

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

TRUSTEES REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

for the YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2014

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

CONTENTS

Charity Information	1
Trustees' Report	2 - 9
Independent Examiner's Report	10
Income and Expenditure Account	11
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	12

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

CHARITY INFORMATION AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2014

Trustees	Dr Kevin Bond John Scampion Ian Fradgley Jonathan Craig Paul Mackey (resigned 8 January 2015)
Charity Number	251182
Secretary	Richard Eggington (appointed Acting Secretary 9 January 2015)
Treasurer	Jonathan Craig
Bankers	Barclays Bank Market Cross Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire CV37 0EA
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 2014

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2014.

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

The key sets of decisions we all await are those of Stratford District Councils (SDC) review of their Core Strategy. Whilst writing this report I note that the Government Inspector has challenged SDC in respect of their housing strategy projections as against their economic growth strategy leading to a need for further revision. This causes further uncertainty and is likely to lead to opportunistic development bids. The issues within the new Core Development Strategy are vital for the future of our Town and District. The series of delays which have dogged this process are worthy of Gilbert and Sullivan and we can but hope for a conclusion to this before too great a damage is inflicted on our infrastructure by development led change.

It looks increasingly as though Long Marston development will continue over the coming decades resulting in the Long Marston New Town without the advantages which the proposed Eco Town development would have delivered. There is surely some learning in this development for us all. Housing numbers are not in themselves the issue. Quality, design and associated infrastructure are key. With development of both the old Royal Engineers Depot at Long Marston and the old airfield likely in the next Core Strategy period we should urge SDC to focus more effort on design and

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

infrastructure to reduce the impact which unplanned change inflicts. Talking of which, in terms of infliction of pain, the traffic difficulties within The Town, in particular, the Birmingham Road is a good example of where the division of responsibilities between SDC and Warwickshire County Council has simply provided the worst of all worlds with a lack of integrated planning and delivery. I am sure that we will begin to see the traffic difficulties impact on visitor numbers to our town in the coming years; an impact none of us should want to see as the economic vitality of Stratford Town is key to all our futures.

I am pleased to say that The Society has continued to be heavily involved in the development of The Stratford upon Avon Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan over the past two years or so and the plan is now in a state to move to public consultation and then a vote (depending on SDC's timing in respect of The Core Strategy updates). Frankly, this plan seems to be the only coherent set of proposals for locating housing, economic development sites and traffic management currently in play. Our politicians have more generally been seen to be helpless in the face of the need to put a long term plan together leaving it to people drawn from the town itself to take the lead. I am grateful to The Town Council for having the foresight to sponsor this process. The challenge will be to ensure that the proposals are taken forward and then ensure that the planning authorities hold to them. I hope that all members of The Society will feel able to support these proposals when they come forward for both consultation and vote.

This past year's talks have focussed on successful examples of plan led design and development. We have seen how successful other parts of the country have been and what opportunities we have missed. It is again of some disappointment to note how few local elected representatives have attended these talks and how very few members of the professional staff have attended. Reduced resource is likely to be a long term constraint on local government and we need inspirational leadership and vision to maximise outcomes. I am reminded that in some parts of our country local authorities are going to their electorate with proposals for growth based on a plan for local people to vote on. I am sure that we would react well to this type of positive leadership and ambition! We have seen examples of, and heard of what can be done. This is what we should be encouraging.

I must thank my colleagues who have led the various committees; the reports of which are contained in this AGM pack. Your committees and Trustees continue to work on your behalf for a Town which retains the best of the past and develops sensitively in the future. To this end we have been reviewing our constitution and will be asking for your agreement to a change in the composition of our trustee body to better reflect good practice.

In conclusion, thank you to the membership for your support. We continue to work on your behalf and that of our town fellow residents and friends. Stratford upon Avon is a historic town of global recognition and value. The home to the father of the modern English language, we have responsibilities to The Town which, none of us who enjoy can ignore.

Kevin Bond
Chairman

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Planning Report

During the course of the year there have been few cases within the town involving design issues on which the Society has been called upon to comment. The focus of planning discussion within the Society has been almost entirely on policies entailed in the preparation by the District Council of the Core Strategy and by the Town Council of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The former has entailed much debate especially about the number and location of dwellings to be built within the District over the next 20 years or so. Several of the proposals for estates are within the boundaries of the Town. At the time of writing, the District Council had been invited by the Government-appointed Inspector to review and resubmit its proposals for scrutiny, primarily with a view to increasing the number of houses to be built during the plan period.

The Society has contributed throughout the year to preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan on which a great deal of agreement has been reached. The Plan will have to be put to a referendum of Town citizens at some stage but as one of the controlling criteria is that it has to be in general conformity with the core strategy – and no such strategy yet exists – the Plan cannot yet be subject to a referendum.

The question of what if any development will take place in Town Square is one of considerable concern to the Society which is seeking to engage the current leaseholders in discussion about the future of the site.

Peter Burgess

Programme Report

Talks and Presentations 2014/2015

The Society was given six presentations in the period September 2014-March 2015. Four were concerned with planning issues, starting on 20th October with a progress report on *Stratford's Neighbourhood Plan*, presented by Kevin Bond and John Scampion who then led the discussion by members. The challenges and failures of the current planning system were brought into sharp focus by Mike Roberts of HAB (17th November – *The demise of the NIMB: how do we get people campaigning for new homes in their community ?*), Dr Hugh Ellis of the Town & Country Planning Association (16th February – *Rebuilding Britain: the future of the British Planning System*) and Steven Bee of Urban Counsel (16th March – *How to get sensitive and successful development in historic towns*) All provoked lively debate with the members. Two other areas of vital interest to Stratford were also covered : on 15th September, Robin Tjolle, CEO of Shakespeare's England talked about *Stratford and Tourism: the challenges and the rewards* and on 19th January the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Coventry Local Enterprise Partnership brought members up to date in *Where does Stratford fit in ?* In addition, the Society was invited to share an evening presentation by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust on 10th September where the revised plans for the re-presentation of the site of New Place were revealed and given general approval.

Nic Walsh

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Visits and Social Events during 2014/15 included:

Society Members were invited to enjoy the **Chairman's Summer Party** last July, kindly hosted by Sarah and Tony Brooker at Springfield Farm. This being no ordinary venue, as the collection of tractors and vintage cars is extraordinary. These are housed in three enormous hangars in order to accommodate the number of vehicles. We enjoyed a delicious buffet supper under cover as the rain set in and Nic Walsh had devised an interesting quiz with solutions based on the vehicles in the collection. Mrs Brooker donated the proceeds from the evening to her charity of choice....The Ettington Community first Aiders. This was a most enjoyable and well attended event. Sadly Tony Brooker has since passed away when on holiday abroad.

A visit to **Ragley Hall** in September 2014 provided members with a well informed and comprehensive private tour of this magnificent property. The family still live there and use the State rooms on occasions such as Birthdays and for Seasonal Celebrations. This provides such an opportunity to understand the normality of everyday life for a family living in an historic building.

Our **Christmas lunch** 2014 was held in the Verona Suite at The Falcon Hotel where we enjoyed delicious food in festive mood. After lunch wonderful entertainment from the youth drama group "Rogues and Vagabonds" was organised by Nic Walsh. They provided us with a glimpse of their outstanding talents in a programme from their repertoire. Everyone was very impressed and delighted with the show.

In March 2015, a similar theme to that of Ragley Hall purveyed our visit to the south wing of **Charlecote Park**, where we were warmly welcomed by Sir Edmund Fairfax- Lucy and his wife Erica, both of whom kindly led our tour through his home. It was a fascinating insight into living history and the tour was greatly appreciated by all the members who joined us that morning.

Our future planned visits are to, **Stanway House** Gloucester, in April 2015 and **Hill Close Gardens**, Warwick in May 2015. Our Chairman's Summer party will be held at **Hall's Croft** in early July. TBA. Finally, in September a private visit to **Sezincote House** is arranged before it closes for the end of season.

I welcome and appreciate the support shown by Society members for these visits and events which are organised for their enjoyment. We endeavour to arrange visits which provide informed private tours, to enhance and reflect the vision of our Society in preserving what is a most valuable heritage in our beautiful county.

Rosemary Applin

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Membership Report

Below is a table which describes the Society membership movements in 2014 split over the various membership categories.

2014 Membership	Renewed1/1/2014	New In 2014	Total 31/12/14
Individual	78	8	86
Joint/Household	69	4	73
Corporate	5		5
Corporate Web Sponsors	2		2
Honorary	2		2
Life	2		2
Schools	2		2
Total	160	12	172
Total Members 2014	229	16	245
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

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Stratford Town Transport Group Report

The group has met 6 times during the year. Meetings were held at the Town Hall courtesy of a grant from the Town Council for the room hire fee.

Bus congestion in Bridge Street & Wood Street is causing problems for passing traffic as well as for pedestrians negotiating the waiting queues. Despite our meetings with bus operators and local government officers this remains unresolved, in part due to the reluctance of the bus operators to use rest parking off road in turn due to reluctance of the parking authorities to waive parking fees. Suggestions of an off road bus station met with like reluctance.

In the early part of the year outsourcing of on street parking enforcement by WCC caused much concern. Happily our worries have been confounded and a useful dialogue has developed with the WCC officer dealing with the issue. We have also taken up some concerns about residents parking.

We have co-operated with the Neighbourhood Plan group, some of our members being directly involved with that body. Our input on transport/highway issues has been incorporated into the plan. The next stage waits upon other forces. Issues such as shared use of High Street have become subsumed into that programme.

Our efforts to get one of the local authorities to provide continuity of the Rosebird/Southern Park & Ride facility from the expiry of the private funding under a Section 106 agreement have fallen on deaf ears. The lack of the courtesy of even contact from SDC persons in a position of authority has been a recurring feature of our year. The legal position seems to have slipped beyond redemption but belatedly the public is becoming aware of the situation and voicing protests which may encourage candidates in the local election to think of some way out of the impasse.

Pedestrian pressure on the Tramway bridge at festivals has become a concern as it has been on the verge of being shut to avoid a Hillsborough type issue arising. Pedestrians have already spilled onto Clopton Bridge amongst the traffic at such times. We have drawn the attention of the SDC leaders to the high risks for them if some solution is not found to provide some additional pedestrian river crossing.

Members of the group have been in contact with the Rail companies about facilities and service at Stratford Station. Improvement is currently promised over the next 12 months or so. We will continue to observe and add pressure where needed.

Birmingham Road congestion has taken a higher profile under the leadership of Nadhim Zahawi as local MP. We have established a dialogue following a private meeting with him and his representative now attends our meetings.

Committee membership includes officers from WCC, SDC and some elected members of those authorities. The Mayor of Stratford Cllr Ian Fradgley who is also a member of the Society has been an active participant this year. We have welcomed the new manager of Stratforward BID and our link with the Cycle Forum has been strengthened.

Robin Sankey

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Historic Spine Working Group Report

The Group in its revised combined format have met on four occasions during the year; they have begun to meet at KES by kind permission of the Head.

Progress on extending pedestrian priority along the route of the spine has been disappointingly slow, certainly to those who believe it to be an obvious way of enhancing the attractiveness of the Town centre to residents and visitors as well the way to a better appreciation of the buildings along the route. Yet there has been progress. A proposal for both High Street and Bridge Street has been included in the Local Neighbourhood Plan. For High Street, it is to introduce an experimental closure on the same basis as Henley Street ie between 11 am and 4pm with a view to the scheme being made substantive if proved successful. For Bridge Street it is to improve the overall ambience by means of footpath widening, carriageway narrowing, reduced parking and landscaping. If the plan is approved in the referendum with these provisions in it there will be an unequivocal mandate from the town for them to be carried out. On this basis the Group have expressed their support to this part of the Neighbourhood Plan which is expected to be out for full public consultation in May this year.

The group have overseen the shop fronts scheme for spine route properties in which advice is offered to owners free- in part financed by the Society- and followed by a Council grant to eligible applicants. The scheme is driven and administered on behalf of the Society by Ian Heggie. Ian has worked hard to encourage those shop front owners who were or might have been interested in making improvements to follow principles of good design. There were successful applications though overall the funds reserved by the Council were not completely used largely due to financial and economic uncertainties. The group asked that the Council hold over the unspent funds to the succeeding year. It is a reasonable expectation the Group believe that this scheme will be a strong candidate for future funding from the CIL. The scheme, extended to the whole town centre, has been included in the neighbourhood plan which will, once agreed, help to secure that funding.

During the year the group adopted and developed a further initiative – a scheme for pavement information plaques to describe buildings along the spine route and in Waterside. Initially some 20 buildings of architectural, cultural or historic interest will be identified as being eligible for a plaque whose design will be overseen by the group. Funding for some buildings will be provided by the respective owners but for others the cost is likely to be largely met by the scheme. The group are confident that the overall funding, expected to be in the order of £20,000, will be found from organisations in the town in time for a start to be made in the anniversary year or 2016.

The group were delighted to learn of the project created by KES for the refurbishment of the Guildhall for opening to the public of Shakespeare's schoolroom. They were of the view that the scheme would be a very important and valuable addition to the Shakespeare tradition in the town.

John Scampion

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2014

Stratford Society Strategy Group: Annual Report

The Group was formed shortly before the last AGM, in order to help shape and deliver a long-term vision for the Society and for the well-being of the town. It provides a forum to consider relevant matters in more depth than is possible within the time constraints of General Committee meetings, and it is expected to make recommendations to the General Committee rather than act in an executive capacity. Its membership is flexible and any society member wishing to become involved should contact the Chairman.

During its first year the Group has considered a number of consultations, mainly from Stratford-on-Avon District Council, and ensured that appropriate responses have been made on behalf of the Society. Topics addressed include: the District Council's draft Core Strategy which sets out plans that manage future development across the District – how much is needed and where it should take place - while protecting our environment and heritage; the Community Infrastructure Levy; and the Council's possible "confederation" with Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire District Council.

The Group has also considered the town's draft Neighbourhood Plan on a number of occasions, with particular reference to what the most appropriate role for the Society might be, and the Coventry Warwickshire Strategic Economic Partnership (LEP) which led to discussion at the general meeting in January 2015.

The Group continues to look at the ongoing issue of communications, both within the Society and with others.

John Deegan

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial statements set out on pages 12 and 13 disclose a surplus for the year of £398 and reserves of £11,801 at 31st December 2014.

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 £11,801 held at 31st December 2014.

Kevin Bond
Chairman and Trustee

..... 2015

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2014 which are set out on pages 12 and 13.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and independent examiner

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

(b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

J. N. White
Chartered Accountant
4 Mansell Street
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire

..... 2015

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

Income and Expenditure Account
For the year ended 31st December 2014

		<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
	£	£	£
INCOME			
Subscriptions inc Gift Aid			
Subscriptions	3,630		
Gift Aid	<u>599</u>	4,229	4,476
Grants and Donations			
Town Trust – Historic Spine	940		
Donations – Historic Spine	<u>410</u>	1,350	-
Talks and Presentations			
Non Member Charges and Donations	15		
Sales	<u>54</u>	69	182
Events and Visits			
Summer Party	991		
Christmas Party	1,225		
Charity Collection at Christmas Party	-		
Visits	<u>946</u>	3,162	3,977
Bank Interest		<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Total Income		<u>8,816</u>	<u>8,642</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Governance			
AGM	68		
General Committee	130		
Talk of the Town, Web Site and Leaflets	142		
Postage Stationery and Charges	506		
Insurance	302		
Audit	<u>240</u>	1,388	1,284
Talks and Presentations			
Accommodation and Wine	773		
Speakers	<u>72</u>	845	1,328
Events and Visits			
Shakespeare Anniversary Lunch	275		
Summer Party	173		
Christmas Party	1,207		
Charity Collection at Summer Party	818		
Visits	<u>895</u>	3,368	3,784
Projects			
Historic Spine	1,590		
Stratford Historic Buildings Trust Donation	1,000		
Heritage Open Day	91		
Frieze	88		
Shop Front	<u>48</u>	2,817	429
Total Expenditure		<u>8,418</u>	<u>6,825</u>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)FOR YEAR		398	1,817
RESERVES at 31st December 2013		<u>11,403</u>	<u>9,586</u>
RESERVES at 31st December 2014		<u>£11,801</u>	<u>£11,403</u>

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As at 31st December 2014

	<u>2014</u> £	<u>2013</u> £
CASH FUNDS		
Barclays Bank – current account	2,203	1,736
Barclays Bank – deposit account	9,762	3,000
CAF Bank	<u>-</u>	<u>6,756</u>
Total	11,965	11,492
 LESS: LIABILITIES		
 Subscriptions in Advance	<u>164</u>	<u>89</u>
Total	<u>164</u>	<u>89</u>
 RESERVES AT YEAR END	 <u>£11,801</u>	 <u>£11,403</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 2015 and signed on their behalf by:

Kevin Bond
Chairman and Trustee

Jonathan Craig
Trustee