

# The Axbridge and District Museum Trust

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 7:30pm

Axbridge Church Rooms

**Present:** P Hughes, E Scott, M Owen, G Paine, K Rooke, J Hayes, P Ironside, J Dunford, R Burdock, C Hembrow, W Kirk, D Packman & L Newman.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Pauline Trapp, Katrina Gulliver, Andy McLeod, Alan Wells, John Page, Ian Tabrett, Madeleine Roberts, Dave Roberts.
- 2. Minutes of AGM held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024:** The minutes were approved as a true and fair reflection.
- 3. Trustee Resignations:** In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Axbridge Town Council (ATC) nominee (Alan Wells), the Axbridge Town Trust ATT) nominee (Grahame Paine\_, together with 25% of the remaining Trustees (Kevin Rooke) duly resigned.
- 4. Confirmation of Trustees:** A Wells, G Paine and K Rooke, along with the remaining Trustees were re-appointed to the Board and the remaining Board members were re-elected.
- 5. Approval of the continuation of the Trustees' Rota of Chair and Deputy Chair for meetings:** the rotation system introduced in 2023 has proven effective and popular. The meeting approved the continuation of the arrangement.

## **6. Reports:**

Trustees' Report: 2024-2025 Season

### Season Overview and Changes

The 2024-2025 season has been a year of significant activity and evolution for the Museum. A notable change early in 2025 was the resignation of our Finance Officer, Ralph Peebles-Brown, who served for many years, diligently "practicing the dark arts of balancing the books." We thank him for his long and dedicated service.

### Steward and Volunteer Contributions

We are delighted to have welcomed seven new stewards this season, who have settled in well and are doing a sterling job. This welcome uptake in our team—now numbering an amazing thirty-one—has allowed us to fulfil our promise of keeping the Museum open seven days a week during the open season, which has contributed to a healthy increase in footfall (detailed below).

# **The Axbridge and District Museum Trust**

It is important to pause and highlight the work our Stewards do. The Museum would not function without their commitment. They meet and greet our guests, often giving up a considerable amount of their free time. Visitor feedback is consistently positive, frequently noting that the Steward interaction is friendly, approachable, and impressive.

While all stewards are valued equally, we must give a special mention to the core group who consistently give their time, come rain or shine: Christine Hembrow and Rosemary White, who have covered fifty-nine and sixty-two shifts, respectively. Thank you to them and to all the other dedicated stewards.

## **Trustee Developments**

We welcomed one new Trustee this season: James Hayes, who joined us in March 2025. James brings an extensive business and technology background and has wholeheartedly immersed himself in Museum life. He performs the role of Keyholder (only setting off the alarm once!) and is playing a pivotal role in the redesign of the Museum entrance.

One of the administrative transformations that occurred last season was the way the Axbridge District Museum Trust (ADMT) is governed. Since John Page stepped down as Chair in October 2023, no single individual Trustee performs the role of Chair. The responsibility is now undertaken democratically, with each Trustee sharing the duties. This model is working well and will continue. A special mention must go to Trustees Alan Wells and Grahame Paine, who between them compile most of the Trust's documents, including minutes.

## **Visitor Figures and Engagement**

Up to early October 2025, this season the Museum has received 7,385 visitors. With still a few weeks to go, we anticipate exceeding last season's numbers. This increase can be attributed to several factors: the additional day of opening, the television exposure of Axbridge and the Museum (A Good Girl's Guide to Murder), and opening for special events.

We have recorded a significant increase in local visitors, with local footfall percentage rising to 5.4% this year. Given that the majority of museums (including KJHL last season) report local footfall of less than 5%, this increase is no mean feat.

A number of factors have helped attract locals across the threshold, but we suspect that Pauline Tripp's interaction with local schools is playing a key part. On more than one occasion, families have visited because their children, following a recent school visit, have "dragged their parents along" to show them around—a sign of young stewards in the making!

## **Entrance Redesign**

The Trustees are currently in a phase of refreshing the entrance area. The goal is to create a warm, well-lit, and informative welcome area. While the entrance was

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transformed a few years ago when Dean became the Museum manager, we are taking the opportunity to develop that work further. In the words of E.M. Forster, "History develops, art stands still," and we are ensuring the Museum continues to develop. This refresh will hopefully include new lighting, signage, and the relocation of a few select items, ready for the new season opening in April 2026.

## **Souvenir Shop Success**

The product selection curated by Dean in stocking the small but effective Souvenir shop cannot go unmentioned. The introduction of locally produced preserves has proved really popular, and Dean is happy to report that the takings this season to date stand at £1,754. Thank you, Dean, for your tireless hard work.

## **Events at the Museum**

### **Cinematic Backdrop: 'A Good Girls Guide to Murder' (Series 2 & 3)**

Since Summer 2023, Axbridge Town Centre has become a set for the popular BBC/Netflix series. Currently, a third series is being filmed, with the Museum being prominently rebadged as the 'Little Kilton Museum'. Additionally, Dawn French recorded a comedy series in Axbridge town centre early in 2025. Interest in both Axbridge and the Museum as a cinematic backdrop and tourist attraction is certainly increasing.

## **Paranormal Investigations**

As reported last year, Paranormal Investigations have continued to take place late evening in the Museum. These investigations are capped to a limited number per year, as a Trustee must always be present. Thank you again to Dean who has hosted these late-night events.

## **Temporary Exhibitions**

This reporting year, the Temporary Exhibitions room has hosted a number of engaging displays, including:

- 75th Anniversary of the Axbridge Caving/Archeological/History Society, and the roots of the Museum
- History of the Axbridge Methodist Chapel
- School Exhibition
- 80th Anniversary of the end of WWII

All the above have garnered a considerable amount of interest from visitors. Thanks must be given to the members of the Curatorial and Exhibitions (C&E) team who pull these exhibitions together on a regular basis.

## **Repacking of Artefacts Project**

Over the last year, archived artefacts in the Town Hall are being repackaged under the watchful eye of Lucy Newman. This project has a rather wordy official title – as required by the grant application for the museum grade packing

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materials, as – 'Wint Hill and Star Roman Villas and Hay Wood; the repackaging and better understanding of significant Archaeological Collections' !! Since June (2025) eight volunteers have given up their Monday mornings to assist with this task, with 170hrs clocked up to date. To date, five hundred items have been repackaged and all involved have learned new skills; and found the time spent rewarding and fascinating.

As a side note, the Hay Wood skulls are 5000 years old and therefore a significant part of local pre-history.

## **School Liaison Report**

Pauline Tripp, our School Liaison Trustee, has worked extensively with local schools this year and would like to highlight the partnership with Sandford Primary school. In July, Years 1 and 2 visited the Town to enrich their local study project.

The visit, run by Museum volunteers, did not just focus on the Museum but was a whole-town experience. The students followed the Children's town trail and stopped at various locations — including the old Methodist church, St John's church, and the Town Hall — as well as the Museum, in rotation. Each venue provided information to the attendant students and carers. This represents a novel way of extending the walls of the Museum to include and showcase the rest of the town.

Pauline states:

"This experiential model provides a unique learning experience and enhances the pre-learning that has taken place in the classroom. We welcome contact from schools that would like to participate in the Axbridge town experience. Thank you to Team Axbridge for your generosity of help on the day – Dean Packham, Paul Hughes, Stephanie Teychenne Gall, and John Page."

## **Closing Remarks**

The current reporting year closes with evolutionary changes that will hopefully leave the Museum feeling refreshed. It is anticipated that this project will continue for some time—possibly forever—as museums should always evolve. This museum belongs to everyone: the town, the stewards, the trustees, the local population, and anyone who has travelled 4,000 miles to visit it. Therefore, we welcome suggestions from everyone about how the Museum can progress. Thank you all for your continued support and hard work.

This report was created by Trustee Kevin Rooke, on behalf of the Trustees of KJHL. October 202

## **Friends report:**

# **The Axbridge and District Museum Trust**

Another successful year was had with our monthly meetings being held in Cross MH

November — Richard Raynesford - Somerset Fingerposts and Signposts

December- 18 enjoyed a Christmas meal at the Lamb , Weare an excellent meal and quiz — this year on 12th December, a date for the diary , menu available shortly - names to me .

January — 4 of our members gave short talks on their subjects followed by free refreshments as a New Year thank you to members

February — Brian Aston SS Great Britain was so good we are taking the Frankie Howerd bus and members in June to see it in Bristol next June.

March — Fiona Torren Spence - History of Aston and Stone Allerton Windmills

March — Frankie Howerd bus commissioned with 12 of us to the Barry Lane Lecture in Westbury sub Mendip — Current Excavations on Mendip Prof Jodie Lewis

April- Yvonne Bell -Somerset's Edwardian Homes

May -- Sue and Phil Thorne - Origins of Somerset Nursery Rhymes

June and July outside trips we had a bus full of Friends on our visits to Watchet and Blackmore Farm Cannington

September — John Page on the Museum's Historic Postcards

October - a bus full of Friends and Stewards had a lovely trip to Laycock Abbey curtesy of the NT

November — last week we had a talk on our historic and nationally pottery collection by Dr David Dawson who I met over 30 years ago when the Museum was run by SDC and David was involved in the Museum with SCC.

We are currently preparing the 2026 calendar of events which will be available soon.

At the moment we have over 60 paid up members and many other supporters of the group. We are actively seeking new members and feel £15 pa single and £25 family membership offers good value to take advantage of the Museums generosity and invites to trips and coffee mornings. Membership forms available here tonight and any other information you wish to know please contact me. If you would like a copy of our monthly Retrospect please let me know.

On 1st December the Museum is taking part in a Heritage evening in the Town Hall at 7. 00 pm where we will be joining forces with the Church and the Axe Valley Arts Centre to promote our organisations. My intention is to prepare a display for the Hunting Lodge on Axbridge Life and Times in the 1950's and 1960's and I am looking for stories, photo's and memories of this period. Any help would be gratefully received.

My thanks to my team Ian Tabrett editor of Retrospect , Margaret Jordan, Madeleine Roberts and John Page for their support in organising our activities during the year.

# **The Axbridge and District Museum Trust**

Trustee Liz Scott created this report, on behalf of the Trustees of KJHL.

## **Finance Report**

Finance Report for the Year 2024–2025

Closing Balance: £66,010.38

(Balance at 31 March 2024: £55,382.53)

### **Financial Overview**

The Trust has had another successful year, marked by record visitor numbers that positively impacted overall income. Increased footfall resulted in higher sales, donations, and a total National Trust membership credit payment of £10,806.

Total income for the year was further strengthened by two payments from Somerset Council under the Care of Collections agreement. These payments included the late payment for the 2023 – 2024 financial year.

A Gift Aid receipt from HMRC totalled £989.41, and bank interest rose significantly to £773.84 following changes to the Trust's deposit arrangements.

Subscriptions and monthly meetings organised by The Friends made a net contribution of £847.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure for the year was notably lower than in 2023–24. Savings were achieved through a reduction in Honoraria payments, with the roles of Treasurer and Company Secretary currently undertaken by Trustees on a voluntary basis.

There were no major purchases during the year, in contrast to the previous period which included the acquisition of the Long Cased Clocks. This contributed to the healthy year-end balance.

### **Prospects for 2025–2026**

A budget has been set for the forthcoming year as follows:

- Projected Income: £23,510
- Projected Expenditure: £20,928

The Trust continues to explore opportunities to maintain and increase its income through visitor engagement, external funding, and partnership initiatives.

### **Accounts and Examination**

The accounts for 2024–2025 have been independently examined by Philip Read, who has confirmed his approval.

Upon approval at the AGM, the accounts will be submitted to:

- Companies House (due by 31 December 2025)
- The Charities Commission (due by 31 January 2026)

Acting Treasurer Alan Wells created this report, on behalf of the Trustees of KJHL.

Company limited by guarantee, Registered in England No 04240988  
Registered office: Charles House, The Lippiatt, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3QP Registered Charity No 1091161

# The Axbridge and District Museum Trust

Manager's information summary for the year;

2024 Visitors: 7,363 (Dec 2024)

2025 Visitors: 7,385

2024 Local: 256 (5.97%) (July-Dec)

2025 Local: 398 (5.39%)

2025 Sales

Cash: £790.10

Card: £963.55

Total: £1,753.65 (2024: £1,403.50)

2025 Donations – Apr-Sept)

Card Donation: £293.50

Cash Donation: £2,111.60

Just Giving: £246.17

Total: £2,641.27 (2024: £3,168.55)

7. **2024 – 2025 Accounts Approval:** The ADMT is not required to present audited accounts. For good practice the accounts are independently checked. This year they were examined by Phillip Read. The board resolved unanimously to accept the independently checked accounts. Proposed K Rooke and seconded by P Hughes.
8. **Honoraria payments to Officers:** Continuation of Honoraria payments, where appropriate for the Museum Manager and Museum curator were approved. The level of, and justification for Honoraria payments will remain the responsibility of the trustees.
9. **AOB:** Paula Ironside asked if the proposed changes to the ground floor of the museum could be shared with Stewards ahead of changes being made.

Is it helpful/possible to re-introduce the visitors book. Some Trustees explained the issues regarding GDPR compliance when collecting information – the discussion considered use of comments cards to collect visitors views, trustee to consider going forward.

## 10. NEXT AGM: 20th OCTOBER 2026

**Axbridge and District Museum Trust**  
**Financial Statements for the period 1st April 2024 to 31 March 2025**

**Income and Expenditure Account**

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

(2023-24)

**Income**

Council grants	£1,400.00	£1,400.00
Admission charges	£0.00	£0.00
National Trust membership credit	£10,896.00	£12,841.50
General donations	£2,990.85	£2,580.50
Online Donations	£297.80	£119.47
Specific donations	£0.00	£0.00
Hire of premises	£650.00	£750.00
Sales	£1,479.38	£1,166.33
Care of collection contribution	£7,140.00	£0.00
Lecture fees	£0.00	£0.00
Custodians trip	£0.00	£0.00
Gift Aid/other income	£989.41	£1,260.09
Fundraising/grants	£300.00	£4,400.00
Interest	£773.84	£187.33
Corporate Friends	£0.00	£0.00
AALHS Funds	£0.00	£1,689.82
Friends Meetings	£187.00	£645.75
Friends of the Museum	£830.00	£720.00
Refunds	£0.00	£1,064.82
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£27,934.28</b>	<b>£28,825.61</b>

**Expenditure**

Honoraria	£6,720.00	£7,914.00
Postage	£0.00	£7.50
Printing/Stationery	£306.67	£23.49
Training	£35.00	£0.00
Volunteer Promotion	£365.80	£203.82
Subsistence/travel	£29.15	£12.30
Membership Fees	£287.00	£263.00
Legal Fees	£0.00	£0.00
Building Maintenance	£872.35	£1,104.03
Building Refurbishment	£108.61	£0.00
Water Supply	£122.09	£92.92
Electricity	£469.06	£570.95
Telephone	£184.32	£286.94
National Trust Lease	£1,320.00	£1,320.00
Town Hall Rent	£3,500.00	£3,500.00
Town Hall Utilities	£431.41	£384.71
Advertising & Publicity	£0.00	£0.00
Exhibitions/events/conservation	£366.03	£449.57
Insurances	£1,146.01	£1,121.01
Room Hire	£30.00	£40.00
Grant related purchases	£0.00	£4,900.00
Shop Purchases	£807.70	£931.06
Friends Meeting Expenses	£170.00	£308.50
Companies House	£34.00	£13.00
Other expenditure	£181.93	£149.35
Prior Year Debtor Write Off	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£17,487.13</b>	<b>£23,596.15</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenditure</b>	<b>£10,447.15</b>	<b>£5,229.46</b>



# Axbridge and District Museum Trust

## Financial Statements for the period 1st April 2024 to 31 March 2025

### Balance Sheet

as at 31st March 2025

(2023-24)

Prepayment	£0.00	£0.00
Bank and Cash	£34,606.47	£24,159.32
Investments	£31,403.91	£31,223.21
Debtors	£0.00	£0.00
Liabilities	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>£66,010.38</b>	<b>£55,382.53</b>
Financed by:		
Opening balance	£55,382.53	£46,615.13
Invoices outstanding	£0.00	£0.00
Retained Profit	£10,447.15	£5,229.46
Movement in Investment value	£180.70	£3,537.94
less commitments	£0.00	£0.00
	<b>£66,010.38</b>	<b>£55,382.53</b>

For the year ended 31 March 2024 the Company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- i) The members have not required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- ii) the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

These accounts were approved by the directors and authorised for issue on 21st October 2025 and are signed on their behalf by:

Signed:

Chair of the AGM

Company Registration Number 4240988

### Note to the accounts

#### Cash Movement Reconciliation

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

(2023-24)

Opening balance	£55,382.53	£46,615.13
Income	£27,934.28	£28,825.61
Expenditure	-£17,487.13	-£23,596.15
Payments uncleared	£0.00	£0.00
Movement in Investment Value	£180.70	£3,537.94
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£66,010.38</b>	<b>£55,382.53</b>
Held as:		
COIF Charity Fund/Investments	£31,403.91	£31,223.21
Business deposit account(s)	£33,996.47	£23,066.69
Current Account	£500.00	£1,092.63
Deposits uncleared	£0.00	£0.00
less uncleared payments	£0.00	£0.00
Cash held	£110.00	£0.00
	<b>£66,010.38</b>	<b>£55,382.53</b>

In accordance with the policy of the Board, £20,000 is held in reserve and has been identified to be used only the the event that otherwise the Trust would become insolvent.

P Read  
17 Hippisley Drive  
Axbridge  
Somerset  
BS26 2DE

12<sup>th</sup> August 2025

To whom it may concern,

**Axbridge and District Museum Trust**  
**ACCOUNTS: 1/4/24 to 31/3/2025**

I have examined the above financial statements for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and can confirm that they have been properly extracted from the accounting records of the Axbridge and District Museum Trust and source documentation.



P Read  
12<sup>th</sup> August 2025