



BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY & MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025 OF TRUSTEES FOR BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY

1. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS

- The charity's name: Bournemouth Natural Science Society.
- The Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered number: CE006863. The registered charity number: 1165951.
- The address of the principal office of the charity: 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH1 3NS. Tel. 01202 553525.
- The charity's trustees for the year were: Mr Grenham Ireland (Chair), Mr Gerry Duggan (Treasurer), Mrs Jacqueline Bainbridge (Honorary Secretary), Miss Pam Field, Mr Malcolm Gould, Mrs Anne Jolliffe and Mr Colin Lord.

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Society was formed in 1903. A new Constitution and Rules for the CIO were agreed at the AGM held on 5 December 2015. The Charitable Incorporated Organisation was registered on 9th March 2016. Financial and related matters are overseen by the trustees who this year have met in person monthly. The trustees are also responsible for the appointment of those officers of the Society who have responsibility for substantial assets of the Society. The trustee body is elected annually by secret ballot by members present at the Annual General Meeting. Up to nine trustees may be elected. Of these two are ex officio, the treasurer and secretary. A chairman is elected at the first meeting of the new trustee body each year.

The Assembly of the Society is open to all members, who can raise any matter of overall interest. The Assembly usually meets roughly quarterly. The first meeting was held following the AGM on 14th December 2024 to elect the Section Chairs. That meeting and those on 25th March 24th June and 30th September 2025 were 'hybrid' being both in person and remotely via Zoom.

The activities of the Society are run by a small number of committees. An ad hoc Programme Committee (consisting of those Section Chairs who can attend meetings by Zoom) continues to be responsible for the lecture programme. A number of field trips were organised in autumn 2024 and late spring 2025.

3. FINANCE

3.1 BNSS Financial Report 2024-25

In 2024-25 BNSS continued to maintain financial stability whilst undertaking some much-needed capital projects to secure the collections – e.g. electrical upgrades, exterior maintenance, new heating & control systems and new lighting systems, ensuring the building remains a safe and welcoming environment for members and visitors. Membership engagement remained strong, and income from events, donations, and sales reflected steady growth.

Our total revenue was slightly more than last year but there was a greater increase in expenditure so the overall shortfall rose to £17k.

Financial Review

Category	2024-25	2023-24
Total revenue	£62.3k	£59.8k
Including: Membership contributions	£11.4 k	£12.1k
Donations	£17.6 k	£12.7k
Sales	£7.5k	£6.2k
Lettings	£7.4k	£9.9k
Young Explorers	£1.8k	£1.4k
Total expenses	-£79.3k	-£61.8k
Including: Admin and legal costs	-£5.6k	-£3.9k
Lecture costs	-£1.0k	-£1.2k
Facility maintenance, insurance & utilities	-£67.7k	-£47.0k
Salary (caretaker)	-£0.0k	-£4.5k
Garden expense	-£0.2k	-£1.7k
Net total for FY 2024-25	-£17.0k	-£2.1k

Next year's budget includes planned or continuing capital projects:

- Completion of EICR electrical safety upgrades – est £20k
- Basement flat refurbishment – est £15k
- Exterior restoration and roof works – est £10k
- Internal fire Doors – est £20k
- In cabinet display lighting – est £2k

3.2 Reserves

BNSS's reserves policy remains designed to manage unforeseen financial events. The target level of unrestricted reserves continues to be based on a scenario of zero income for two years, currently estimated at around £120k.

As of September 2025, accessible cash reserves stood at £133.7k, with a further £57.8k held in long-term Charity Investment Funds. Given the expected cost pressures for 2025-26, the Society's reserves continue to meet the policy requirements and provide an appropriate safety margin.

3.3 Conclusion

The Society's progress in 2024-25 reflects the dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of members and supporters. Their time, enthusiasm, and financial contributions remain the cornerstone of the Society's continued success.

We extend special thanks to: Louise Tonkin of Fisherton Consulting for reviewing the accounts as required by the Charity Commission; to Mary Tiller, Assistant Treasurer, for managing cash and Gift Aid; and to Sally Grant, Membership Secretary, for maintaining HMRC records and Gift Aid compliance.

And many thanks to Trustees, Volunteers and Members who have kindly assisted over the last 15 years and have been a joy to work with and made my time as BNSS Treasurer something I will look back on with great pleasure.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership was 243 on 1st October 2024 and 253 on 30th September 2025. During the year, there were 42 new members, 29 resignations and 3 deaths. The new members include ten joint memberships and 3 Young Person (under 17) memberships. The latter highlighted how little we offer to those aged 12-17 years.

5. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The museum has been open to the public on Tuesdays throughout the year and additionally on some Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays (as detailed in section 6.4). Throughout the year weekly lectures in house or via Zoom were made available to the public (Zoom links were given to those who requested them). Lectures were advertised on the BNSS Facebook page as well as the BNSS website. All activities were free to enter but were also supported by members explaining the importance of donations to keep our activities going and to support maintenance of the old Victorian building. BNSS once again hosted the Arts University Bournemouth Spring display by second-year students (see 6.4). The Young Explorers programme for 7–12-year-olds continues and has had a successful year with attendance at most meetings being 20. We hosted 43 visits from local organisations including 35 local schools, language schools and scout groups. Two external visits were made to schools, during which demonstration materials were presented. In total our Education Officer organised activities and engaged with 839 children and young adults. The museum is often visited by parents with home-educated children and also support workers with special needs children and young adults to provide a learning and entertaining experience. A group from the Netherlands and Belgium visited for two days to work on our archaeocete whale specimens and a paper explaining their research has been submitted for publication. A member of the British Antarctic Survey examined some of our rare plesiosaur bones. Many visitors brought in items to be identified.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

6.1 Programme

A total of 63 lectures were given in the year 1st October 2024 to 30th September 25. 33 were Zoom only, 23 were hybrid and 7 in house only. Holding lectures in a hybrid fashion is useful for members who cannot attend in person but requires more volunteers willing to host the AV in house. Three quizzes were held during the year. The four special museum open days, with extra displays, that were held over weekends in October 2024 and April 2025 attracted a total of 991 visitors. Another special opening was held during Dorset Architectural Heritage Week and 67 visitors participated in the building tours. A joint meeting with the Quekett Microscopical Club was held on 31st May with displays and good attendance from members of the public and the mayor. A photographic competition was held over the winter months and drew in many entries. Five botany and two mycology trips were held. A coach trip to RHS Wisley gardens attracted 39

members. A members' garden party in the summer was attended by the deputy mayor of Bournemouth and 60 people.

6.2 Forward Plan

The Forward Plan 2025-2028, including a detailed action plan, was finalised by the trustees and submitted with other documents to apply for renewal of our accredited museum status in March 2025.

6.3 Museum Curation

A replacement Curator has not yet been identified. Members of the Museum Committee have taken on extra responsibilities, and this report represents their collective view. The general curation of the collections has continued with low levels of pest infestation and pyrite decay. No serious damage has been observed thus far. The building in general has remained in reasonable condition with no current problems. New LED lighting has been fitted to some of the Archaeology cabinets which improves the visibility and appearance of the specimens. Since no tenant has yet been found for the top floor rooms, these are currently being used for microscopy demonstrations, sorting and scanning of lantern slides and storage purposes. Storage in general is a problem, and a basement room has been used for storage mainly of bird taxidermy specimens whilst 29 birds donated by the Russell-Cotes Museum have been incorporated into our ornithology collection. It is still necessary to address the problems associated with the general environment of the building, together with the electrical power requirements.

6.4 Museum Public Openings and Exhibitions

As is normal the museum was open to the public on Tuesdays throughout the year. In addition, we opened a total of 16 extra days, including three days between Christmas and New Year and for two extra days each week (Saturdays and Wednesdays) during August 2025. Our usual twice-a-year open weekends were also arranged in October 2024 and April 2025 with a total of 991 visitors. We were fortunate that sufficient volunteers were available to cover those additional days particularly those in December. Tours of the building were arranged in Architectural Heritage Week in September 2025.

6.5 Publicity

We have again increased our number of "followers" on Facebook and one of our young volunteers was instrumental in more than doubling our number of Instagram followers between April and September 2025. We continue to improve the appearance and appeal of our content on social media. Apart from ongoing updates to content, it has not yet been possible to take steps to update our website.

7. PREMISES

Simon Turner our maintenance man has been cleaning, opening and closing the building and looking after those renting the rooms. The good news is that the whole building is leak-free and dry apart from a lantern leak which is being investigated. We are on our second year of a three-year agreement of an insurance package for the building. Contracts have been set up with the electricity and gas suppliers to get the best price, and we are monitoring the supply and price. Low energy lighting has been installed in the Museum Room. A new central heating boiler was installed in the house and flat in November 2024. We hope that will improve conditions in the winter months. Numerous maintenance jobs from refreshing paint and high-level cleaning continue to be done while Simon is on site. A room has been cleared in the basement for storage of acquired taxidermy birds. We are in the process of getting quotes for supply and installation of a kitchen in the caretaker's flat.

8. LIBRARY

The library has two sections: a lending library where members can borrow two books for up to three weeks, and a reference section containing older and fragile books that may not be removed from the library. We also have many oversize volumes on separate shelves, covering all the subjects from Archaeology to Zoology. All books are arranged according to the Dewey decimal system, on shelves for easy access, and numbering over 1000 volumes. Please ask the Librarian or volunteers if you have a problem finding books.

Several donations have been received from members, most of which have been included in the library list.

A few stalwart members borrow library books, but please do not forget, if you do not use it, we could lose this great store of knowledge.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

We continue to monitor and ensure the house meets the statutory requirements for health & safety.

We have had a full fire audit and all issues arising from this have been dealt with. Emergency lighting, PAT testing and fire extinguishers testing continue to be completed and monitored.

Moss has been removed from the car park, paths and the steps as the build-up was becoming a hazard to visitors. This is an ongoing project.

A new Emergency Plan has been prepared for the house including a new emergency incident kit to cover flood, fire etc. From September 2026 we will be looking for new volunteer first aiders as we have to re-train every three years. We will arrange the training, and volunteers would be appreciated.

10. VOLUNTEERS

The trustees are extremely grateful to those members of the Society who have acted as volunteers and also to members of the public who have given their services as volunteers. Without them, we would have been unable to open the museum as often as we did. As stated in previous reports, our aim to open the museum more frequently remains in place but it is dependent on having sufficient volunteer stewards. Once again, we would ask that any member who does not currently volunteer but is interested in doing so should either get in touch via contact@bnss.org.uk or call into the museum on a Tuesday.

11. COLLABORATIONS

We had a joint meeting with the Quekett Microscopical Club with whom we hold an affiliate membership.

Our patron Dr Jane Goodall DBE continued to use our premises to hold recordings of her interviews with a number of organisations, for which we were grateful. Unfortunately we have to report that Dr. Goodall died on 1 October 2025.

The trustees were pleased to open the building during Dorset Architectural Heritage week, and Colin Lord showed a record number of visitors the renovated lantern roof and talked about the architecture and history of the building. We continued our association with the Arts University Bournemouth with a major display of artworks in the Wallace Room and in other parts of the museum. BNSS also collaborated with Upton Country Park at their Summer Wildlife Discovery Day until an untimely thunderstorm!

12. THANKS

As in previous years we are indebted to our members for keeping us running through their subscriptions. From the other sections of the report, you will be aware of the many contributions from trustees, officers, members and volunteers without which the Society would cease to function. We would particularly like to thank Gerry Duggan for his many years of service as Treasurer and his sage advice as a trustee. We are also grateful for Mary Thornton's contribution as Programme Chair providing a diverse and stimulating programme of talks. Our website and social media continue to be important for communication with members and the public. We are grateful for another year of free 'charity hosting' for the BNSS website from 34SP.

The Trustees, November 2025



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/10/2024

To

30/09/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Subscriptions & Donations	28957.11	0.00	0.00	28957.11	25361.53
Lantern Roof Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lantern Grants (HLF & Canford Env)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Legacies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	330.00
Lettings	7390.00	0.00	0.00	7390.00	9868.00
Activities inc Teas	3756.67	0.00	0.00	3756.67	3907.55
Income from Investments	8193.12	0.00	0.00	8193.12	9245.25
Sales Receipts	7553.28	0.00	0.00	7553.28	6177.90
Young Explorers	1819.09	0.00	0.00	1819.09	1382.00
Gift Aid (Tax Rebate)	4632.88	0.00	0.00	4632.88	3484.91
Museum income (inc Open Days)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
External Grants (RHLGF)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	62302.15	0.00	0.00	62302.15	59757.14
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total receipts	62302.15	0.00	0.00	62302.15	59757.14
A3 Payments					
Accommodation & Services	67714.65	0.00	0.00	67714.65	46972.93
Salaries & Tax	-11.82	0.00	0.00	-11.82	4539.85
Administration inc legal, web, mkt	5624.11	0.00	0.00	5624.11	3878.74
Activities inc Coach	1422.72	0.00	0.00	1422.72	1573.20
Museum	1022.50	0.00	0.00	1022.50	1434.43
Lectures	969.00	0.00	0.00	969.00	1171.98
Garden	234.48	0.00	0.00	234.48	1680.25
Young Explorers	524.88	0.00	0.00	524.88	329.65
Sales Expenses	1788.83	0.00	0.00	1788.83	279.44
Lantern Roof Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub total	79289.35	0.00	0.00	79289.35	61860.47
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Equipment and Fittings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total payments	79289.35	0.00	0.00	79289.35	61860.47
Net of receipts/(payments)	-16987.20	0.00	0.00	-16987.20	-2103.33
A5 Transfers between funds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
A6 Cash funds last year end	150720.37	0.00	0.00	150720.37	152823.70
Cash funds this year end	133733.17	0.00	0.00	133733.17	150720.37

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander Current (*27330)	23733.17	0.00	0.00
	COIF Deposit A/C General (*68709)	110000.00	0.00	0.00
				0.00
	Total cash funds	133733.17	0.00	0.00

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))


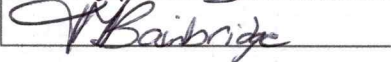
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		0.00	0.00	0.00
		0.00	0.00	0.00
		0.00	0.00	0.00
		0.00	0.00	0.00
		0.00	0.00	0.00
		0.00	0.00	0.00

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	M&G Charifund Income Units (*04717)		0.00	38934.00
	COIF Investment Fund Units (*68710)		0.00	18884.92
			0.00	0.00
			0.00	0.00
			0.00	0.00

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Land Property & Contents, 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth. (revalued)		0.00	750000.00
	Equipment and fittings (paid for 2021)		23284.52	0.00
			0.00	0.00

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Improved in-cabinet display lighting		£2,000	2026
	Building external maintenance		£10,000	2026
	Lighting EICR electrical safety upgrades, rewiring where required. Replacement of expired fluorescent fittings		£20,000	2026-27
	Internal Fire Doors		£20,000	2026-27
	Upgrade Basement Flat		£15,000	2026

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	GRENHAM IRELAND	18/11/25
	JARQUETTE BANSICOR	18/11/25

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Report to the Management Committee (trustees) of Bournemouth Natural Science Society on the accounts for the year ended 31st. March 2025.

Respective responsibilities of the Management Committee and Independent Examiner

The management committee, as the charity's trustees, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Management Committee consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

As the Independent Examiner, it is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts (under section 43(3)(a) of the Act);
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting recordshave not been met;
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed



Name: Louise Tonkin

Date: 10/11/2025

Relevant Professional Qualification: MAAT

Address: 5 Albion Road, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 1EL