

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 1048637

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1995-08-14

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Bristol Commonwealth Society
14 Whiteladies Road
Bristol
BS8 1PD

Phone 01179734720

Email info@bcsbristol.org.uk

Website www.bcsbristol.org.uk

Activities

Objects: (1) THE CHARITIES OBJECTS (HEREINAFTER CALLED THE OBJECTS) ARE TO ADVANCE EDUCATION AND TO PROMOTE WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND OVERSEAS THE INCREASE AND SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE RESPECTING THE PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH(2) WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE GENERALITY OF THE FOREGOING SUB-CLAUSE IN FURTHERANCE OF THE OBJECTS (BUT NOT OTHERWISE) THE CHARITY MAY:(I) PROVIDE A MEETING PLACE IN BRISTOL FOR ITS MEMBERS(II) MAINTAIN A LIBRARY(III) HOLD MEETINGS AT SUCH INTERVALS AS THEY SHALL DETERMINE FOR THE DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS OF COMMONWEALTH AND OTHER INTEREST(IV) ENCOURAGE THE STUDY OF THE GEOGRAPHY ETHNOLOGY HISTORY LITERATURE ART NATURAL RESOURCES ECONOMICS AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES IN ANY MANNER THAT THE CHARITY SHALL DETERMINE(V) PROMOTE THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE WAYS OF LIFE IN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES AND ENCOURAGE INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS(VI) ENCOURAGE MUTUAL INTEREST IN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE(VII) CO-OPERATE WITH OTHER CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS(VIII) USE ANY OTHER CHARITABLE METHOD PROPER TO THE CARRYING OUT OF THE OBJECTS

Activities: Provides information and promotes knowledge about the peoples and countries of the Commonwealth, providing a meeting place for members, maintains library, holds meetings, talks and lectures on the Commonwealth, supports young people and students in studies relating to the Commonwealth, cooperates with other organizations interested or working in Commonwealth countries.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Children/young People, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Bath And North East Somerset
- Bristol City
- Gloucestershire
- Somerset
- Wiltshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£112,475	£176,202	-	-
2023-12-31	£81,757	£71,731	-	-
2022-12-31	£59,506	£76,665	-	-
2021-12-31	£64,704	£50,872	-	-
2020-12-31	£72,415	£45,177	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr KAY BARNARD	Chair	2012-09-14
Athanasios Lazarides		2023-03-08
Janet Mary Kirk		2019-06-01
Janis Purdy		2016-04-30
Nicholas Stephen John Watts		2025-04-19
Robin Danny Elms		2014-04-30
Sibusiso Tshabalala		2018-04-30

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1048637

Accounts



THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2024
CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Number: 1048637

Patron: Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Bristol

President: Professor Evelyn Welch, MBE, Vice-Chancellor University of Bristol

Chairman: Dr K Barnard

Treasurer: Ms J Purdy

Members of the Executive Committee:

Mr L Athanasis
Dr K Barnard
Mr R Elms
Mrs J Kirk
Mr T Frewin
Ms J Purdy
Mr S Tshabalala

Address: Commonwealth House
14 Whiteladies Road
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1PD

**Independent
Examiner:** CEK Accounts
Apartment 1, Bamburgh House
Bamburgh Road
Westerhope
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE5 5PZ

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
For the Year Ended 31st December 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE
TRUSTEES OF THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

We report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act") and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the 2011 Act):
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

The examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Executive Committee has the honour to present the 30th Annual Report of the Bristol Commonwealth Society.

Reference and administrative information

The Bristol Commonwealth Society is a registered charity (No. 1048637). Its registered office is shown on the information sheet. The Trustees who served during the year are noted on the information sheet.

Objects, aims, and activities

The Society is a charity which exists to advance education and to promote within the United Kingdom and overseas the increase and spread of knowledge respecting the peoples and countries of the Commonwealth.

Structure, governance and management***Governing document***

This is through a constitution adopted 4th March 2008 as amended April 2012.

Governing bodies

The Board of Trustees and Executive Committee are responsible for the overall governance of the charity.

Recruitment and training of trustees

The charity's trustees and committee members are appointed by the Board of Trustees after due consideration being given to eligibility, personal competence, specialist skills and local availability. New Trustees and committee members are inducted into the workings of the charity by the Board of Trustees.

Risk management

The Trustees and Executive Committee are responsible for the management of the risks faced by the Trust. A formal review of the charity's risk management processes is undertaken on an annual basis. The key controls used by the charity include:

- formal agendas for all committee and board activities
- detailed terms of reference for all committees
- comprehensive strategic planning, budgeting and management accounting
- established organisational structure and lines of reporting
- formal written policies
- clear authorisation and approval levels

Through the risk management processes established for the Trust, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that the system can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

COMMONWEALTH HOUSE

Health & Safety, Licensing and Events

Mrs Smith continued to ensure that health and safety requirements were met at Commonwealth House. She acts as administrator, events manager and licensee (DPS). She is pleased to report that the premises retain a five star hygiene rating.

Quick Financial Overview to 31st December 2024

Revenue from the car park:	£20,230
Membership Subscriptions:	£1,532
Income (gross) from venue hire, catering and the bar:	£14,543
Rental income from the upper floor offices:	£4,400
Gift Aid:	£1,302
The Society's investments at 31 st December 2024:	£54,852
Charitable donations made by the Society in 2024:	£4,620
Charitable donations received by the Society:	£600

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe the Society's level of reserves to be sufficient to meet its day to day requirements. As a matter of policy, each year the Trustees review the value of the reserves required to be held in investments, cash and cash equivalents not restricted to any particular purpose. The Committee considers the charity's exposure to the risk of any significant loss of income and to the risk of unforeseen expenditure, which cannot be mitigated by executive action, and the degree of the risk ascribed to each such event is assessed.

Mr Christopher Serle

The Chair and Trustees would like to express their deep sadness at the death of Chris who served as Vice-Chair for 10 years. He was a much loved member of the Executive who brought with him an irrepressible enthusiasm, warmth and wonderful sense of humour. We feel very privileged to have known him. Our thoughts are with his wife Ali and their children.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS MADE BY THE SOCIETY IN 2024

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARS NEW YEAR'S PARTY 20TH JANUARY

The Society hosted its annual New Year's party for Commonwealth Scholars who last year were studying at Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth universities under the auspices of their Regional Co-ordinator, Siddhi Joshi, from India. The event was very well supported with twenty eight scholars in attendance as well as our Patron and Trustees of the Society.

The students enjoyed a hot buffet lunch with a range of options and afterwards a specially inscribed cake which definitely received the seal of approval. After lunch each student was presented with a certificate declaring "Proud to be a Commonwealth Scholar" which we are sure they will treasure. BCS donated £280 towards the event and continues to offer support to Commonwealth Scholars throughout the year.



THE KENYAN ASSOCIATION IN BRISTOL 17TH FEBRUARY

We had great pleasure to meet with David Nguyo, Rose Kingori and Robert Owino, Trustees of the Kenyan Association in Bristol. This community led organisation aims to promote the welfare and shared heritage of its members and to this end hosts a variety of social, cultural and educational events throughout the year.

We are delighted to announce that as a result of that meeting BCS has partnered with them and offered use of our event space along with a donation of £500.



COMMONWEALTH DAY 11th MARCH

The annual fly-the-flag celebration took place on 11th March outside City Hall and was attended by our Patron together with the High Sheriff of Bristol, the Rev Richard Pendlebury, Mayor of Bristol, Mr Marvin Rees, Lord Mayor of Bristol, Cllr Paul Goggin and the Very Revd Dr Mandy Ford, Dean of Bristol. Also in attendance were community and faith leaders along with representatives from the Police, Army Cadets and the Fire Service.

We were delighted to see David Nguyo, Vice-Chair of the Kenyan Association in Bristol and Marian Siawanda, Chair of the Sierra Leone Bristol Association, both organisations having recently partnered with BCS.

The theme for Commonwealth Day 2024, and the subsequent Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Samoa, was ‘One Resilient Common Future’.

The flag was proudly raised by Commonwealth Scholar Nicholla Chan from Fiji who was studying Economics at the University of Bristol.

Our Patron read the King’s speech to the Commonwealth with the Affirmation read by the Lord Mayor and prayers by the Dean of Bristol. Afterwards guests retired to the Lord Mayor’s Reception Room in City Hall where light refreshments were sponsored by BCS. The event, which is jointly organised by BCS, Bristol City Council and the Lord Lieutenantcy, was extremely well supported with around 65 guests. The Society donated £190 towards the occasion.



GLENSIDE HOSPITAL MUSEUM TEA PARTY 6TH JUNE

Glenside Hospital Museum, which was founded by consultant psychiatrist Dr Donal F Early, is now curated by a dedicated team of volunteers and aims to educate visitors about the history of mental healthcare. Its unique collection of objects and photographs creates a vivid story of life in the hospital which is explored with compassion and dignity.

The Museum is located within the hospital’s church which was built exclusively for patients in 1888. The stained glass windows and altar carvings are of particular note as they were specially designed to give the congregation hope and a belief in recovery.

Glenside once housed one thousand patients but was eventually closed in 1994. A high percentage of its healthcare professionals came from Commonwealth countries and on 6th June BCS was delighted to collaborate with the Museum in a very special tea party to honour their service. The event was appropriately named “Answering the Call” reflecting the various post war recruitment campaigns aimed mainly at the Caribbean. Around seventy people attended the event and in a particularly moving gesture many of the former nurses had adorned the museum with hand embroidered textiles.

After speeches and a chance to explore the exhibits, guests were treated to afternoon tea which had been specially prepared by BCS. The Society donated £500 towards the event and hopes to work with the Museum again.



SIERRA LEONE BRISTOL ASSOCIATION (SLEBA) AFROFEST 15TH JUNE

Youth members from the Sierra Leone Bristol Association were thrilled to be chosen to showcase their cultural heritage at last year’s Afrofest. This prestigious festival takes place annually at the Trinity Centre and is a celebration of African dance, music, food and art. Participating in this event is a great achievement and offers increased visibility within Bristol’s cultural scene. SLEBA needed to raise £300 to buy costumes and provide transport for their performers and BCS was delighted to donate the full amount.



BRISTOL COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INCLUSION DAY 10TH JULY

On 10th July members of the BCS Executive attended at a special Community Awareness Day kindly organised by Punjabi Forum International (PFI). The event welcomed Bristol's new Lord Mayor, Cllr Andrew Varney, and thanked the previous Lord Mayor, Cllr Paul Goggin, for his service to the city. Our Patron was also in attendance along with community leaders, representatives from Bristol Multi Faith Forum and a number of city Councillors. It was a wonderful opportunity for stakeholders to exchange ideas on ways to make Bristol a more inclusive city and there were some truly inspiring speeches. The Society donated £150 towards this event and the continued work of PFI.

BRISTOL PHOTO FESTIVAL 16TH TO 20TH OCTOBER

BCS was very pleased to support this annual event which last year was entitled "The World a Wave". The festival explored global connections and in particular migration focusing on the experiences of Britain's Caribbean diaspora from the early days of the Windrush through to post Brexit Britain. It also examined the psychological impact of migration for those who came here and those they left behind.

This is a locally grounded event delivering long term educational programmes to culturally underserved communities and community spaces. It regularly draws around 200,000 visitors and the exhibitions, alongside a wide programme of accompanying events, is free to everyone.

Sponsors of the exhibition included the Royal Photographic Society and the British Council along with BCS which donated £500.



Photograph courtesy of Andrew Jackson

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL ACCESS APPEAL – OCTOBER

Bristol Cathedral launched its “Access for All” appeal which will create level access for people with mobility issues and enable them to enjoy the Cathedral, its café and the many events and exhibitions it hosts throughout the year. BCS donated £150 towards their goal.

ATLAN FILM FESTIVAL 28TH SEPTEMBER

ATLAN (which stands for Africans Transforming Lives and Narratives) was a showcase event for emerging talent from both Bristol and South African film makers.

It began with screenings in Durban South Africa and Bristol UK where the energies of these two UNESCO-recognised cities in Film and Literature converged. On 28 September 2024, the Bristol community was treated to a captivating selection of South African short films at Easton Community Centre while Durban audiences experienced some of Bristol's finest shorts at the KZN Tourism and Film Authority Cinema in Musgrave.

Film is an excellent medium to promote better international understanding and the initiative exposed both film makers and audiences to new cultures and experiences. Most importantly it increased awareness of the social and environmental challenges faced by both communities.

Film and film makers screened at the event:-

- **The River Gives** by conservationist Mlungisi Ntuli
- **Meeting The Tides** by Tembisa Jordaan
- **SENT** by Ayanda Halimana
- **Make A Wish** by Minenhle Luthuli
- **Grassland** by Nature Environment Wildlife Filmmaking
- **Who Remembers** by Marchez Sullaphen

Around one hundred people attended the screenings in Easton which was sponsored jointly by Ujima Radio and BCS which donated £1,000 to the project. It is hoped ATLAN will be expanded to create an annual cultural exchange between the two cities.



Photograph courtesy of Kelvin Williams.

CACEFU KIDS MARCHING BAND MOZAMBIQUE

The Society continued its support for The CACEFU Kids Marching Band from the Zambezia School in Alto Molocue, Mozambique. The band was formed by former Commonwealth Scholar, David Muassua, who recognised the value of music to young people and is passionate about making it accessible to all.

The Band not only brings a great deal of joy to the students but also empowers them to attain their full potential both musically and as individuals and they regularly perform at prestigious ceremonies for dignitaries and government officials. The Society is very proud to sponsor this grassroots initiative and last year donated £300 which will help towards much needed musical instruments and uniforms.



FANCY FINANCE

In April BCS offered support to this newly formed community project led by Jasmyne Wilkinson who works for the Malcolm X Centre.

Fancy Finance began with a series of informal meetings by women of Commonwealth heritage in each other's homes where they shared information on employment, education and wellbeing. Topics have since expanded to typically include investments, grants, insurance and general financial management as well as access to better healthcare and nutrition.

Through collective support the women discuss their goals and with diligent research aim to turn them into reality with subjects explored through film, guest speakers and practical demonstrations.

BCS was very impressed with the dedication and professionalism of this initiative which was bringing about positive change for ethnic minority women. The Society offered them a safe space to hold their monthly meetings representing a donation of £1,200.

SLEBA AND SIERRA WOMEN INDEPENDENT GROUP FESTIVE APPEAL

The Sierra Leone Bristol Association in conjunction with Sierra Women Independent Group set about raising funds to buy gifts for children, elders and vulnerable individuals in their community who would otherwise go without. Their committees worked tirelessly not only to raise funds but to identify those in need and distribute the gifts in time for Christmas. BCS donated £500 towards this most worthwhile appeal which brought smiles to so many faces.

BRISTOL LINK WITH BEIRA (BLB)

BCS have good links with this organisation which represents Bristol's only twinning with a Commonwealth City. BLB was formed in 1990 when the two cities signed a friendship agreement to celebrate the end of apartheid in neighbouring South Africa. Since then BLB has promoted networks between Bristol and Beira to empower and benefit both communities and to foster cultural exchange. BCS donated £250 towards their annual calendar appeal with all funds going directly to the charity's continued work.

OTHER ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 27TH APRIL

The AGM was well supported with around 25 members in attendance. Dr Barnard had prepared a power point presentation of the previous year's highlights which was very well received and afterwards members enjoyed a complimentary buffet lunch.

BRISTOL LEGACY FOUNDATION 15TH MARCH

On 15th March BCS was privileged to attend the official launch of the Bristol Legacy Foundation (BLF) which took place at M Shed.

BLF's objective is to examine racial justice and the future of African heritage communities in our city as well as Bristol's history in the context of the Transatlantic Trafficking of Enslaved Africans (TTEA). Its vision is to create a dedicated cultural, educational and visitor experience to be called "Story House" which would chronicle the lives and futures of those affected by enslavement.

Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol, said at the launch: "For decades Bristol has avoided meaningful acknowledgment of its involvement in the Transatlantic Trafficking of Enslaved Africans. Through a wide coalition of interests, Bristol is now primed to play a leading role nationally and internationally."

As part of its on-going memorialisation efforts, BLF had appointed Bolanle Tajudeen as the Public Art Commissioner to create permanent and impactful installations commemorating African Heritage Communities. A space by the Cascade Steps had been confirmed as the site for the first memorial.

Taking the stage, Cllr Asher Craig, Chair of the Bristol Legacy Foundation and then Deputy Mayor, was delighted to announce that B Bond Warehouse was the proposed site for Story House. She said: "Our vision for B Bond warehouse is to create a world-class Story House or museum that not only educates but also inspires positive change and a collective commitment to social and racial justice."

It was a truly uplifting event with around 300 attendees, which brought together stakeholders from all sectors and walks of life. Cllr Craig finished by saying:

“Today’s launch of the Bristol Legacy Foundation marks a pivotal moment in our collective journey towards healing, reconciliation and justice.”



GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY ANNUAL BBQ 30th JUNE

BCS was delighted to receive an invitation from newly appointed Trustee, Mr Athanasios Lazarides, to this annual event at the community’s venue in St Pauls. The Greek Orthodox Church at the very heart of the community was open to visitors and was a truly magnificent sight with an array of candles and stunning icons.

After exploring the church guests were treated to a feast of traditional Greek Cypriot food and famed hospitality. Above all it offered a wonderful opportunity to engage with the culture, faith and rich history of this Commonwealth country. We are most grateful to Laz for his kind invitation.

KENYAN ASSOCIATION IN BRISTOL BBQ 13TH JULY

Members of the Executive were also delighted to be invited to this event having recently partnered with the Kenyan Association in Bristol.

Despite a rather disappointing summer the sun shone brightly as guests enjoyed traditional food, music and cultural presentations. There were a variety of interesting stalls promoting other organisations and it was an excellent opportunity for BCS to get to know its new partners. Joining us for this event were two students from Kenya and one Commonwealth Scholar from Uganda who were residents of Hodgkin House.



SIKH AWARENESS DAY 17TH NOVEMBER

Members of BCS were graciously invited to attend the Gurdwara in St George for a Sikh Awareness Day where members of the Sikh community welcomed everyone who wished to learn more about their religion and culture. Representatives from Bristol Multi Faith Forum were in attendance as well as the Lord Mayor of Bristol, Cllr Andrew Varney. Guests enjoyed Langar which is a free communal meal of vegetarian dishes available to all, regardless of background or religious beliefs, reflecting Sikhism's selfless service to the community. Sikh Awareness Days are held several times a year and are a wonderful way to explore this culture. Their hospitality and contributions to society are well known and both were most evident at this event. We would like to thank Punjabi Forum International for their kind invitation.

COMMONWEALTH WRITERS READERS GROUP 26TH NOVEMBER

This long established book group meets each month under the guidance of BCS member, Mrs Valerie Davey, to explore works by authors from around the Commonwealth. Each year they read the winners of the Commonwealth short story competition along with a wide range of other works. The group is always open to new members and membership of BCS is not a requirement if you wish to join them.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHER CHARITIES

Throughout the year the Society offered use of its facilities to other charities and community groups including African Voices Forum, Bristol Beira Link, Beyond the Fringe Theatre Group and Fancy Finance as well as a number of local residents' associations. BCS is delighted to offer free or discounted room hire to community and charitable organisations and we invite those with similar values to get in touch.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities and Governance

The Trustees are responsible for their annual report and the presentation of the accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the incoming resources and application of those resources to the charity during the year and of the state of affairs at the end of the financial year. In preparing these accounts the Trustees are required to:

- ensure that suitable accounting policies are established and applied consistently
- make judgements and estimates which are reasonable and prudent
- state whether the applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended accounting practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems and controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993 (amended 2006).

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for their proper application as required by charity law, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charity is operating efficiently and effectively
- all assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition and are properly applied
- proper records are maintained and financial information used within the charity, or for publication, is reliable
- the charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Internal controls over all forms of commitment and expenditure continue to be refined to improve efficiency. Processes are in place to ensure that performance is monitored and that appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed regularly by both the Executive management and the Board of Trustees.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- an annual budget approved by the trustees
- regular consideration by the trustees of financial results, variances from budgets, non- financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews
- delegation of day to day management authority and segregation of duties; and identification and management of risks

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities. Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:-

Kay Barnard

DR KAY BARNARD, CHAIR

Dated 10th April 2025

BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AS AT	31.12.2024	31.12.2023
INCOME	£	£
Membership Subscriptions	1,532	0
Charitable Donations Received	600	0.00
Office rents invoiced	26,400	26,400
Rents - Car Parking	20,230	17,800
Venue Hire, Catering & Bar	14,543	27,506
Dividends & Interest Receivable	1,764	379
Gift Aid	1,302	1,086
Draw down of investments	46,104	0
Coronavirus Covid 19 Grants	0.00	0.00
	112,475	73,171
LESS: OVERHEADS		
Purchases	10,619	9,040
Staff Salaries & Book-Keeping	24,450	24,372
Office & General Administration	3,856	5,467
Upkeep of Premises & Refurbishment	46,104	21,975
Functions & Catering Costs	0	0
Charitable Donations	4,620	4,037
Equipment Hire	0	0
Insurances	4,351	4,399
Sundry Expenses & Retirement Gift	0	0
Accountancy	1,750	1,800
Legal & Professional	1,459	0
Commission	158	581
Bank Charges	60	60
Bad Debt Written Off (unpaid office rents)	22,000	
	119,427	71,731
NET PROFIT(LOSS) before Depreciation and Investments FOR THE YEAR	(6,952)	1,440
MOVEMENT IN VALUATION OF INVESTMENTS		
Surplus (loss) on Valuation of Investments	(56,775)	8,586
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR ENDING 2024	(63,727)	10,026

		31.12.2024	31.12.2023
	NOTES	£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets		356,072	358,351
INVESTMENTS			
Unit Trust Portfolio		54,852	111,627
		410,924	469,978
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		0	0
Debtors & Prepayments		22,000	0
Cash at bank and in Hand		42,677	40,473
Doubtful Debt Provision		(22,000)	
		42,677	40,473
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Amounts falling due after more than one year			
Sundry Creditors & Accruals		(10,000)	(1,151)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		443,601	506,451
CAPITAL & RESERVES			
Unrestricted Funds		443,601	506,451
Approved by the Executive Committee			
<i>Kay Barnard</i>			
DR K BARNARD - CHAIR			

3	TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Computer Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Freehold Property	Total
		£	£	£	£
	COST				
	At 01 January 2024	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	Additions				
	Disposal				
	At 31 December 2024	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	DEPRECIATION				
	At 01 January 2024	5,600	71,043		76,643
	Charge for the year	37	2,242		2,279
	Disposals				
	At 31 December 2024	5637	73,285	0	78,922
	NET BOOK VALUE				
	At 31 December 2024	150	8,966	346,956	356,072
	At 31 December 2023	187	11,208	346,956	358,351
4	INVESTMENTS			31.12.2024	31.12.2023
				£	£
	Investments			54,852	111,627

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The investments were valued on the 31 December 2024 and the surplus on revaluation has been credited with reserves, with opening and closing market value of investments reconciled as follows:

	£
Balance at 01 January 2024	111,627
Dividends and interest income received in year	0
Cash drawdown in year and prior year adjustments	(56,775)
Movement in valuation of investments	
Balance at 31 December 2024	54,852

			31.12.2024		31.12.2023
5	RESERVES		£		£
	Balance as 01 January 2024		518,432		508,406
	General surplus (deficit) for the year		(18,056)		1,440
	Movement in valuation in investments		(56,775)		8,586
	Balance at 31 December 2024		443,601		518,432
6	STAFF COSTS				
	Salaries and other Costs		24,450		24,372
7	CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE & DONATIONS				
	During the year the Society expended the following		4,620		4,037
	Amounts on charitable works and student subsidies				
	Other Donations				

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1048637

Accounts



THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022
CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Number: 1048637

Patron: Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Bristol

President: Professor Evelyn Welch, MBE, Vice-Chancellor University of Bristol

Chairman: Dr K Barnard

Vice Chairman: Mr C Serle

Treasurer: Ms J Purdy

Members of the Executive Committee:

Dr K Barnard
Mr M Barnard
Mr R Elms
Mrs J Kirk
Mr C Eddison-Cogan
Mr T Frewin
Ms J Purdy
Mr C Serle
Mr S Tshabalala

Address: Commonwealth House
14 Whiteladies Road
Clifton
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BS8 1PD

**Independent
Examiner:** CEK Accounts
Apartment 1, Bamburgh House
Bamburgh Road
Westerhope
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE5 5PZ

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
For the Year Ended 31st December 2022

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE
TRUSTEES OF THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

We report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act") and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

The examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
For the Year Ended 31st December 2022

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Executive Committee has the honour to present the 27th Annual Report of the Bristol Commonwealth Society.

Reference and administrative information

The Bristol Commonwealth Society is a registered charity (No. 1048637). Its registered office is shown on the information sheet. The Trustees who served during the year are noted on the information sheet.

Objects, aims, and activities

The Society is a charity which exists to advance education and to promote within the United Kingdom and overseas the increase and spread of knowledge respecting the peoples and countries of the Commonwealth.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

This is through a constitution adopted 4th March 2008 as amended April 2012.

Governing bodies

The Board of Trustees and Executive Committee is responsible for the overall governance of the charity.

Recruitment and training of trustees

The charity's trustees and committee members are appointed by the Board of Trustees after due consideration being given to eligibility, personal competence, specialist skills and local availability. New Trustees and committee members are inducted into the workings of the charity by the Board of Trustees.

Risk management

The Trustees and Executive Committee are responsible for the management of the risks faced by the Trust. A formal review of the charity's risk management processes is undertaken on an annual basis. The key controls used by the charity include:

- formal agendas for all committee and board activities
- detailed terms of reference for all committees
- comprehensive strategic planning, budgeting and management accounting
- established organisational structure and lines of reporting
- formal written policies
- clear authorisation and approval levels

Through the risk management processes established for the Trust, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that the system can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

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THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Chair is pleased to report that the Society remains in a strong position whilst continuing to support a wide range of charitable initiatives and she would like to thank each of the Trustees for their commitment towards this end.

The Trustees extend their thanks to the Society's Chair Dr Barnard, Vice-Chair Mr Serle and Treasurer Ms Purdy for their expert guidance throughout the year.

The Chair and Trustees also express their gratitude to the Society's members for their contribution over many years.

Patron

The Executive extends its thanks to Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, for her highly valued patronage and dedication to the Society.

President

The Society is delighted to welcome Professor Evelyn Welch, MBE, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol, as its new President. The Committee and members look forward to a long and valued association.

Accountants

The Committee wishes to thank Ms Kerby of CEK accounts for her diligence on the Society's behalf.

COMMONWEALTH HOUSE

Health & Safety, Licensing and Events

Mrs Smith continues to identify maintenance concerns at Commonwealth House ensuring health and safety requirements are met for members, clients and tenants. She maintains an up to date Food Safety certificate, is DPS (licensee) for the premises, registered Fire Officer and acts as events co-ordinator, catering manager and administrator. She is pleased to report that the premises retain a five star hygiene rating.

Room Hire, Car Park & Office Rental

Venue hire has shown a marked increase since the Club Room's refurbishment in 2020 and the resulting income has almost covered the cost of those works.

Parking spaces let to a nearby business continue to generate an income of around £1,000 per month with minimal administration and no additional overheads for the Society.

Both the first and second floor offices of Commonwealth House remain let to commercial tenants at market rents.

Quick Financial Overview to 31st December 2022

Membership subscriptions for the year:	£1,185
Revenue received from the car park:	£14,822
Income from venue hire, catering and the bar:	£15,900
Rental income from the upper floor offices:	£26,400
The Society's investments at 31 st December 2022:	£103,041
Charitable donations made in 2022:	£4,250

Increased income from the car park and room hire has enabled the Society to donate more than ever to charitable projects as well as carrying out essential maintenance and upgrades to the premises.

Reserves policy

The Trustees believe the Society's level of reserves to be sufficient to meet its day to day requirements. As a matter of policy, each year the Trustees review the value of the reserves required to be held in investments, cash and cash equivalents not restricted to any particular purpose. The Committee considers the charity's exposure to the risk of any significant loss of income and to the risk of unforeseen expenditure, which cannot be mitigated by executive action, and the degree of the risk ascribed to each such event is assessed.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES 2022

BILLY CHIP

On 26th January the Society met with team members from Bristol based charity “Billy Chip” which provides food and warm drinks to the city’s many homeless and rough sleepers. Their vision, along with the charity’s unique donation platform, greatly impressed us and we were pleased to offer £500 towards their work.

The Billy Chip initiative offers a safe way for the public to give financial help to rough sleepers without the fear of it being misused on drugs or alcohol. The recipient can redeem the specially created token (pictured below) in participating shops and takeaways up to the value of £2.00. The scheme was invented by Billy Abernethy-Hope, a twenty year old ambulance driver from Bristol who having supported the homeless at Christmas was disheartened by the lack of help they received for the rest of the year. Sadly Billy died before his dream became a reality but his family set about launching Billy Chip in his memory and it is now widely used in Bristol and other cities.

The Society is delighted to announce that since our first meeting Billy Chip has been introduced to Australia and has received interest from other Commonwealth countries. Two of its team members have also been selected for the Queen’s Commonwealth Trust Award. Congratulations to this truly inspirational Bristol born charity.



Meghan Abernethy-Hope holds a Billy Chip

COMMONWEALTH DAY

Cathedral Service

In recognition of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, Bristol Cathedral held a special Commonwealth Day service in the presence of HRH Duke of Kent together with our Patron and faith and community leaders from across the city. The service was led by the Bishops of Bristol and Swindon.

The Cathedral particularly wanted musicians of Commonwealth heritage to play at the service and tasked BCS with finding suitable candidates. We were subsequently delighted to be introduced to the Johnny Kalsi Bhangra Drummers whom the Cathedral commissioned for the occasion. Johnny has connections to the Punjab and Kenya and is a prominent musician and composer who in 2013 curated the music for Her Majesty the Queen's Coronation Gala.

In 1991 he formed the Johnny Kalsi Dohl Foundation which raises money for a variety of charities and he is part of the Sikh Welfare Awareness Team helping those living below the poverty line regardless of faith or heritage. The Society is most grateful to Johnny for taking the time from his busy schedule to perform on Commonwealth Day and to Mr Mohindra Chowdhry of Punjabi Forum International for facilitating the introduction. The performance was sensational and everyone in the Cathedral was captivated by the exotic beat of Bhangra. The Society donated £550 towards the on-going work of the Johnny Kalsi Dohl Foundation and we hope to collaborate with him again in the future.



Johnny Kalsi Bhangra Drummers outside of Bristol Cathedral

Fly the Flag Ceremony

Prior to the Cathedral service, the Commonwealth Flag was raised on College Green by George Tsitati from Kenya. George, who was studying for a Master's Degree in Climate Change Science and Policy, was awarded a prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship in 2021 and was also selected as student representative for the University of Bristol at the COP 26 summit that year.

BCS was delighted to nominate him as flag raiser for this annual ceremony which was attended by the Lord Lieutenant, Mayor Marvin Rees and the Lord Mayor of Bristol along with community representatives and faith leaders.



George Tsitati from Kenya raises the Commonwealth flag in Bristol

BIG JUBILEE LUNCH 5th JUNE

To mark the Platinum Jubilee, Bristol Cathedral held an activity day on College Green featuring music, street theatre and food amongst many other attractions. The event, which was free to the public, brought together Bristol's diverse communities for a wonderful day of fun, unity and celebration. Throughout the day funds were raised on behalf of Heart of BS13, a charity addressing food poverty and social deprivation in Hartcliffe, where the City Farm is creating a space to learn about growing, cooking and sustainability.

Fruit and vegetables and beautiful cut flowers can be purchased directly from the farm or its website which helps to provide education and training opportunities for the community. The Society formed part of the event's planning Committee and also made a donation of £250.

WINDRUSH DAY

Nearly 100 people gathered at Commonwealth House to share an innovative evening of interactive art as part of a collaborative event between BCS and Bristol based charity Black Artists on the Move.

The immersive experience entitled “Looking Back in Anger, Looking Back in Pride” transported guests from the Caribbean to the early post war years of the UK through visual imagery, sound, music and the power of imagination. It was a compelling and sometimes uncomfortable exploration of the past and offered a view of social history through a different lens.

For many who attended it was also a celebration of their forebears’ achievements against unimaginable hardship and prejudice while for those who knew little about Windrush it was an epiphany.

Jamaican folk culture group Tan Teddy, poet Antoinette and singer Jessica Ncube gave evocative performances while our Patron was invited to share her own thoughts on Windrush.

The evening ended with a proud and moving rendition of “Redemption” and afterwards guests were encouraged to express their emotions by contributing to a collective collage. BCS sponsored this acclaimed event for £400.



Tan Teddy perform at Windrush Day, Commonwealth House 22nd June 2022

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARS NETWORKING EVENT

On 17th June Professor Atenchong Talleh Nkobou, lecturer in International and Rural Development at the Royal Agricultural University of Cirencester, gave a talk to Commonwealth Scholars on the political economy of agrarian systems, land tenure and food security including human rights-based approaches to development.

The talk had been organised in conjunction with BCS by the Scholars Regional Co-ordinator, Frederick Omara from Uganda, who was himself studying agriculture at the Royal Cirencester University.

The event was very well received by the Scholars who had travelled from as far afield as Exeter to attend and afterwards they enjoyed lunch and networking opportunities with their fellow students from around the Commonwealth. The Society donated £200 towards the event.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

BCS Sponsorship Scheme: Kay and Gina met with the Diversity and Community Engagement team at GCC which, since the appointment of their new Chair, has been keen to engage with young people from minority ethnic and under-privileged communities living in inner city areas. Many young people from this socio-economic group lack the opportunity to play cricket or attend matches and less still to pursue it professionally. This year we will be discussing a sponsorship framework with the Club to support this goal.

GCC Jubilee Celebration: Last summer we donated £650 towards GCC's Jubilee celebration which was free to attend for under-represented and disadvantaged groups in Bristol. BCS also arranged musical entertainment from Bristol R & B band Private Joys, which played well past their schedule when heavy rain stopped play. We extend our special thanks to the band for going above and beyond!



Private Joys rocking Gloucestershire County Cricket Ground 3rd June 2022

PUNJABI FORUM INTERNATIONAL (PFI)

Punjabi Forum International is a charity representing the Sikh community in Bristol and BCS is very pleased to have forged close links with them. For several years Committee members have been honoured to attend its Remembrance Day services at Castle Park where PFI were instrumental in commissioning a dedicated Sikh war memorial, one of very few in the country. Donations to PFI help support the many charitable objectives undertaken by the Sikh community which is invested in giving back to society. BCS donates £100 annually to this charity.

ST PAULS CARNIVAL

In 2020 the Society was made a Friend of St Pauls Carnival and we continue to support this organisation which, though famous for its street festival, also offers valuable educational and outreach programmes across the City. Its Committee seeks to promote social cohesion and cultural understanding through talks, exhibitions and a variety of other experiences in schools and community centres as well as offering support to elders, many of whom are of the “Windrush Generation”.

Last year marked the 60th anniversary of Jamaican independence and instead of the familiar festival the Carnival team hosted smaller, accessible events in different parts of the city such as the Windrush Library where visitors heard historically crucial stories from that generation. There was also an Elders’ Brunch at the Malcolm X Centre and a community picnic in Portland Square where members of the public enjoyed traditional Caribbean food and music from local artists such as Rider Shafique and Da Fuchaman.

It was an amazing way to honour the local community and all those who have made Carnival possible over the last 54 years. The Society donates £500 annually to this Bristol based charity and continues to work closely with its Committee.



Levi Roots, Chairman of St Pauls Carnival

PAKISTAN FLOOD RELIEF APPEAL

The monsoon season of mid-June brought unprecedented flooding to Pakistan which intensified throughout the ensuing months submerging whole villages and killing at least 1,700 people. Huge areas of agricultural land were severely affected, with crops and livestock swept away bringing inevitable long term starvation and water borne diseases. The United Nations Secretary General called it a “climate catastrophe” and appealed to the global community to give five times more aid than usual for this stricken Commonwealth country. In response the Society donated £300 through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) which brings together leading charities skilled at raising funds quickly and deploying the correct aid in life and death situations.

CACEFU KIDS MARCHING BAND

The CACEFU Kids Marching Band from the Zambezia school in Alto Molocue in Mozambique was the brain-child of former Bristol Commonwealth Scholar, David Muassua, who recognised the value of music to young people.

In 2018 his dream became a reality and the Band, which aims to empower students and give them the confidence to attain their full potential, was formed. The pioneering Zambezia School encourages students to access higher education not only in Mozambique but also the UK, Canada and Australia and its specialist team assists with university and scholarship applications.

The Society is very proud to sponsor this community led initiative which gives so much pleasure and pride to the students of Zambezia. Last year BCS donated £300 which will help towards much needed musical instruments and uniforms. The Band is always grateful for donations, no matter how small, and new and used instruments (particularly wind) are especially welcomed.



Cacefu Kids Marching Band, Mozambique Independence Day 25th June 2022

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARS WELCOME PARTY

On the 17th December BCS was delighted to welcome the new arrivals of South West Commonwealth Scholars and to meet their Regional Co-ordinator, Precious Ozemoya from Nigeria.

Twenty six Scholars attended the welcome party with one travelling all the way from Portsmouth. It was one of the coldest days of the year but the Scholars, who were certainly not used to sub-zero temperatures, soon warmed up with a very spicy stew!

After lunch the students enjoyed dancing to sounds from their respective home countries and each Scholar spoke of their personal journey to scholarship. Our Patron and Committee members were delighted to embrace the truly infectious fun. The Society donated £300 towards the occasion and will be hosting further Scholars' events for 2023.

PROCLAMATION OF KING CHARLES

On 11th September our Chair represented the Society at a Proclamation ceremony for the new King which took place outside of City Hall. The Proclamation was read by the High Sheriff from the City's historic Proclamation carriage and the ceremony was opened by our Patron.

TURNING POINT

The Society was approached by a not for profit organisation called Sweet Patootee which produces documentary films and performance art based on heritage history. Their Artistic Director was seeking contributors and a space for their latest work entitled "Turning Point" which explores the neglected history of the British ruled Caribbean during the 1920's.

The performance which features professional actors and community participants includes the real experiences of black women and men told through archive imagery, text and rare folk songs.

BCS was delighted to facilitate introductions and share its contacts within the Bristol Caribbean community which helped to enable the exhibition. Turning Point began in November 2022 and is at Bristol Museum until 29th May with free entry.

FOOD BANK

Commonwealth House continued to act as a collection hub for various food banks in the city although the Society is now requesting clothing or monetary donations only due to lack of suitable food storage. We began the initiative during the early days of the pandemic which significantly affected those already on or below the poverty line. Since then energy and food costs have considerably increased and the need for food banks has not diminished. The Society will continue to offer what help it can.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND OTHER CHARITIES

Throughout the year the Society offered free room hire to other charities and community groups including African Voices Forum, Black Artists on the Move, Bristol Beira Link, Beyond the Fringe Theatre Group and Frank Water as well a number of residents' associations.

BCS is delighted to offer complimentary or discounted use of its facilities to community and charitable organisations and we invite those with similar values to get in touch.

WEBSITE

Last year the Society launched a new website which better reflects the Society's image and objectives. We would like to thank Carolyn Anderson of Media Tube for designing the site at a discounted rate.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities and Governance

The Trustees are responsible for their annual report and the presentation of the accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the incoming resources and application of those resources to the charity during the year and of the state of affairs at the end of the financial year. In preparing these accounts the Trustees are required to:

- ensure that suitable accounting policies are established and applied consistently
- make judgements and estimates which are reasonable and prudent
- state whether the applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended accounting practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems and controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993 (amended 2006).

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for their proper application as required by charity law, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charity is operating efficiently and effectively
- all assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition and are properly applied
- proper records are maintained and financial information used within the charity, or for publication, is reliable
- the charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Internal controls over all forms of commitment and expenditure continue to be refined to improve efficiency. Processes are in place to ensure that performance is monitored and that appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed regularly by both the Executive management and the Board of Trustees.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- an annual budget approved by the trustees
- regular consideration by the trustees of financial results, variances from budgets, non- financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews
- delegation of day to day management authority and segregation of duties; and identification and management of risks

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities. Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:-

..... Dated

DR KAY BARNARD, CHAIR

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AS AT	31.12.2022	31.12.2021
INCOME	£	£
Membership Subscriptions	1,185	1,421
Donations	0.00	980
Rents Received & Tenants Contributions	26,400	26,400
Rents - Car Parking	14,822	13,090
Room Hire	13,414	2,614
Functions & Catering Income	2,487	2,169
Dividends & Interest Receivable	112	2
Gift Aid	1,086	1,086
Coronavirus Covid 19 Grants	0.00	16,942
	59,506	64,704
LESS: OVERHEADS		
Purchases	8,561	4,432
Staff Salaries & Book-Keeping	21,300	19,034
Office & General Administration	3,164	6,934
Upkeep of Premises	20,246	18,312
Functions & Catering Costs	0	0
Charitable Expenditure & Donations	4,250	1030
Equipment Hire	0	0
Insurances	2,891	-8,289
Sundry Expenses & Retirement Gift	0	0
Accountancy	1,145	1,320
Legal & Professional	360	180
Commission	460	643
Bank Charges	73	91
	62,450	43,687
NET PROFIT(LOSS) before Depreciation and Investments FOR THE YEAR	(2,944)	21,017
DEPRECIATION FOR THE YEAR		
Depreciation	(3,560)	(5,910)
MOVEMENT IN VALUATION OF INVESTMENTS		
Surplus (Loss) on Valuation of investments	(10,655)	(1,275)
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	(17,159)	13,832

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022

		31.12.2022	31.12.2021
	NOTES	£	£
FIXED ASSETS	3		
Tangible Assets		361,200	364,760
INVESTMENTS	4		
Unit Trust Portfolio		103,041	113,696
		464,241	478,456
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		0	400
Debtors & Prepayments		0	0
Cash at bank and in Hand		38,624	60,288
		38,624	60,688
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Amounts falling due after more than one year		10,000	10,000
Sundry Creditors & Accruals			5,288
		10,000	15,288
NET CURRENT ASSETS		492,865	523,856
CAPITAL & RESERVES			
Unrestricted Funds	5	492,865	523,856
Approved by the Executive Committee on			
K Barnard - Chairperson			

The notes on Pages 17 to 18 form part of these Accounts

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022

3	TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Computer Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Freehold Property	Total
		£	£	£	£
	COST				
	At 01 January 2022	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	Additions				
	Disposal				
	At 31 December 2022	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	DEPRECIATION				
	At 01 January 2022	5,495	64,739		70,234
	Charge for the year	58	3,502		3,560
	Disposals				
	At 31 December 2022	5,553	68,241	0	73,794
	NET BOOK VALUE				
	At 31 December 2022	234	14,010	346,956	361,200
	At 31 December 2021	292	17,512	346,956	364,760
4	INVESTMENTS			31.12.2022	31.12.2021
				£	£
	Investments			103,041	113,696

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The investments were valued on the 31 December 2022 and the surplus on revaluation has been credited with reserves, with opening and closing market value of investments reconciled as follows:

	£
Balance at 01 January 2022	113,696
Dividends and interest income received in year	0
Cash drawdown in year and prior year adjustments	0
Movement in valuation of investments	(10,655)
Balance at 31 December 2022	103,041

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022

			31.12.2022		31.12.2021
5	RESERVES		£		£
	Balance as 01 January 2022		510,024		482,786
	General surplus (deficit) for the year		(6,504)		18,589
	Movement in valuation in investments		(10,655)		8,649
	Balance at 31 December 2022		492,865		510,024
6	STAFF COSTS				
	Salaries and other Costs		21,300		19,034
7	CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE & DONATIONS				
	During the year the Society expended the following		4,250		1,030
	Amounts on charitable works and student subsidies				
	Other Donations				90

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1048637

Accounts

BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2021
CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Number: 1048637

Patron: Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Bristol

President: Professor Hugh Brady, Vice Chancellor, University of Bristol

Chairman: Dr K Barnard

Vice Chairman: Mr C Serle

Treasurer: Ms J Purdy

Members of the Executive Committee:

Dr K Barnard
Mr M Barnard
Mr R Elms
Mrs J Kirk
Mr C Eddison-Cogan
Mr T Frewin
Ms J Purdy
Mr C Serle
Mr S Tshabalala

Address: Commonwealth House
14 Whiteladies Road
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1PD

**Independent
Examiner:** CEK Accounts
17 Sycamore Close
Nailsea
BS48 2UZ

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE
TRUSTEES OF THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY**

We report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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- examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
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For the Year Ended 31st December 2021

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The key controls used by the charity include:

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- formal written policies
- clear authorisation and approval levels

Through the risk management processes established for the Trust, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that the system can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

Report for 2021 from the Executive Committee

The Executive has continued to safeguard the interests of the Society during the pandemic whilst fulfilling its role as a charity. The Committee wishes to record its thanks to Dr Barnard for her expert guidance.

Dr Barnard is pleased to report that the Society remains in a strong position and she commends each member of the Committee for their dedication in such unprecedented circumstances.

The Chair and the Committee would also like to extend a special thank you to the Society's members for their continued support.

Treasurer

The Committee is delighted to announce the appointment of Ms Janis Purdy as the Society's new Treasurer. As a solicitor and Treasurer of the South Western Law Societies, Ms Purdy is eminently qualified for the position and has enthusiastically embraced her new role within BCS.

Accountants

The Committee extends its thanks to CEK accounts who were appointed Independent Examiners for the Society in September 2020.

Financial Overview to 31st December 2021

During the year the Society received £1,086 in Gift Aid together with Coronavirus grants in the sum of £16,942. Membership subscriptions for the year were £1,421 and revenue from the car park amounted to £13,090. Income derived from room hire and catering was £2,614 and £2,169 respectively. Rents from commercial offices at Commonwealth House amounted to £28,800 during the year. The Society's insurance policy provided cover for Business Interruption and a settlement of £8,289 was received in respect of the pandemic. The Society's accounts remain in a healthy position.

Reserves policy

Free reserves available for use by the charity are deemed to be those that are readily realisable. The charity's reserves amounted to £113,696 as of 31st December 2021.

The Trustees believe this level of reserves to be sufficient to meet the day to day requirements.

As a matter of policy, each year the Trustees review the value of the reserves required to be held in investments, cash and cash equivalents not restricted to any particular purpose. The Committee considers the charity's exposure to the risk of any significant loss of income and to the risk of unforeseen expenditure, which cannot be mitigated by executive action, and the degree of the risk ascribed to each such event is assessed.

COMMONWEALTH HOUSE

Health & Safety, Licensing, Events & Administration

Mrs Smith continues to identify maintenance concerns at Commonwealth House ensuring that health and safety requirements are met for both members and tenants. She maintains an up to date Food Safety certificate, Fire safety certificate and is DPS (licensee) for the premises. Mrs Smith continues to act as programme co-ordinator and Branch Manager.

Room Hire & Car Park

Income from room hire and catering was severely restricted by the pandemic however a small profit was made from both of these resources in 2021.

In 2020 parking spaces were offered for rental to a local business which to date this has yielded an average income of £1,000 a month. The Society incurs no overheads through this arrangement.

Tenants

Both the first and second floor offices of Commonwealth House remain let to commercial tenants.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Commonwealth Scholars & Commonwealth Day

The Society continued to offer support to Commonwealth Scholars and last March a truly inspirational online event was held to celebrate Commonwealth Day. The Lord Lieutenant together with our Chair and Mrs Kirk welcomed the Scholars and engaged with them throughout the meeting while later the Mayor of Bristol, Mr Marvin Rees, addressed the forum.

As an Executive Committee member of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Mayor Rees was particularly invested in this event and his specially prepared speech was well received by the students. Michael Aregbesola, a Scholar from Nigeria, had also been asked to write a blog for the Mayor's Facebook page and the result was an uplifting essay entitled "Bristol City and Amazing Symbols of Peace". This went live ahead of Commonwealth Day and was shared by citizens of our city and beyond.

The Scholars enthusiastically discussed the 2021 Commonwealth theme of "Delivering a Common Future" and were expertly led through the agenda by Micheal. Above all, the event presented a wonderful opportunity (albeit virtually) for the students to engage with each other after considerable isolation during the

pandemic. The Society was delighted to facilitate the meeting which highlighted the global possibilities of Zoom and the idea of forming a BCS Scholars Alumni association. The Committee will be exploring this in the coming year.

Page 5

Commonwealth Scholars Welcome Party

On December 4th Commonwealth House welcomed twenty three newly arrived Scholars with a buffet lunch and refreshments. The students had travelled from the universities of Exeter, the West of England, Bristol, Bath and Cirencester where their co-ordinator, Frederick Omara, was studying at the Royal Agricultural University. It was truly gratifying to once again host an in person event and the students thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We will be planning further events for the Scholars in the summer and autumn this year. The event represented a donation of £180.00.

St Pauls Carnival

The Society was delighted to have been made a Friend of St Pauls Carnival which, though famous for its street festival, offers valuable educational programmes to schools and communities.

The history of Carnival dates to the 1960's when residents of St Pauls formed the Commonwealth Coordinated Committee and West Indian Development Committee both of which sought to promote integration and equal opportunities. Indeed these organisations set much of the groundwork for future anti-discrimination laws. It was from this pioneering work that in 1968 Carnival was born as Caribbean and other migrant communities joined together to create an event to celebrate each other's heritage.

Food, dance and music not only brought a sense of fellowship but a reminder of the countries and traditions they had left behind. The first Carnivals were homespun affairs with food often cooked and served from front gardens but the event is now one of the largest cultural festivals in Europe attracting thousands of visitors from the UK and overseas and bringing considerable revenue to the city.

The St Pauls Carnival outreach work has gained great momentum and accolade over the years as evidenced by the appointment of its celebrity new Chair, the musician and entrepreneur, Levi Roots and BCS looks forward to forging even stronger links with its team. During the year the Society donated £500 towards their valuable work.

Bristol Link with Beira (BLB)

BCS continued to recognise the important work of registered charity Bristol Link with Beira by offering our meeting space and facilities to its Committee. BLB has

promoted cultural and educational links with this Commonwealth city since its inception in 1990 when a friendship agreement was signed between the two cities.

Since 2019 BLB has deployed aid and project management to Beira after two devastating cyclones decimated schools, hospitals and other essential infrastructure. Women, children and those living in poverty were disproportionately affected by these extreme weather events and BCS continues to help in its relief effort. The Society's support for BLB represents a donation of some £300.

Page 6

Food Bank

Commonwealth House continued to act as a collection hub for St Nicholas of Tolentino food bank and last year the response to our appeal was so overwhelming that donations were distributed to a number of other food banks across the city.

We hope, in some small way, that our intervention helped to alleviate the plight of those affected by the pandemic and other critical social issues in Bristol. The Society donated £200 to St Nicholas of Tolentino Food Bank during the year.

Punjabi Forum International (PFI)

Punjabi Forum International is a charity representing the Sikh community in Bristol and BCS is very pleased to have forged close links with them. For several years Committee members have been honoured to attend its Remembrance Day services at Castle Park where PFI were instrumental in commissioning a dedicated Sikh war memorial. Donations to PFI help towards charitable objectives undertaken by the Sikh community who are particularly invested in giving back to society. BCS donates £100 annually to this charity.

Katungua Tjitendero

Katungua Tjitendero, a health worker at Southmead hospital, was horrifically attacked whilst walking home from work. He was racially abused by the occupants of a car who then drove into him at speed breaking his nose, leg and cheekbone, leaving him unable to walk and requiring three operations. The Police launched a racially aggravated attempted murder inquiry while Katungua and his family were supported by the charity Stand Against Racism and Inequality (Sari). An appeal to help his recovery went viral to which BCS donated £50.

Community Groups and Other Charities

Throughout the year our refurbished Club Room has proved enormously popular with a variety of community groups and charities including the Royal West of England Academy and the University of the Third Age who, restrictions permitting, have enjoyed regular meetings at Commonwealth House.

Our partner organisation, the Royal African Society, also hosted a Christmas event and their members were delighted to return after a hiatus of almost two years.

BCS offers discretionary or free use of its facilities to all community and charitable organisations and during 2021 this represented a donation of £800.

Membership

In 2021 there were 51 paid up members. There was no increase in the cost of subscriptions.

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Redecoration of the Club Room

The Committee identified lockdown as the perfect opportunity to carry out a much needed refurbishment of the Club Room and work was duly commissioned in 2020. Since then visitors to Commonwealth House have been delighted with the results which in turn has increased interest in the Society. The Committee would like to thank Mark Colfer of Alteriors Design and Build for his vision and craftsmanship.

FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

After two years of restrictions and uncertainty, Mrs Smith has begun work on future events.

A package of incentives for new members will be put together in the form of discounts at restaurants, shops and local attractions.

A commercial coffee machine will be purchased/leased for the bar.

The exterior of the premises along with window frames will be painted.

We will be forming a Bristol Commonwealth Scholars Alumni Society.

Future events will celebrate Commonwealth and local producers of wine, chocolate, coffee and other goods and there will be pop-up experiences with food and music from Commonwealth countries.

A new website will be launched in the very near future.

The Society will be working more closely with the St Pauls Carnival team.

Page 8

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities and Governance

The Trustees are responsible for their annual report and the presentation of the accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the incoming resources and application of those resources to the charity during the year and of the state of affairs at the end of the financial year. In preparing these accounts the Trustees are required to:

- ensure that suitable accounting policies are established and applied consistently
- make judgements and estimates which are reasonable and prudent
- state whether the applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended accounting practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems and controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993 (amended 2006).

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for their proper application as required by charity law, and hence for taking reasonable

steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charity is operating efficiently and effectively
- all assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition and are properly applied
- proper records are maintained and financial information used within the charity, or for publication, is reliable
- the charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Internal controls over all forms of commitment and expenditure continue to be refined to improve efficiency. Processes are in place to ensure that performance is monitored and that appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed regularly by both the Executive management and the Board of Trustees.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- an annual budget approved by the trustees
- regular consideration by the trustees of financial results, variances from budgets, non- financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews
- delegation of day to day management authority and segregation of duties; and identification and management of risks

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:-

.....
Dated

DR KAY BARNARD, CHAIR

BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2021

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT AS AT	31.12.202 1	31.12.20 20
INCOME	£	£
Subscription	1,421	1,638
Donations	980	1,144
Rents Received & Tenants Contributions	26,400	30,456
Rents - Car Parking	13,090	6,083
Room Hire	2,614	2,833
Functions & Catering Income	2,169	1,087
Dividends & Interest Receivable	2	1
Gift Aid	1,086	4,737
Coronavirus Covid 19 Grants	16,942	24,436
	64,704	72,415
LESS: OVERHEADS		
Purchases	4,432	3,092
Staff Salaries & Book-Keeping	19,034	18,430
Office & General Administration	6,934	3,938
Upkeep of Premises	18,312	11,281
Functions & Catering Costs	0	0
Charitable Expenditure & Donations	1030	1,736
Equipment Hire	0	0
Insurances	-8,289	2,762
Sundry Expenses & Retirement Gift	0	0
Accountancy	1,320	2500
Legal & Professional	180	0
Commission	643	2,145
Bank Charges	91	37
	43,687	45,921
NET PROFIT(LOSS) before Depreciation and Investments FOR THE YEAR	21,017	26,494
DEPRECIATION FOR THE YEAR		
Depreciation	(5,910)	(7,905)
MOVEMENT IN VALUATION OF INVESTMENTS		
Surplus (Loss) on Valuation of investments	(1,275)	8,649

NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	13,832	27,238

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

		31.12.2021	31.12.2020
	NOTES	£	£
FIXED ASSETS	3		
Tangible Assets		364,760	370,670
INVESTMENTS	4		
Unit Trust Portfolio		113,696	114,971
		478,456	485,641
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		400	400
Debtors & Prepayments		0	1,060
Cash at bank and in Hand		60,288	39,908
		60,688	41,368
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Amounts falling due after more than one year		10,000	10,000
Sundry Creditors & Accruals		5,288	6,985
		15,288	16,985
NET CURRENT ASSETS		523,856	510,024
CAPITAL & RESERVES			
Unrestricted Funds	5	523,856	510,024
Approved by the Executive Committee on			
K Barnard - Chairperson			

3	TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Computer Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Freehold Property	Total
		£	£	£	£
	COST				
	At 01 January 2021	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	Additions				
	Disposal				
	At 31 December 2021	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	DEPRECIATION				
	At 01 January 2021	5,422	58,902		64,324
	Charge for the year	73	5,837		5,910
	Disposals				
	At 31 December 2021	5,495	64,739	0	70,234
	NET BOOK VALUE				
	At 31 December 2021	292	17,512	346,956	364,760
	At 31 December 2020	365	23,349	346,956	370,670
4	INVESTMENTS			31.12.2021	31.12.2020
				£	£
	Investments			113,696	114,971

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

A settlement of £8,289 was received in the year from Hiscox Insurance for Business Interruption due to the pandemic.

The investments were valued on the 31 December 2021 and the surplus on revaluation has been credited with reserves, with opening and closing market value of investments reconciled as follows:

	£
Balance at 01 January 2021	114,971
Dividends and interest income received in year	
Cash drawdown in year and prior year adjustments	
Movement in valuation of investments	(1,275)
Balance at 31 December 2021	113,696

		31.12.20 21	31.12.202 0
5	RESERVES	£	£
	Balance as 01 January 2021	510,024	482,786
	General surplus (deficit) for the year	15,107	18,589
	Movement in valuation in investments	(1,275)	8,649
	Balance at 31 December 2021	523,856	510,024
6	STAFF COSTS		
	Salaries and other Costs	19,034	
7	CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE & DONATIONS		
	During the year the Society expended the following	1,030	
	Amounts on charitable works and student subsidies		
	Other Donations		90

THE NOTES ON PAGE 1 OF THE ANNUAL REPORT FORM PART OF THESE ACCOUNTS.

THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1048637

Accounts

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2020

CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Number: 1048637

Patron: Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, Lord Lieutenant of Bristol

President: Professor Hugh Brady, Vice Chancellor, University of Bristol

Chairman: Dr K Barnard

Vice Chairman: Mr C Serle

Members of the Executive Committee that served during the year:

Mr N Ball
Dr K Barnard
Mr M Barnard
Mr C Eddison-Cogan
Mr R Elms
Mrs J Kirk
Mr D MacCannell
Ms J Purdy
Mr C Serle
Mr S Tshabalala

Address: Commonwealth House
14 Whiteladies Road
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1PD

Independent Examiner: CEK Accounts
17 Sycamore Close
Nailsea BS48 2UZ

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE
TRUSTEES OF THE BRISTOL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY**

We report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act") and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

The examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
For the Year Ended 31st December 2020

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Executive Committee has the honour to present the 25th Annual Report of the Bristol Commonwealth Society.

Reference and administrative information

The Bristol Commonwealth Society is a registered charity (No. 1048637). Its registered office is shown on the information sheet.

The Trustees who served during the year are noted on the information sheet.

Objects, aims, and activities

The Society is a charity and exists to advance education and to promote within the United Kingdom and overseas the increase and spread of knowledge respecting the peoples and countries of the Commonwealth.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

This is through a constitution adopted 4th March 2008 as amended April 2012.

Governing bodies

The Board of Trustees and Executive committee is responsible for the overall governance of the charity.

Recruitment and training of trustees

The charity's trustees and committee members are appointed by the Board of Trustees after due consideration being given to eligibility, personal competence, specialist skills and local availability. New Trustees and committee members are inducted into the workings of the charity by the Board of Trustees.

Risk management

The Trustees and Executive Committee are responsible for the management of the risks faced by the Trust. A formal review of the charity's risk management processes is undertaken on an annual basis.

The key controls used by the charity include:

- formal agendas for all committee and board activities
- detailed terms of reference for all committees
- comprehensive strategic planning, budgeting and management accounting
- established organisational structure and lines of reporting
- formal written policies
- clear authorisation and approval levels

Reserves policy

Free reserves available for use by the charity are deemed to be those that are readily realisable. The charity's reserves amounted to £114,000 as of 31st December 2020.

The Trustees believe this level of reserves to be sufficient to meet the day to day requirements.

As a matter of policy, each year the Trustees review the value of the reserves required to be held in investments, cash and cash equivalents not restricted to any particular purpose. The Committee considers the charity's exposure to the risk of any significant loss of income and to the risk of unforeseen expenditure, which cannot be mitigated by executive action, and the degree of the risk ascribed to each such event is assessed.

Through the risk management processes established for the Trust, the Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that the system can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

Report for 2020 from the Executive Committee

The Executive is pleased to report that, despite unprecedented circumstances, it has continued to safeguard the interests of the Society whilst fulfilling its role as a charity. The Committee wishes to record its thanks to Dr Barnard for her expert guidance throughout the pandemic.

Dr Barnard is pleased to report that the Society remains in a strong position and commends each member of the Committee for making this possible.

The Chair and the Committee would also like to extend a very special thank you to the Society's members for their continued support.

Treasurer

The Committee reports the resignation of the Society's Treasurer on 21st July 2020. Mr Ball served in this capacity for four years and had been a supportive member since 2015. The Committee thanks him for his diligence and dedication. The position currently remains unfilled although potential replacements have kindly stepped forward.

Accountants

After careful consideration and acting in the best interests of the Society, the Committee appointed new accountants in September 2020. CEK Accounts has assumed the role and the Committee feels sure they will be a great asset to BCS.

Financial Overview to 31st December 2020

During the year the Society received £4,737 in Gift Aid claims dating from 2017 to the year ending 31st December 2020.

Additionally, grants in excess of £24,000 were received in respect of Government closure.

Membership subscriptions for the year were £1,638.00.

Revenue from rental of parking spaces was £6,083.

Gross income from catering and room hire was £1,088.00 and £2,833.00 respectively (a significant decrease on previous years due to lockdown restrictions).

Charitable donations amounted to £1,736.60.

The Society's reserves to 31st December 2020 were £114,971 reflecting an up-lift in performance despite the pandemic.

At the year end the accounts reflected a surplus of £27,238.00.

It appears the Society's insurance policy provided cover for business interruption and a claim on that basis is being pursued. At this stage the Committee is hopeful of a positive outcome.

Commonwealth House

Following unfavourable feedback from visitors about the décor of the Club Room, the Committee agreed it was not the image the Society wished to project. With lockdown presenting the perfect opportunity, it was decided to commission a professional contractor to refurbish the facilities which has created a much more marketable space.

The Executive considers the improvements to be an investment which should increase private hire and be more attractive to prospective members.

Health & Safety and Licensing

Mrs Smith continues to identify and report to the Executive on matters concerning Commonwealth House, ensuring health and safety requirements are met for both members and tenants. She maintains a Food Safety certificate and as DPS (Licensee) ensures the premises meet current licensing regulations. She is Fire Officer for Commonwealth House.

Events

Mrs Smith continues to act as Programme and Event Co-ordinator.

Room Hire

Mrs Brown continues to act as the Society's room hire agent. The Committee extends its thanks to Mrs Brown for raising the premises' profile during her tenure.

Tenants

Both the first and second floor offices of Commonwealth House remain let to commercial tenants.

Membership

As of 31st December 2020 the Society had 40 paid up members.

Review of Charitable Objectives and Activities for 2020

Commonwealth Writers Readers Group

The Book Club continued to explore a wide range of works by Commonwealth authors under the care of Mrs Valerie Davey. From March onwards the group held monthly meetings via Zoom with special thanks to Sue Thomas for hosting. The online meetings were very successful although the group looks forward to returning to Commonwealth House. The Book Club is open to non BCS members and the Society is pleased to offer the club complimentary use of the Club Room representing a charitable contribution of £100.

Bristol Beira Link

In 2019 Mozambique was devastated by two powerful cyclones leaving large parts of the country without water or medical supplies. Much of the country's infrastructure was destroyed with the poorest members of society and children in particular most affected. In the wake of the disaster Bristol Beira Link set up an emergency committee to help with the recovery of this beleaguered Commonwealth country. BCS responded to the crisis by offering them much needed office space and meeting facilities to co-ordinate the relief effort, which in 2020 represented a charitable donation of £200.

Royal Commonwealth Society Associate Fellow

The Society was delighted to grant £100 to Femi Omotoyinbo to enable him to travel from Belfast to London where on 9th March he attended Westminster Abbey. Femi, who is from Nigeria, was awarded a Royal Commonwealth Associate Fellowship whilst a member of the Bristol Student Commonwealth Society. He is a strong advocate of the Commonwealth and in 2017 the Society sponsored him to attend the Commonwealth Youth Conference in Cameroon. Femi is currently studying for a PhD in Philosophy and is a member of the International Society for Philosophers.

In his own words he says:

“I specially appreciate the kind support from BCS to attend the recent Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey. I am sincerely grateful for the trust, kindness and interest of BCS in my activities concerning the Commonwealth. I will always be grateful.”

Below is a photograph taken on Commonwealth Day 2020 that Femi is keen to share with members.



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Commonwealth Scholars Welcome Party - 8th February 2020

Twenty Commonwealth Scholars attended a New Year's celebration at Commonwealth House where they very much enjoyed meeting our Patron, who is particularly invested in young people within the Commonwealth.

This annual event offers great opportunities for cultural exchange and friendship amongst these exceptional students, many of whom maintain on-going links with the Society. After a buffet lunch which explored flavours of the Commonwealth each student sang a song that reminded them of home.

The Scholars' Regional Representative for the year was Faria Uquaili from Pakistan who thanked BCS for such a vibrant and at times moving occasion. The event represented a charitable donation of £171.00.

Commonwealth Sunday 8th March 2020

Commonwealth Sunday was celebrated at the Lord Mayor's Chapel where students Sarah Natumanya from Uganda and Collet Mweene from Zambia read passages from the Bible and our Patron read the Queen's Message to the Commonwealth. Also present was Cllr Jos Clarke, Lord Mayor of Bristol and the service was led by the Rev Harold Clarke. After the ceremony, guests returned to Commonwealth House for a Cypriot themed lunch.

The event represented a charitable expenditure of £160.00.

Fly the Flag, Commonwealth Day 9th March 2020

The Fly the Flag initiative began in 2014 at the request of Her Majesty the Queen who asked for the Commonwealth flag to be flown from prominent buildings around the Commonwealth. In 2017 it became an annual event with the flag being raised in communities great and small across the world. In Bristol the flag is raised each year outside of City Hall by a student from a Commonwealth country who has been nominated by BCS.

In 2020 the flag raiser was Isaac Kipkemoi from Kenya who was studying for a PhD in the School of Geographical Sciences at the University of Bristol. At the time he was also working with the SCience of Climate, LAnd, Water, Plants & Society (SCI-CLAWPS) research group at Cardiff University on the impacts of climate and climate change on water and vegetation dynamics in Horn of African drylands.

After the flag was raised, our Patron read the Queen's Message to the Commonwealth, the theme of which was "Delivering a Common Future", and guests responded to the Affirmation. The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Mayor of Bristol, Cllr. Asher Craig, and Lord Mayor Cllr. Jos Clarke. A reception was held afterwards in City Hall where light refreshments were sponsored by BCS, representing a charitable donation of £105.60.

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St Paul's Carnival

For the first time in its history the St Paul's Carnival Committee held a digital event which was viewed by a staggering 250,000 people worldwide. The Carnival dates back to 1968 and although it is one of Bristol's most anticipated cultural events (bringing valuable revenue to the City through tourism) it also encompasses a series of workshops, talks and schools' programmes around inclusion which BCS is proud to support. £100 was donated towards this important work.

Community Groups and Other Organisations

As part of its Community Engagement Programme, BCS offered Commonwealth House for complimentary use by outside organisations including local theatre group, Beyond the Brink, the Lansdown Poetry Group, African Voices Forum, Bristol Beira Link and Senegambia Hidden Talents.

Additionally, the Club Room was made available to the Royal African Society, Bristol Anglo German Society and Primary Science Teachers' Training at discounted rates. This represented a charitable donation of £800.

Charitable Response to the Pandemic

The Covid-19 crisis saw charities across the UK re-align their core objectives to meet the demands of the pandemic and BCS was no exception. Below are some of the initiatives we supported in response to the pandemic.

Food Bank

The Society engaged with St Nicholas of Tolentino Food Bank in Easton after learning of a sharp increase in demand for its services. Many of its clients were facing extreme hardship through loss of earnings and families were struggling to feed their children. To put it in to perspective, the food bank had been helping in the region of 50 people a week but after March 2020 it was catering to around 600. Through social media, BCS made a charitable appeal to the wider community and the response was overwhelming with people offering financial support as well as food and

warm clothing. Many donations were brought to Commonwealth House and the Committee also co-ordinated food collections from across the city.

The Vulnerable

The onslaught of the pandemic left many older people shielding and unable to leave home. Those without support found everyday tasks such as shopping impossible and the situation was further compounded by a sense of alarm and isolation. Within the framework of the Society's resources, the Committee sought to identify members of the community it could best help and thus in April a plan was devised to offer assistance to the vulnerable.

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Commonwealth Scholars

In the autumn of 2020 the Society was contacted by a number of Commonwealth Scholars who had been adversely affected by the pandemic. Students who were due to return home found themselves stranded amid limited flights and vastly increased air fares.

In addition, those who were coming to Bristol were required to quarantine for fourteen days at great expense before they could take up their pre-booked accommodation. There was a sense of abandonment amongst the Scholars who seemed to have fallen through any safety nets that may have been available to them. On hearing of their plight, the Society wrote to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and contacted the University of Bristol. Following our intervention the Committee is pleased to report that all the Scholars involved received appropriate support.

Micheal Aregbesola, a Scholar from Nigeria, would like to share these words with members:-

"The Bristol Commonwealth Society is truly a platform where diverse people of Commonwealth heritage are given the opportunity to be genuinely inspired and educated for future generations of the Commonwealth community. The Bristol Commonwealth Society gave me the platform and support to engage Commonwealth scholars across Universities in South West of England on better ways to deliver a Common Future for the Commonwealth. This engagement has really educated me on how best to transform the capacity of the Commonwealth community in delivering the sustainable development goals.

Moreover, the Bristol Commonwealth Society has also been of great help to me in navigating my living successfully in Bristol. This is really a wonderful organisation I will keep on cherishing and supporting the values they stand for".

Present and future activities

Club Activities

At the date of writing, Covid-19 restrictions still prohibit indoor gatherings although these should end on 21st June. The Chair and Committee are really looking forward to “business as usual” and, once safe to do so, a full programme of events will be made available. Top of the agenda will be the re-opening of the Club Room and a Sunday lunch but the Committee welcomes further suggestions from members.

Website

A more up to date website has been commissioned which will incorporate options to join the Society, make a donation or book events digitally and will be easier for clients to navigate. Other social media platforms will also be used to their full advantage.

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Membership

A membership drive will be prioritised now that our Club Room and Bar have undergone refurbishment. More innovative ideas for the programme along with a better website should also encourage interest.

Urban Creations

Over the past year BCS has formed a collaboration with Urban Creations who own and manage luxury holiday accommodation in and around Clifton. Their website now hosts a link to our facilities along with printed leaflets advertising the Club Room for private hire. In reciprocation, BCS members, their guests and room hire clients will be able to stay in Urban Creations’ accommodation at discounted rates. We are sure this will be a very beneficial arrangement for both parties.

Many of their properties are also let to students and further discussions are taking place as to how those from Commonwealth countries could benefit from BCS membership. Initial thoughts include a language exchange, a Commonwealth debating club and of course a safe environment for study.

The Queen’s Commonwealth Trust

In October 2022 the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee and to mark the occasion the Queen’s Commonwealth Trust (QCT) will be supporting the Fund for Young Leaders. The QCT offers these inspirational young people grants, bespoke advice and access to resources through a network of hubs which are found in each of the Commonwealth’s 54 countries. The hubs are fully inclusive of indigenous and marginalised communities. The candidates represent the next generation of change makers and BCS is already making plans to support this fantastic initiative.

Commonwealth Scholars

Our successful engagement over several years with Commonwealth Scholars has inspired discussion about an association of alumni. The ability to connect world-wide via Zoom offers enormous potential to create a network of Scholars who wish to remain in contact with the Society, sharing their experiences and achievements once they have returned home. This is an exciting opportunity for BCS and we will be taking it forward this year.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:-

.....
Dated
DR KAY BARNARD, CHAIR

	31.12.2020	31.12.2019
INCOME	£	£
Subscription	1,638	533
Donations	1,144	175
Rents Received & Tenants Contributions	30,456	28,803
Rents - Car Parking	6,083	5691
Room Hire	2,833	12,138
Functions & Catering Income	1,087	3,604
Dividends & Interest Receivable	1	2,284
Gift Aid	4,737	0
Coronavirus Covid 19 Grants	24,436	0
	72,415	53,228
LESS: OVERHEADS		
Purchases	3,092	4,694
Staff Salaries & Book-Keeping	18,430	20,501
Office & General Administration	3,938	3,765
Upkeep of Premises	11,281	10,474
Functions & Catering Costs	0	2,133
Charitable Expenditure & Donations	1,736	1,916
Equipment Hire	0	131
Insurances	2,762	2,860
Sundry Expenses & Retirement Gift	0	0
Accountancy	2500	3,800
Legal & Professional	0	205
Commission	2,145	4,199
Bank Charges	37	60
	45,921	54,738
NET PROFIT(LOSS) before Depreciation and Investments FOR THE YEAR	26,494	(1,510)
DEPRECIATION FOR THE YEAR		
Depreciation	(7,905)	(2,075)
MOVEMENT IN VALUATION OF INVESTMENTS		
Surplus (Loss) on Valuation of investments	8,649	13,008
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE	27,238	9,423

YEAR		
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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

		31.12.20 20	31.12.201 9
	NOTES	£	£
FIXED ASSETS	3		
Tangible Assets		370,670	353,181
INVESTMENTS	4		
Unit Trust Portfolio		114,971	126,322
		485,641	479,503
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		400	400
Debtors & Prepayments		1,060	659
Cash at bank and in Hand		39,908	3,743
		41,368	4,802
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Amounts falling due after more than one year		10,000	
Sundry Creditors & Accruals		6,985	1,519
		16,985	1,519
NET CURRENT ASSETS		510,024	482,786
CAPITAL & RESERVES			
Unrestricted Funds	5	510,024	482,786
Approved by the Executive Committee on			
K Barnard - Chair			

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

3	TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Computer Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Freehold Property	Total
		£	£	£	£
	COST				
	At 01 January 2020	5,787	56,857	346,956	409,600
	Additions		25,394		25,394
	Disposal				
	At 31 December 2020	5,787	82,251	346,956	434,994
	DEPRECIATION				
	At 01 January 2020	5,300	51,119		56,419
	Charge for the year	122	7,783		7,905
	Disposals				
	At 31 December 2020	5,422	58,902	0	64,324
	NET BOOK VALUE				
	At 31 December 2020	365	23,349	346,956	370,670
	At 31 December 2019	487	5,738	346,956	353,181
4	INVESTMENTS			31.12.2020	31.12.2019
				£	£
	Investments			114,971	126,322

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

The investments were valued on the 31 December 2020 and the surplus on revaluation has been credited with reserves, with opening and closing market value of investments reconciled as follows:

	£
Balance at 01 January 2020	126,322
Dividends and interest income received in year	8,649
Cash drawdown in year and prior year adjustments	(20,000)
Movement in valuation of investments	
Balance at 31 December 2020	114,971

		31.12.20 20	31.12.201 9
		£	£
5	RESERVES		
	Balance as 01 January 2020	482,786	473,363
	General surplus (deficit) for the year	18,589	(3,585)
	Movement in valuation in investments	8,649	13,008
	Balance at 31 December 2020	510,024	482,786
6	STAFF COSTS		
	Salaries and other Costs	18,430	20,501
7	CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE & DONATIONS		
	During the year the Society expended the following		
	Amounts on charitable works and student subsidies	1,736	1,916

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020