

BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN HALL TRUST



The Town Hall

BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN HALL TRUST

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1st April 2022-31st March 2023



The Market Hall, Wedding set up



The Council Chamber, Wedding Set up

Trustees	Jane Carroll	Director
	Trevor Chalkley	Director
	Andy Stelman	Director
	Patricia Theobald	Director
	Helen Vaughan	Director
	Grant Perry	Director
	Henry Hunter	Director
	John Rimmer	Director
Secretary	Helen Vaughan	Company Secretary
Independent Examiner	Clive Sawyer Associates	
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank	
	PO Box 250	
	Delf House	
	Southway	
	Skelmersdale	
	WN8 6WT	
Solicitors	PCB Solicitors	
	Corvedale Chambers	
	Corvedale Road	
	Craven Arms	
	Shropshire	
	SY7 9NE	

BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN HALL TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT

A: Structure, Governance and Management

A.1 Governing Document

The governing document of the charity is the Memorandum of Association.

A.2 Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

Trustees are appointed from member organisations in equal share with each member organisation appointing three trustees. For the year 2022 there were a total of 8 trustees and 1 vacancy.

A.3 Induction and training of Trustees

Induction and training will continue to be informal with responsibility shared between existing Trustees.

A.4 Organisational structure and decision making

The three member organisations are:

Bishop's Castle Tourism Community Interest Company (BC&CTIC)

Bishop's Castle Town Council (BCTC)

House on Crutches Museum Collection Trust (HOCMCT)

- The Chairman is elected by the Trustees
- The Treasurer and Company Secretary are also Trustee volunteers
- The strategic management of the charity and the policies for the day to day running of the Town Hall are the responsibility of the Trustees who meet monthly.
- Day to day running is carried out by two Town Hall Operations Managers, appointed by the Trust. They are assisted by a body of trained volunteers, which includes several Trustees.

- Minutes of the Trustee meetings are maintained at the Registered Office, which is at the Town Hall, and copies are held off-site with the Company Secretary.

Trustees have agreed to take on specific roles to include:

Finance

Staffing/HR

Tourism and promotion

Heritage Activities

Monitoring and evaluation

A.5 Affiliation to national and regional bodies

The Trust is affiliated to Shropshire Hills AONB and is part of the Sustainable Business Scheme. It is also a member of Shropshire Hills Tourism Association. Member organisations have their own respective affiliations, which may occasionally be useful to the Town Hall Trust.

A.6 Relationships with other organisations

Most relationships are informal and reciprocal. There is one formal legal relationship: BCTHT and Bishop's Castle Town Council are *jointly* contracted to maintain public access to the renovated Town Hall, with the Heritage Lottery Fund, the principal project funder.

ADDThe Forum has 10 member organisations. It has existed since 2013 and was introduced at the beginning of the project to refurbish the Town Hall. The Forum meets every quarter. BC and Area Heritage Forum has produced a leaflet in the Heritage on Your Doorstep series describing each organisation, providing contacts and advertising its existence.

Research at BCHRC covers the Town, Town Hall and surrounding area.

- BCTHT regularly meets with representatives of BCTC
- Bishop's Castle and Area Heritage Forum, led by HOCMCT has 10-12 member organisations which support the Town Hall by using it as a venue for events, selling publications and other merchandise there.

- BCHCT has close links to Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre (BCHRC) where research related to the Town Hall continues, and BCTHT stores its own archive material. BCTHT is affiliated to BCHRC
- BC&CTCIC advocates for BCTHT with local businesses
- The Trust supports Enterprise South West Shropshire, a Community Interest Company, based in Bishop's Castle, by using their IT and administrative services
- BCTHT consults with SpArC theatre to ensure the program of events at each venue complement each other rather than compete
- BCTHT maintains links with BC Primary School and the Community College engaging young people in activities at the Town Hall whenever possible
- BCTHT co-operates with the volunteer organisers of town events such as the Art Festival, the Walking Festival and the Michaelmas Fair, to ensure the Town Hall makes a positive contribution.

A.7 Risk assessment

A strategic risk assessment informs the business plan and activity plan for the Trust. A risk assessment for the Trust's use of the building has been adopted and individual risk assessments for specific activities are carried out as required. Members of staff and volunteers are given a Staff Handbook which contains Health & Safety information. The Trust liaises with the Town Clerk over matters of H&S.

B: Objectives and Activities

B.1 The Objects of the charity as set out in the Memorandum of Association

The Charity's objects are:

'For the benefit of the public the preservation, restoration, maintenance, repair and improvement of the Bishop's Castle Town Hall, being a grade II Listed building, situated in Bishop's Castle, Shropshire.*

Such charitable purposes for the public benefit as are exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may from time to time determine within Bishop's Castle, Shropshire and the surrounding area'.

B.2 The aims of the charity

The key aims of the Trust are to:

- *Improve* accessibility of the building;
- *Promote* the Town Hall as a welcoming community hub;

- *Provide* a self-funding boost to the local economy;
- *Raise* the profile and educate people in the town's heritage;
- *Illustrate* and promote sustainability.

B.3 The Main Objectives of the charity for 2022-2023 are:

- 1. To maintain public opening hours committed to in the HLF project plan**
- 2. To maintain regular markets of various sorts encouraging local traders**
- 3. To run a varied and financially sustainable Events Programme**
- 4. To engage the local community in using and appreciating the Town Hall**
- 5. To recruit, train, and support staff - paid and voluntary - capable of delivering the Trust's aims**
- 6. To establish and consolidate income streams**

B.4 The strategies for achieving these objectives

Different BCTH Trustees have specific responsibilities for the following strategies:

Working closely with BCTC to ensure that BCTHT activities do not impede the operation of the Council in its historic setting

Supporting BCTHT paid staff in their roles; seeking their input to and ensuring regular consultation after Trust meetings; and listening to and acting on their requests, relating both to day to day issues and their employment terms

Similar attention is given to supporting and developing volunteers, who are essential to meeting Objective 1, by providing cover for staff absences

Monthly Trustee meetings to closely monitor financial performance and deal promptly with any operational issues.

C: Achievement and performance

C.1 Significant activities contributing to the achievement of the objectives

Objective 1: Thanks to its dedicated staff and flexible volunteers the Town Hall is open 10.00am-4.00pm Monday – Saturday each week, except Christmas and New

Year, providing a warm welcome and an effective information service to visitors and local residents.

Objective 2: With the easing of Covid restrictions BCTHT has run 2 monthly markets (one an Antique and Flea and the other a Farmers' market) and 3 Craft Fairs and 2 Book Fairs.

Demand for stalls at both monthly markets continues to increase, with each having 8 regular stalls added to by ad hoc attendees. Charges to stall holders are retained at a competitive rate to keep the markets healthy, thus providing a low cost advertising and retail outlet for many small local traders which is vital as the national trend is for markets to shrink or close like high street retail in general.

The operational managers are supported by Trustees and the caretaker to coordinate the markets and deliver this very positive outcome.



Objective 3: The Town Hall has a reputation as an excellent events venue for live music, storytelling and other entertainments. The operational managers work hard to identify and encourage performers from a wide spectrum of genres who attract good audiences and to promote such events widely. High profile acts continue to make repeat bookings. Other events include story-telling, heritage talks and various workshops. At all concerts BCTHT runs a bar at events to generate extra income.



Jazz at the Town Hall



Objective 4: To engage the local community in using and appreciating the Town Hall

The Town Hall is used by around 45 sole traders, local organisations, makers and authors using the Town Hall as an outlet.

The wide range of events brings in various sections of the community as well as visitors from the local area and beyond.







ADD PHOTOS

OF ARTS FEST WORKSHOPS

BCTHT uses local suppliers and services which bring them into the building and BCTHT's no single use plastic policy (introduced in 2021) remains in place.

16 schools in and around Bishop's Castle are advised of any events of interest to students.

BCTHT work closely with local festival organisers and during The BC Arts Festival is not only the Headquarters for the Festival but hosts a number of Art Workshops. The Town Hall is a venue for annual festivals and information point for other Town events such as Michaelmas Fair and Christmas Lights.

The Town Hall organised and hosted Wedding ceremonies for a number of local couples and couples from afar who brought all their friends and family into Town thus

supporting local businesses. The Town Hall is now an established popular wedding venue. The Town Hall is a beautiful venue which has hosted 12 weddings throughout the year.

Objective 5: To recruit, train, and support staff - paid and voluntary - capable of delivering the Trust's aims

The Trust's activities hinge around the operational managers; they welcome in the public, building Town Hall income streams and promoting the heritage of the building and the town. The two managers along with the support team of cleaner / caretaker are a highly valued team.

We constantly look for ways to support our staff. Nominated Trustees meet with operational managers after Trust meeting to ensure clarity about Trust decisions.

In 2022 a successful volunteer recruitment event took place. We continue to nurture existing volunteers as well as train our new volunteers. Thanks to their flexibility we are able to deliver a range of events and keep the Town Hall open Monday to Saturday.

Our volunteers are an essential part of delivering our services as well as proof of our successful community engagement.

Objective 6: To establish and consolidate income streams

All staff maintain good communications to ensure smooth delivery of events, supported by the voluntary efforts of a Trustee/Housekeeper.

The operational managers and key volunteers are skilled in delivering a rewarding experience for people choosing to get married at the Town Hall, so that weddings are an important source of income.

They have developed excellent systems for displaying and keeping track of all stock whether bought in or supplied for sale on commission

Monthly art exhibitions in the Council Chamber give local artists an attractive low – cost venue and increase our footfall. In 2023 as part of the Arts Festival the Town Hall hosted an exhibition by the nationally acclaimed portrait artist, Clae Eastgate.

We also run 2 annual sales of donated S/H books, CDs and DVDs which significantly helps the revenue of the Trust.

Regular and ad hoc hirers bring in additional income. These include choir practice and training sessions, birthday celebrations, AGMs of regional clubs and organisations. We also host a range of craft workshops such as Indian Block Printing and Silver Smithing.



Fundraising Book Sale



C.2 A review of charitable activities, Fundraising and Other Trading undertaken

Most activities described for Objectives 1-6 constitute Charitable Activity*: contributing to the 'preservation' and 'maintenance' of the Town Hall by keeping it active in the heart of the community AND promoting the town's economic, cultural, social and environmental well-being. Apart from those which have been grant funded, most are income generating. The income generated is not profit, but combined with careful management of outgoings, pays for BCTHT to continue to deliver its charitable purposes.

The annual Challenge Walk organised by The Trustees was resumed after a two year covid hiatus. The event, which participants pay to enter is a specific fundraising event for BCTHT.

The 2 annual sales of donated S/H books, CDs and DVDs constitute Other Trading*

* As per SORP FRS102

C.3 Investments.

No investments are held.

C.4 Donations

BCTHT regularly receives small donations.

C.5 Other factors relevant to the achievement of the charity's objectives.



Trustees recognise the responsibility that goes with managing a heritage site as important as Bishop's Castle Town Hall.

Trustees continue to liaise with the Town Council, the owners of the building, to ensure we jointly care for the physical structure of the building through sensible partnership arrangements.

C5. Trustees' Responsibilities

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the Trust for that period. In doing so the Trustees are required to:

- *select* suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- *make* sound judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- *state* whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- *prepare* the financial statements on the 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 Trust has an appropriate system of 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 Trust and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Trust and hence for taking reasonable steps for the detection and prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

2022/23 Bishop's Castle Town Hall Chairman's Report

BCTHT is very much an established part of the Bishop's Castle scene.

The Town Hall continues to develop its role post covid as a visitor information centre alongside being a multiuse events location offering a broad-church of carefully curated concerts. The Town Hall staff make every effort to welcome our visitors and increase our revenue streams. Bishop's Castle Town Council, which owns the building, continues to be supportive taking on the responsibility to a large extent for the on-going costs of the building.

The Town Hall Trust continues to maximise every opportunity to sustain its own running costs, with all income and outgoings carefully monitored, staff work hard to maximise income. Bishop's Castle & Clun Tourism CIC helps by supporting tourism services, meeting the cost of tourism advertising and membership of tourism organisations.

The Trust continues to be represented well by the three partner organisations: Bishops Castle Tourism CIC, Bishops Castle Town Council & Bishops Castle Heritage Resource Centre. New trustees are always welcome as they bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the trust as are volunteers, without whom the Trust could not operate.

The Town Hall is well used by local members of the community and visitors to the area, whilst Heritage events organised by partner organisations, Bishops Castle Heritage Resource Centre and HOCMCT are popular and this year we hosted a series of talks as well as promotions of new Heritage publications.

Being part of BCTHT continues to be a rewarding experience and we feel justifiably proud of the diverse range of uses this wonderful space is put to throughout the year and the marvellous efforts of staff and volunteers to make the Town Hall special.

We are especially grateful to our staff, volunteers, Town Councillors and trustees who continue to ensure the Town Hall enhances our beautiful town.

2022/23 Bishop's Castle Town Hall Treasurer's Report

The Trust finished the year with a deficit of just over £9,500 as the staff work to recover from the covid period. This is worrying but expected and the bank balance is still a healthy £22,404.28 thanks to Government Covid grants. Important income streams such as weddings were already paid for prior to this financial year and concerts and other activities were slow to get going.

The trust has continued paying the Town Council £500 a quarter rent and staff costs were increased as the Government Living Wage went up in April. Staffing costs were some £5,000 higher now with no Government support. Trustees are very appreciative of the staff, the two operational managers and the caretaker, and their efforts to try to generate income and manage the hall efficiently. Income was up to nearly £43,000 but expenses were up to over £52,000.

The trust still benefits considerably by the Town Council bearing responsibility for the on-cost of the building – the electricity, water, telephone, cleaning etc.

The healthy bank balance should help us get through lean times as we try to build the business back to pre-Covid levels.

Cllr. Jane Carroll, treasurer.