



Bampton Heritage & Visitor Centre (BHVC)

9th Annual Report.

2022

Our Aims

1. To conserve our heritage and inspire interest and learning through our centre using a wide range of accessible means to residents and visitors
2. To promote the town to potential visitors and provide them with information to meet their needs and interests
3. To develop rewarding and valued volunteer roles and experiences
4. To contribute to the community by working to enhance the reputation of Bampton as a place to live, visit and value

1. Chairman's Overview of the Year – Judi Thomas, Chair and Trustee



2022 was a challenging year for us. Covid was still present, affecting visitor confidence and, as a consequence, visitor numbers. Nonetheless we had a very successful year with many achievements to celebrate. I was elected as Chairman after the Annual General Meeting in 2022 when Liz Redfern stood down as chairman and retired as a Trustee. I am very proud to follow our previous chairs Katrina Munroe and Liz Redfern and to bring my own passion for our heritage to the role.

1.1 Highlights of the year

- Reaching a wider audience and increasing our reach by new videos, podcasts and improved social media presence on Facebook and a creating our Instagram profile
- Supporting our volunteers with regular social gatherings – talks, training and always tea and cake!
- The Welcome to Bampton map created and paid for by Mid Devon District Council – installed on the wall of the public toilets
- Queen's Jubilee community event – BHVC stalls by the Motte
- Brook Street stalls, attracting visitors and residents with great displays of photos of Bampton in times past – bringing interest, sales and donations
- Activities with families and wider audiences - Geolab, sponsoring the annual town scarecrow competition, Fossil Detectives, Exmoor Dark Skies, Walk Through the Solar System with Bampton cubs
- Walkers are Welcome status achieved and inaugural walk on August bank holiday Monday.
- The 5 Churches walk leaflet – routes to the 5 churches in the Hukeley Mission
- The writing, rehearsing and recording of new stories for children
- New videos on YouTube – Putting Bampton on the Map and From Legs to Wheels

We could not have achieved all of these things without the continuing support of all our volunteers. All our volunteers are unpaid, and you each bring your own skill, experience, and enthusiasm to your role. Whatever your role, I want to thank you for your invaluable contribution. My particular thanks go to my fellow Trustees who work tirelessly and have made my job as Chair an enjoyable experience.



Figure 1 - BHVC Out and about

The Centre in the church has faced very difficult times with no heating for the whole of 2022. The building is stone, and in the autumn and winter months was indeed, stone cold. Thank you to all the volunteers who put on extra layers and braved the freezing conditions to make sure we kept the Centre open.

Our thanks to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and in particular Sue Leach and Tony Mount, who with Kevin Chandra, have kept us updated with all aspects of church business affecting BHVC. Our partnership with the PCC is a strong and lasting one. Our support was called on for a meeting with the Diocesan committee and the Diocesan Chancellor to determine the position of the reredos (altar screen). Andy Macdonald and I were invited to present our research and views at the meeting.

1.2 Governance of the Charity

The Charity is governed by 5 Trustees who set the strategy for the Centre, run it on a day-to-day basis, coordinate volunteer recruitment and training and ensure the effective use of resources. We operate using a standard Charity Commission constitution and submit accounts and reports to them as required.

The Trustees meet on a regular basis around every 6-8 weeks. These meetings deal with substantial business of running the whole operation. Volunteers are invited to join the meeting by request and agendas are circulated beforehand. Following each meeting a Newsletter is sent to all volunteers to update them on decisions from the meeting and other relevant information, to keep them informed.

We have a review schedule for all our policies to ensure they are all current and in line with national best practices. Our 5-year strategy is a working document and is monitored and updated by Trustees on a quarterly basis.

Since 2016 Trustees have been elected from our pool of volunteers.

The AGM took place on the 8 March 2022 and confirmed the following 5 Trustees

- Judi Thomas (Secretary) – re- elected 2022 for 3 years – 2025
- Rachel Macdonald (Treasurer) – elected 2022 for 1 year - 2023
- Ken Mills – re-elected 2020 for 3 years - 2023
- Wendy Boothroyd – re-elected for 3 years - 2024. Resigned in 2022.
- Alison Brooker – elected 2020 for 3 years - 2023

Information on who we are and how we operate, with policies and our strategic plan available on our website pages. Our policies and procedures are reviewed and updated in accordance with the guidelines from the Charity Commission. The National Council for Voluntary Service and the Government.

2. Our Volunteers – Alison Brooker, Volunteer Lead and Trustee



This past year has seen some changes to the running of BHVC but, as always, our volunteers have risen to the challenge and we are lucky to have them working with us.

First of all, due to the heating in the Church breaking down we took the decision to close BHVC for the winter months as it was felt to be too cold for volunteers and visitors alike. We re-opened in March 2022.

Upon reopening we made changes: the rota would now be put up on a month-by-month basis to make it easier for people to commit to filling the volunteering slots. On the whole, this change was met positively and there were very few sessions where Trustees had to step in at the last minute to fill spaces.

It was decided that footfall on a Friday afternoon session was too low to keep the centre open and so we changed our schedule and opened on a Thursday morning, Friday morning and all-day Saturday. This has worked well but some volunteers reported that they don't like the morning slots on a Thursday and Friday because it involves both opening and closing the centre which means their slot is closer to 2.5 hours than 2. It also means that for volunteers going out in the afternoon, it can be a rush if you only finish at one and then have to close up. It was suggested that we split these morning-only sessions into two 1-hour sessions but realistically it is very unlikely to get 4 people to cover these shifts. We are looking at ways we can make this work for our volunteers.



Figure 2 - The Visitor Centre

Our Coffee and Chat sessions continue and have proved successful. They are a good opportunity for our volunteers to meet up with each other and for us to share information in person. In May we held a drop-in session for volunteers at The Bridge, and it was an opportunity for our volunteers to share what's good about volunteering with us and what's not. Some great ideas that came out of this session and we plan to initiate some of these this year.

3. Centre Activity

Our volunteers have overseen a reduced amount of visitor activity because of the two periods of Covid 19 lockdown closure requirements, as can be seen in the table below.

The months with no visitors at all are when we were closed.

	Visitor Numbers					Town Trail Numbers				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	37	52	62	0	0		5		0	0
Feb	59	104	76	0	20		6		0	2
Mar	65	105	42	0	13		5	7	0	0
Apr	177	93	0	0	62		11		0	0
May	180	231	0	23	77		27		0	0
Jun	186	119	0	57	59	8	10		4	25
Jul	183	180	0	112	58		5		8	0
Aug	226	235	32	231	120		2		0	0
Sep	163	146	8	196	497	14	4	8	18	0
Oct	99	248	13	79	83	9	3		12	0
Nov	141	60	0	44	0	5	0		8	2
Dec	72	32	0	0	0	4	6		8	4
Total	1551	1605	233	742	989	40	84	15	50	33

In addition, there were 448 visitors for our major Heritage Open Day event (Heritage Open Days Railway model event) in 2022

4. Treasurer's Report – Rachel Macdonald, Treasurer and Trustee

4.1 Financial Year January to December 2022



I am pleased to draw your attention to the continuing healthy financial position of the Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre. BHVC thanks our Independent Examiner, Geoff Girdlestone, for his time, help and guidance in preparing these accounts.

The formal accounts are presented in a straightforward format that demonstrates that the BHVC Trustees act honestly and responsibly in handling funds. The accounts are divided into two sources of revenue – Restricted and Unrestricted.

Restricted funds are grants or donations which are only used for the purpose for which they are given. In 2022 BHVC was awarded 3 grants totalling **£1,320**. Expenditure on projects during the year, walking events and COVID remedial action, totalled **£272**.

BHVC needs to expend money to achieve the above-mentioned income and to pay for its overhead and running costs. **Unrestricted expenditure totalled £4,032.**

By taking the total unrestricted expenditure away from the total unrestricted income and adding in the stock-holding we see that this year BHVC had a **net income of £2,418.**

The **balances** at year end 31 December 2022 show that total holdings of cash in hand or at the bank (restricted and unrestricted) stood at £14,171, whilst stock was valued at £2,002. Assets have depreciated by £636. This stable financial position is due to hard work by Trustees and Volunteers, and support from local business and members of the community - whose endeavours continue to keep the Centre viable.

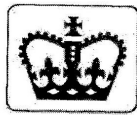
In recognition of the stable financial position, the Trustees will review and agree the **2023 Reserves Policy** which lays out what BHVC will do with its money. To be prudent we need to keep reserves in the bank to insure us against hard times, but we do not wish to build up large reserves of cash when there is much we can do to keep BHVC vibrant and alive. It is expected that, in light of the cost of living rises and inflation pressures, less donations will be made and sales will drop during 2023. Expenses are expected to rise. With this external environment in mind, a judicious **draft budget** will be set for 2023 and will be updated throughout the year in line with the Reserves Policy. Both documents, along with the **draft examined accounts** shown on the next page, will be received for approval at the Annual General Meeting.

4.2 BHVC Accounts for year ending 31st December 2022

2021		£	£	£
	INCOME	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
2,000	Grants	1,300		1,300
976	Donations	20	1,531	1,551
3,694	Sales		3,675	3,675
15	Gift Aid Refund	196		196
<u>6,685</u>		<u>1,516</u>	<u>5,206</u>	<u>6,722</u>
	EXPENDITURE	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
131	Admin		6	6
143	Equipment/Materials		236	235
41	Events		367	368
49	Publicity		6	6
132	Museum Collection		322	322
621	Overheads		278	278
0	Repairs & Maintenance		331	331
1,454	Shop stock		2,233	2,233
110	Subscriptions		140	140
155	Volunteer support & training		113	113
48	Other		0	0
0	Covid	257		257
1,113	Walking festival	15		15
<u>3,997</u>		<u>272</u>	<u>4,032</u>	<u>4,304</u>
2,688	Net Income	1,244	1,174	2,418
3,181	Assets minus depreciation (20%)		2,545	636
11,811	Balances - Bank		14,147	
77	Balance with Paypal		7	
60	Cash in hand		17	14,171
0	Money owed to BHVC		195	
2,218	Stock		2,002	
<u>17,347</u>	Total Assets		<u>18,913</u>	

Note: Stock of 128 Church leaflets written down in value from 2.10 each to 1.00 each = £141

4.3 Examiner's Report



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's
report on the accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1156194

Set out on pages

7 & 8

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

G.C. Girdlestone

Date:

11 FEBRUARY 2023

Name:

G.C. GIRDLESTONE

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

N/A

Address:

7 ASHLEIGH PARK, BAMPTON, EX16 9LF

5. Curator's Report - Dr Ken J. Mills, Curator and Trustee



The major development has been the acquisition of a safe and dry store for much of our material, thanks to the assistance of the Trustees of Riverside Hall. The old rifle club room has been repainted and is now already full! All our more delicate material has been placed there. Our thanks to Judi Thomas, who loaned her garage for temporary storage, and, especially, to Colin Williams and Liz Redfern, who stored the material for some time and donated excellent storage racks. The balance of the material is in a barn at a local farm – our thanks to the owner for allowing us to use the space. The barn is unheated and not very secure, but at least dry.

Much work has been done following the acquisition of a computer and much paper material from the relatives of the deceased historian Tom McManamon. The contents of his broken computer have been rescued and transferred to the Curator's computer, where they can be searched - over 110,000 files in over 11,000 folders! The slide collection has been rationalized and stored. Work has started on cataloguing some of the boxes of papers, thanks to Elise Collins, who has archiving qualifications. To date about three-quarters of a box have been catalogued – 549 separate entries to date. Work continues. Boxes of maps (all copies), archaeological specimens and a collection of 44 computer discs and two USB storage devices have been catalogued.



Figure 3 - The Station Master's hat from 1960 - just one of the many artefacts we have

The Beryl Fothergill (midwife) exhibit was replaced by an extensive railway exhibit – to coincide with the model railway exhibit in November. A Bampton in Bloom exhibit was also displayed in the summer. Numerous collections of old photographs were displayed when the street stalls operated on Saturday mornings.

Among the many acquisitions was a 16th Century Court roll purchased with BHVC help by the South West Heritage Trust (Devon Records Office). Despite searches no local person could be identified who could transcribe the very particular mixture of Latin and medieval legal script. We seek funding for the £120 that this will cost. Other acquisitions include:

- a collection of papers and photos and a valuable history of the Escott family who owned bakeries, Barnhay house and New Buildings at one time. 1
- the reminiscences of Donald Gould, who grew up in Bampton in the early 20th Century and worked at Scotts Quarry for much of his life, tell us much about Bampton from 1900 until 1960.
- a large collection of cups and plaques won by Bampton in Bloom and a number of other donations.

Curator's Notes #'s 9 – 15 were published in Signpost – some of them resulted in correspondence about the items described.

Over the year, I have represented BHVC on the Devon Museums Group, a useful source of information and support.

I would thank my fellow Trustees and my wife, Wendy, for their support throughout the year.

6. Publicity and Social Media – Marian Girling, Trustee



We have had great success this year publicising our events, merchandise and the Centre itself. Using more publications, websites that offer free publicity and social media we have been able to reach more people in a much wider area.

Expanding our Social Media profile has been very successful. Our Facebook page is now widely followed, with 800 followers from as far away as New Zealand and the USA. Last year we also set up an Instagram account with now has nearly 300 followers. Reaching more people and giving them a chance to comment on our posts too and we do get a good response from our followers.

Our online presence is here:

Website: Part of Bampton's website <http://www.bampton.org.uk/BHVC/>

Facebook: Our Facebook page is Bampton Heritage & Visitor Centre at <https://www.facebook.com/bamptonheritage>

Instagram: @bamptonheritagecentre <https://www.instagram.com/bamptonheritagecentre/>



Figure 4 - The BHVC Facebook Page

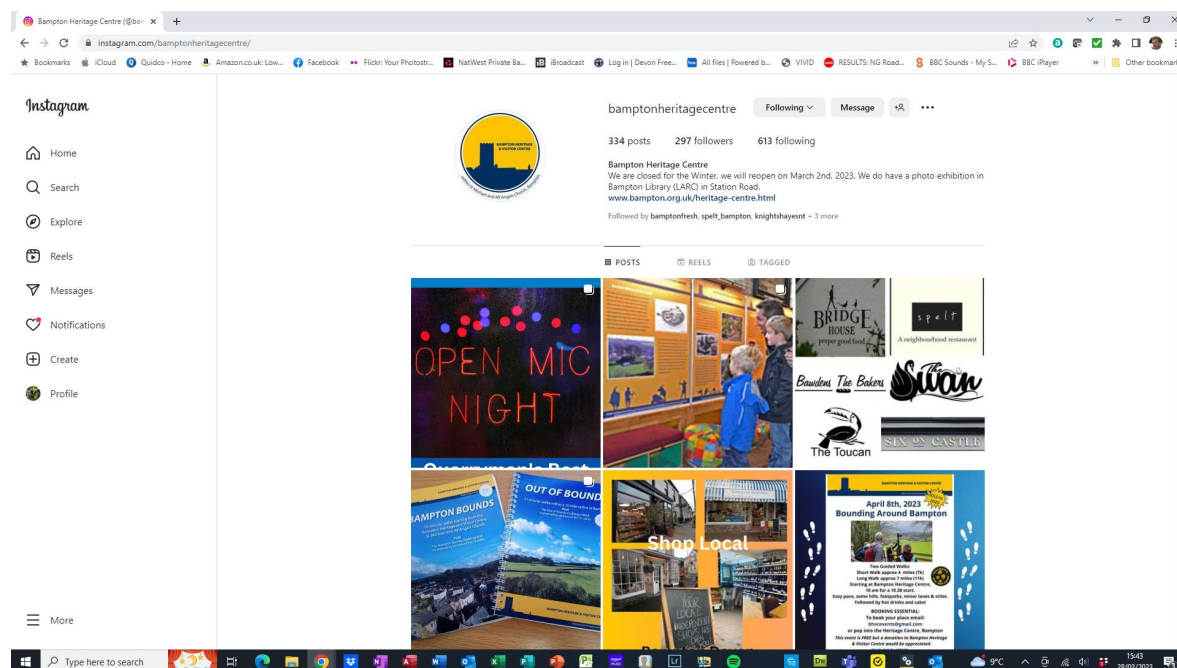


Figure 5 - The BHVC Instagram Page

7. Key Events during 2022

7.1 Launch of Walkers of Welcome (WaW) status for Bampton

Following the success of the original steering group in achieving the WaW status for the town, BHVC took over management of the scheme. We had our inaugural walk in August with an enthusiastic group of walkers taking routes around our great countryside. WaW status is important for Bampton, being a key part of our attraction as a visitor destination. We have so many great local walks and walkers can spend a weekend or longer exploring the routes and footpaths on offer. This boosts the economy for the whole town – accommodation providers, eateries, and shops.



Figure 6 - Our first Walkers are Welcome event

7.2 Heritage Open Days

We had a wonderful exhibition of a working model of Bampton station and its surrounds, created by railway modellers from Liverpool. Chris Hewitt brought the model to Bampton in the back of a transit van and expertly assembled the kit – with the help of some of our local railway enthusiasts – in the Community Hall. The event was a tremendous success, attracting over 400 visitors over 3 days. We welcomed visitors who drank tea and ate cake,



Figure 7 - Bampton Station Model and Model Railway

bought goods from our event shop and gave generous donations. One of the most enjoyable and satisfying aspects of the event was the chat between residents and former residents who came together to reminisce and share their stories of catching the train to school, work and to shop. We heard of where people left their bikes, caught the train, just making it by the skin of their teeth. A great event and our thanks go to Chris for his dedication in building such an amazingly accurate model and

bringing it to us.

7.3 Tom McManamon Heritage Talk

Following the sad loss of our great friend Tom in 2021, we established our annual heritage talk in memory of Tom. Our inaugural Tom Talk was held in October 2022, with From Legs to Wheels, a history of transport and routes researched and delivered by Andy Macdonald. Andy's talk was both entertaining and enlightening.



Figure 8 - Tom McManamon Heritage Talk

7.4 Michael Browning

In 2022 we lost one of our founder Trustees. Mike Browning was one of the original 4 people who came together to explore the concept of a heritage centre for Bampton, and who applied for the funding to start the project. Mike brought great skill and years of professional experience to the group, resulting in the achievement of our original funding and inception of the project.

8. Future Plans – 2023 and Beyond

8.1 10th Anniversary Year

2023 is our 10th anniversary year and we have planned 10 events to celebrate our first 10 years. Events will happen throughout the year, seeing us take activities out and about to connect with our community and attract visitors to Bampton. In the autumn we will have a day-long celebration for our whole community to join us in marking this important milestone.

8.2 Renewal of our license with St Michael's and All Angels church

We will renegotiate our license with the PCC. This is a very important milestone in our existence to take us into our next 10 years.

8.3 Review of town walks with new themed walks

We are reviewing our main town walk and also developing some new themed walks – a railway walk, a buildings walk, a family quiz walk and others. We always need new walk leaders so if a theme attracts you, let us know.

8.4 Farm history project with Bampton Scouts

We have some extensive knowledge of and information on the history and stories of our main town. We will continue to build on this part of our collection, but we are very aware that we lack similar knowledge of the farms that surround the town. Our farms and the families that work the land are part of our community story. We will be working with Bampton Scouts on a farm history project. Our volunteers, with scouts and a scout leader will visit 4 farms who have accepted an invitation from the Scouts to take part in this project. The Scouts will record the stories of these farms and families and display their findings at the end of the year. We will gain an important addition to our collection, the farming families will share their stories and the Scouts will gain some hard-earned badges – great outcomes for all involved.

8.5 Trustee and volunteer recruitment

Whilst we recruited some new volunteers during the year, we also lost some and we lost a Trustee. We are advertising for volunteers and Trustees in Bampton but also further afield, including Petroc, Tiverton High School and Blundells. Please encourage any friends or other people you know who might be interested to get in touch with us to find out more.

8.6 Our Digital Archive

Our collection is growing, and we have a responsibility for the care and maintenance of every item in our collection. Part of that responsibility is to record every item. This record is managed by Ken, our Curator, and is in the form of a word document. This record is backed up and stored securely as a necessary safeguard. Following research, we have identified a nationally recommended digital software package (Modes Compact) which we now have the funds to buy. Funding came from Bampton Jubilee funds, Exmoor Rotary Club and an anonymous donor. We will be purchasing the software and training to make a start on digitization. We will use the information we collect from the farm history project as a trial run.