the Gazebo) in the grounds of the Shakespeare Institute which was reputed to have been the site of the composition of Ms Corelli’s writing

Jean Clymer & Dick Prior

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Transport Group Report

The group was formed under the initiative of the Society and now operates jointly with the Business Improvement District Stratforward and the Town Council as well as elected and staff members of WCC, SDC, Stratford Voice and Accessible Stratford. We were very sorry to lose the very real help of Roger Bennett of WCC whose untimely death last year was a blow to both WCC and ourselves; he had been instrumental in many improvements we had proposed particularly as to more acceptable signs in the town centre. We have welcomed his successor Jo Edwards to our meetings. We have also lost Chris Gregory the former project director of Stratforward and await his successor to be appointed, but meanwhile our link with the business community is represented by the Town Host manager Sam Lloyd.

During the year we have met roughly every 6 weeks at the Town Hall courtesy of a grant from the Town Council. The topics which have come under discussion have been:

Southern Park & Ride (aka Rosebird P&R)

Our main concern has been to persuade the WCC and/or SDC to take ownership of this facility and plan for its continued service after the current s106 agreement with the developer expires in the near future. The service has had a very slow start in part due to poor road signs and publicity which we have managed to get resolved to a modest degree but much more needs to be done particularly as to confusing signs and parking charges on site. Use of the dedicated bus service has increased some 60% though in part for access to Waitrose rather than for P&R.

Northern P&R (aka Bishopton P&R)

This is operated by WCC in marked contrast to their lack of interest in the Southern P&R which is a later construction. It has not yet justified itself but we are keeping an eye on the tweaks which occur from time to time in attempts to improve performance.

Stratford Parkway railway station

We kept a close watch on the construction of this facility by WCC who were using government funds for the project. It is adjacent to the Northern P&R with overlapping issues including signs, charges and promotion.

Bus congestion in Bridge Street

We have continued to press the highway authority and the bus operators to address the obstruction on both pavement and road due to the unduly long waiting periods of buses at this bottleneck at a critical point as well as Wood Street. As ever, any substantial highway alterations/relocation of stops runs up against the lack of public funds. Our proposed changes to parking and bus stands appear to be adopted by the NP.

Tourist coach routes in the town and at Shottery

We have consulted with the main co-ordinator of tourist coach visits to the town and local bus operators. This has resulted in a voluntary one way system by school bus in Shottery which has improved safety and traffic flow in the area. We hope to emulate that success with tourist coaches. Following this example we hope to get WCC to adopt a voluntary Advisory Coach Route through the town.

Clutter of street furniture

Our discussions with officers of WCC resulted in more sympathetic street signs which do not spoil the tourist view of historic buildings, though the wooden bollards have attracted some complaints. Of particular note has been our successful campaign to have a BT internet box removed from the front of Hall's Croft to the place for which planning permission had been granted, having to invoke the assistance not only of SDC but also the local MP.

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Mix of vehicle and other highway users in the main shopping streets of the town centre

A trial exclusion of vehicles or shared space in High Street remains on our agenda in conjunction with the NP. Meanwhile the effect of the new parking regime in High Street for which we had pressed is being closely watched.

Residents parking particularly in Old Town

Representations to WCC have brought about a new review and consultation which we trust will lead to an improved regime for locals and visitors alike.

On and off street parking charging and enforcement by the SDC and WCC.

Our member Yvette Widdowfield of SDC has done sterling work to bring about a more user friendly charging regime for on and off street parking in co-operation with WCC and has established an informal Parking Advisory Panel so successfully that the NP recommends it should become a formal Advisory Committee. SDC manages enforcement of most of the facilities in town both for itself and under contract for WCC. However WCC have now decided to outsource enforcement. We submitted extensive comments to WCC during the consultation period but there remains much concern about how this will work.

Proposals for modernising the pedestrian bridge at Seven Meadows

This started as an initiative of Stratford Voice and is now being carried forward by a new organisation Friends of Lucy's Mill Bridge. Our group has not played an active part but we support the stated aim of improving access at this location subject to due regard for cost and adjoining property.

Overall transport strategy for the town and the neighbourhood plan

Mark Haselden chair of the NP attended one of our meetings following which we have developed a working relationship with the NP committee where our interests overlap. One of our members is part of the NP management team and a steering group member. We prepared a Draft Transport Strategy which we put to the NP committee in the hope that the NP with our support will incorporate an overall strategy for the numerous transport needs of the town to supplant the current sporadic activities of the highway and public transport agencies which have proceeded without reference to the knock on effects to other transport issues, the traffic control arrangements in Birmingham Road being the most obvious example.

Sundry other issues are brought to us from time to time to which we contribute as seems to be within our sphere of influence.

Robin Sankey

Historic Spine Working Group Report

This year each of subjects that had exercised both the mail Spine Group and the Spine working group over the previous two years were brought to a concluding stage though perhaps an interim one. The work on the frieze publication concluded with the GC's decision to support the publication financially, the shop front initiative has successfully concluded its first phase to be continued subject to the availability of funding; and the experimental closure of High Street initiative has been introduced into the local Neighbourhood plan to be submitted to the referendum in due course. As a result the main group met only once and the working group on two occasions. At the second of these meetings a decision was taken to bring about the amalgamation of the two groups with refreshed agenda.

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That initiative has now been completed at a joint meeting of the two groups , a new Spine Group constituted with a revised membership.

John Scampion

Publications Report

The lack of a communications group to share the responsibilities of compiling and issuing newsletters has meant that *Talk of the Town* has been discontinued and *Update* has been suspended for the time being. The main form of communication with members has been through the scheduled meetings. A survey of members and non-members will be undertaken to examine how best the Society can satisfy the needs of its members and at the same time attract new active support.

However, the Historic Spine Guide has proved one of the Society's most successful publications. After its initial run of 500 copies, the Town Trust supported a print run of 10,000 copies and these have been distributed to residents' associations, primary schools, local businesses and the three local authorities. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust held stocks at their various properties and gave copies to ambassadors visiting the Birthday Celebrations. The Town Hosts have distributed the guides to visitors.

In two years, we have distributed all but 400 of the original 10,000 copies, and this success prompted a further application to the Town Trust for a re-print. The Society is most grateful to the Trust for a grant of £940 and for this tangible recognition of the value of the whole Historic Spine project. The Society will match the grant to cover amendments to the design which will include the RSC.

Dr Robert Bearman, who provided the text for the guide, has been working on a further Spine publication in the form of a frieze, documenting every building along the Historic Spine and beautifully illustrated by member and retired architect Paul Burley. It is expected that the book will be on sale in April 2014.

Beryl Downing

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial statements set out on pages 10 and 11 disclose a surplus for the year of £1,817 and reserves of £11,403 at 31st December 2013.

RESERVES POLICY

It is the policy of the Trustees to hold adequate reserves for the forthcoming year's ongoing expenditure together with funds to enable The Society to fulfill its objects. There is no restriction on the use of the reserves of £11,403 held at 31st December 2013.

Kevin Bond
Chairman and Trustee

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THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

Income and Expenditure Account
For the year ended 31st December 2013

	£	<u>2013</u>	£	<u>2012</u>	£
INCOME					
Subscriptions inc Gift Aid					
Subscriptions	3,838				
Gift Aid	<u>608</u>	4,476		4,628	
Grants					
Town Trust – Historic Spine	-				
District Council – Shop Windows Advice	<u>-</u>	-		4,055	
Talks and Presentations					
Non Member Charges and Donations	125				
Sales	<u>57</u>	182		92	
Events and Visits					
Summer Party	953				
Christmas Party	1,402				
Charity Collection at Christmas Party	185				
Visits	<u>1,437</u>	3,977		3,147	
Bank Interest			<u>7</u>		<u>17</u>
Total Income		<u>8,642</u>		<u>11,939</u>	
EXPENDITURE					
Governance					
AGM	162				
General Committee	100				
Talk of the Town, Web Site and Leaflets	328				
Postage Stationery and Charges	92				
Insurance	302				
Membership Fees	60				
Audit	<u>240</u>	1,284		2,489	
Talks and Presentations					
Accommodation and Wine	875				
Speakers	<u>453</u>	1,328		660	
Events and Visits					
Summer Party	1,039				
Christmas Party	1,486				
Charity Collection at Christmas Party	185				
Visits	<u>1,074</u>	3,784		3,053	
Projects					
Historic Spine	79				
Flag design and supply	246				
Schools Promotion	<u>104</u>	<u>429</u>		<u>6,413</u>	
Total Expenditure		<u>6,825</u>		<u>12,615</u>	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)FOR YEAR		1,817		(676)	
RESERVES at 31st December 2012		<u>9,586</u>		<u>10,262</u>	
RESERVES at 31st December 2013		<u>£11,403</u>		<u>£9,586</u>	

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As at 31st December 2013

	<u>2013</u> £	<u>2012</u> £
CASH FUNDS		
Barclays Bank – current account	1,736	2,895
Barclays Bank – deposit account	3,000	-
CAF Bank	<u>6,756</u>	<u>6,749</u>
Total	11,492	9,644
 LESS: LIABILITIES		
 Subscriptions in Advance	<u>89</u>	<u>58</u>
Total	<u>89</u>	<u>58</u>
 RESERVES AT YEAR END	 <u>£11,403</u>	 <u>£9,586</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 2014 and signed on their behalf by:

Kevin Bond
Chairman and Trustee

Paul Mackey
Trustee