



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st January 2025 Period start date

To 31st December 2025 Period end date

Charity name: The Harwich Society

Charity registration number: 1161931

Objectives and Activities

Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	To promote public interest in the Harwich area, encourage high standards of planning and architecture and to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in Harwich and its hinterland
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	<p>Reviewing and commenting upon as necessary the planning applications placed before the Planning Authority.</p> <p>Encourage interest in and awareness of local history by managing and conserving The Harwich Redoubt, a fort built to defend Harwich Harbour during the Napoleonic War. The Society also operates museums charting the maritime history of the town, manages the High Lighthouse and runs a Visitor Centre on Harwich Quay which acts as a focal point for tourist information.</p> <p>The Society encourages awareness of local history by maintaining an archive, publishing information, organising guided walks and arranging lectures for local residents, visitors and tourists. Managing a small wildlife reserve in the town enables the Society to encourage local interest in the natural environment.</p> <p>The Society's sites are popular destinations for people of all ages for leisure and education purposes including supervised groups from local primary schools.</p>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	The Trustees confirm they have complied with Sec.4 of the Charities Act 2006 in having due regard to the Charity Commissioners general guidance on public benefit. The Trustees actively review the success of the Society's activities and the benefit accrued to local residents and visitors.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policy on grant making	The purpose of the charity is not primarily as a grant giving body. Any request received would be considered on its merits.
Policy on social investment including program related investment	The Society does not undertake social investment as its focus is on environmental work. However by creating volunteering opportunities, encouraging public interest in the local environment and managing visitor attractions for the public good we enhance opportunities for community and social engagement.
Contribution made by volunteers	The Society would be unable to exist without the support and commitment of volunteers, including our trustees. Volunteers ensure the sites operated by the Harwich Society are managed, maintained and opened to visitors, provide guided walks, undertake research, maintain our archives and ensure the Highlight magazine is published and distributed.
Other	This organisation was formed to update the constitution of Harwich Society. On 1 st January 2016 the charitable activities for public benefit were transferred from the original Harwich Society (Charity no 261798) to this new charity including assets and liabilities. The original Harwich Society was formed in 1969.

Achievements and Performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	<p>The Society continues to publish quarterly the 'Highlight' magazine which is distributed to members locally, elsewhere in the UK and abroad. This magazine is seen as an important link with residents and former residents of the town. The magazine includes articles about the activities of the Society, the history of the area, conservation and planning matters, promotes current events and volunteering and creates a platform for people to share information and reminiscences.</p> <p>During 2025 Society volunteers managed and staffed the seasonal Visitor Centre in Harwich and the iconic historic buildings and museums under its ownership or control which are a significant tourist attractions in the Harwich area including Christopher Jones' house being the home of the Master of the Mayflower and linked to the history of the Pilgrim</p>
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	<p>Fathers.</p> <p>The Bobbits Hole town wildlife area was managed, and was open to the public including families with children during 2025 to promote safe accessible access to the natural environment.</p> <p>Significant conservation project work was progressed at The Redoubt in liaison with Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.</p> <p>The Society website was updated and linked to social media to better promote public interest in the Harwich area.</p> <p>The Society provided guided walks for residents, visitors, including foreign tourists, school groups and parties wishing to explore the locality.</p> <p>The Society was consulted and participated in the statutory planning processes for the Harwich area.</p> <p>The Society participates in town enhancement and tourism initiatives in partnership with others.</p> <p>The Society continued to promote interest and knowledge about the Harwich area including conducting research into the history of the area and publishing information.</p>
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Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	The Society was in a sound financial position at the end of the accounting period. At the year end our funds amounted to £386,417.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	The Society has no formal policy on financial reserves other than to ensure funds are ring fenced towards the conservation and preservation of 5 Church Street Harwich ('Foresters') probably the oldest house in Harwich and The Redoubt Fort a key Harwich ancient monument for the benefit of future generations.
Amount of reserves held	As recorded in the Annual Accounts we had £128,952 in the designated Foresters Fund and £468,669 in the designated Redoubt Fort Fund.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	N/a
Details of fund materially in deficit	N/a
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	The Society is in sound heart having over 2000 members and a sound balance sheet.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Membership subscriptions, museum admission fees, sales, donations and fundraising including monthly pub quizzes, provide most of the income for designated and unrestricted funds. Restricted fund grant income was obtained towards the cost of the conservation activities at The Redoubt Fort.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	We adopt low risk investments for funds held for future use to promote the objectives of the charity.
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	The risks are low since the charity insures against risk and generates sufficient funds to maintain its annual programme of activities. We seek grant support for any major conservation projects with the historic buildings in our care. We seek to minimise this risk by undertaking surveys and timely repairs.

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:	
Type of governing document	Charity Commission Association Constitution
How is the charity constituted?	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Trustees appointed by members

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	The Harwich Society
Other name the charity uses	n/a
Registered charity number	1161931
Charity's principal address	5 Church Street Harwich Essex CO11 3DR

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
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1	Andy Schooler	Chairman		
2	Robert Barham	Vice Chairman		
3	Maria Fowler	Secretary		
4	Diane Bitmead	Treasurer		
5	Dan Beck			
6	Garry Calver			
7	Richard Colley			
8	Sue Daish			
9	Colin Farnell			
10	Richard Oxborrow			
11	Paul Smith			
12	Nigel Mowle			

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
n/a		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
n/a		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	none
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	n/a
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	n/a

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

We employ no paid staff- we are a volunteer based organisation managed by our Board of Trustees.

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details


n/a

Other optional information

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

 Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Andy Schooler	
Position (e.g Secretary, Chair)	Chairman	
Date	16/06/2026	



REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
AND
ASSET STATEMENT**

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931
 RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
 Period 1st January - 31 December 2025

RECEIPTS	UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND £	DESIGNATED REDOUBT FUND £	DESIGNATED BOBBITS FUND £	DESIGNATED MUSEUMS FUND £	DESIGNATED SOCIAL FUND £	RESTRICTED FORESTERS FUND £	TOTAL 31 Dec 2025 £	TOTAL 31 Dec 2024 £
ADMISSIONS								
DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS		12352		4075			16,427	17,308
GIFT AID	5826	1713	1201	1616			10,356	5,972
GHOST HUNT INCOME	2124						2,124	1,734
NAPOLEONIC WEEKEND		7480					7,480	6,785
PRIVATE HIRE FEES		500					500	2,560
GRANTS		3450					3,450	375
GUIDE PANEL INCOME	409	29803					29,803	29,803
INVESTMENT INCOME	3293						409	1,111
MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS	10314	2044	240	457	350	5667	12,051	5,879
MISC INCOME	2126						10,314	10,843
MISC SALES	4014					66	2,192	770
QUIZ NIGHT INCOME	2727	4100		1106			9,220	12,283
FORESTERS 200 CLUB							2,727	2,814
WATERFRONT DINNER						1425	1,425	1,525
MONTHLY MEETINGS INCOME					1693		1,693	2,196
					570		570	452
TOTAL RECEIPTS	30,833	61,442	1,441	7,254	2,613	7,158	110,741	102,410

THE HAWTHORN SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
Period 1st January - 31 December 2025

	DESIGNATED FUNDS					RESTRICTED FORESTERS FUND	TOTAL 31 Dec 2025	TOTAL 31 Dec 2024
	UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND	DESIGNATED REDOUBT FUND	DESIGNATED BOBBITS FUND	DESIGNATED MUSEUMS FUND	DESIGNATED SOCIAL FUND			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
PAYMENTS								
ITEMS FOR RESALE								
REDOUBT - HOUSEKEEP & CAFÉ COSTS	956	937		792			1,748	4,070
INSURANCE							937	914
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL FEES	762	686	486	690		1382	4,006	4,423
MAINTENANCE	1800	1260		61			3,121	7,820
NAPOLEONIC WEEKEND COSTS	976	3033	249	8221		347	12,826	16,860
HISTORIC ENGLAND COSTS							0	600
NATIONAL LOTTERY		26753					26,753	6,000
POSTAGE		1200					1,200	
PRINTING	1983						1,983	2,724
PUBLICITY	3805	910					4,715	3,667
RENT PAID							0	168
STATIONERY	100			481			581	581
SUBSCRIPTIONS / DONATIONS	855						855	443
MISC COSTS	130						130	70
MONTHLY MEETING EXPENSES	2538	469		218	412	501	4,138	4,094
INTERNET/WEB EXPENSES					260		260	602
UTILITIES	179						179	144
FORESTERS 200 CLUB	3840	9321	289	2420			15,870	11,722
WATERFRONT DINNER						800	800	800
FIXED ASSET PURCHASE	1243	567	30	4959	130		130	2,488
TOTAL PAYMENTS	19,167	45,136	1,054	17,842	802	3,030	87,031	72,247
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS	11,666	16,306	387	(10,588)	1,811	4,128	23,710	30,163
FUNDS AT 31 Dec 2025	116,053	172,559	11,938	(28,162)	1,220	112,809	386,417	362,707

THE HARWICH SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931

ASSET STATEMENT
As at 31st December 2025

CASH FUNDS

CASH IN HAND
CURRENT - CO-OPERATIVE BANK
DEPOSIT - CO-OPERATIVE BANK
SAVINGS ACCOUNT - NATIONWIDE
UNITED TRUST BANK
REDWOOD BANK
CAMBRIDGE & COUNTIES BANK

UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND	DESIGNATED REDOUBT FUND	DESIGNATED BOBBITS FUND	DESIGNATED MUSEUMS FUND	DESIGNATED SOCIAL FUND	RESTRICTED FORESTERS FUND	TOTAL 2025	TOTAL 2024
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
815						815	815
53,383						53,383	46,900
25,750	8,000	1,240		2,350	22,250	59,590	57,000
72,223	12,000					84,223	84,223
17,000					70,199	87,199	83,158
4,866	4,866		4,866		3,866	18,464	0
23,803	23,803		2,500		32,637	82,743	90,611
197,840	48,669	1,240	7,366	2,350	128,952	386,417	362,707

TOTAL CASH FUNDS

FIXED ASSETS

PROPERTY & LAND

PROPERTY CONTENTS & EQUIPMENT

MUSEUM EXHIBITS

IT EQUIPMENT

OTHER ITEMS

13,600	87,500				320,000	421,100	421,100
1,271	7,281	2,502	5,882	27	3,095	20,058	21,793
7,309	49,887	0	12,962	0	0	70,158	68,930
1,288	507	0	2,110	0	122	4,027	1,048
354	366	0	620	0	0	1,340	1,192
10,222	71,641	90,002	21,574	27	323,217	516,683	514,063

TOTAL FIXED ASSETS

STOCK

STOCK - PUBLICATIONS Etc.
STOCK - HS SHIRTS.

1,975	3,354		411		5740	6,336	6,336
178					178	190	190
2,153	3,354	0	411	0	5,918	6,526	6,526

TOTAL STOCK

TOTAL ASSETS

210,215	123,664	91,242	29,351	2,377	452,169	909,018	883,296
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APPROVED BY THE TRUSTEES AND SIGNED ON THEIR BEHALF:
on

A Schooler

A Schooler
CHAIRMAN

D Bitmead

Diane Bitmead
TREASURER

THE HARWICH SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
Year ended 31st DECEMBER 2025

- 1 FORESTERS FREEHOLD PROPERTY STATED AT REBUILD COST
- 2 FORESTERS CONTENTS STATED AT REPLACEMENT COST
- 3 BOBBITS HOLE FREEHOLD LAND VALUED AT ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE
- 4 PAINTINGS AND PLAQUES VALUED AT COST
- 5 MUSEUM EXHIBITS (OFTEN DONATED) AT COST PLUS 1% PER ANNUM
- 6 TOOLS VALUED AT COST LESS 20% WASTAGE PER ANNUM
- 7 SMALL ASSETS, OFFICE EQUIPMENT WRITTEN DOWN AT 20% PER ANNUM

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE HARWICH SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of The Harwich Society for the year ended 31st December 2025, which are set out on pages 1 to 3.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustee's 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 Charities Act 2011

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

My 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 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 connection with 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 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.

SIGNED *M. Scutcher*

NAME: MARGARET SCUTCHER

QUALIFICATION

ADDRESS: 16 VALLEY ROAD, HARWICH, ESSEX

DATE: 2/3/26

THE HARWICH SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1161931

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
Year ended 31st DECEMBER 2025

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

SIGNED

m. Scutcher

NAME:

MARGARET SCUTCHER

QUALIFICATION

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ADDRESS:

16 VALLEY ROAD, HARWICH, ESSEX

DATE:

2/3/26