



Cheltenham  
Civic Society

Annual Report & Accounts  
2023







# Annual Report & Accounts 2023



# Annual Report 2023

## GOVERNANCE

### INTRODUCTION

Cheltenham Civic Society's Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The charity is constituted as a community interest organisation (CIO) – number 1166580 – and is, therefore, governed by a memorandum and articles of association dated 13 April 2016.

### OBJECTIVES

Cheltenham Civic Society – a registered charity – is an active network of citizens that promotes civic pride in our town. As a critical friend to both Councils, we aim to encourage:

- ▶ high standards of design and execution for buildings and public spaces;
- ▶ conservation of the town's heritage;
- ▶ discussion and understanding of our urban environment.

We do this by identifying concerns, developing ideas and galvanising the community to help make the town more distinctive, attractive and enjoyable.

### TRUSTEES

The Trustees were:

- Andrew Booton – Chair
- Vacancy – Honorary Secretary
- Claire Attenborough – Honorary Treasurer
- Steve Bryson – Communications Officer
- Hugh Curran – Successful Streets Group Chair
- Peter Sayers – Vice Chair
- Sarah Harvey – Events and Heritage Open Days Officer

### ROTATION

Steve Bryson, Hugh Curran and Sarah Harvey are due to rotate and have agreed to stand again for election as Trustees and in their respective roles.

### NEW TRUSTEES

A call has been placed for new trustees.

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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### INTRODUCTION

Cheltenham Civic Society is an active network of citizens that promotes civic pride in our town.

As a critical friend to both Councils, we aim to encourage:

- ▶ high standards of design and execution for buildings and public spaces;
- ▶ conservation of the town's heritage;
- ▶ discussion and understanding of our urban environment.

We do this by identifying concerns, developing ideas and galvanising the community to help make the town more distinctive, attractive and enjoyable. We exert significant influence in Cheltenham as a visionary, authoritative and proactive group. Cheltenham Civic Society is a force for good that is determined to ensure that Cheltenham can be all it is capable of being.



The town's rich heritage deserves protection.

I am pleased to present my report and the Society's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Andrew Booton  
Chair of Trustees  
May 2024

Handwritten signature of Andrew Booton



# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### PARMOOR

Almost a year after our initial application and three delays at the request of Cheltenham Borough Council, we finally obtained planning and listed building consent for Parmoor.



A computer generated image of 'Parmoor' – which the Society has named to forward the name of Lord Parmoor, who donated 13 Lypiatt Terrace to the Civic Society in 1964.

But those delays have caused the loss of almost £100,000 in lost rents and revenues and additional costs including planning charges and inflation. This is extremely disappointing and should have been avoided. The Trustees will be submitting a complaint to the Council and will be seeking to recover some of the costs.

Ryan Farrell, who has only been a trustee for a year, has stepped forward to oversee the project. His leadership and professionalism have been invaluable in driving the project and we are very grateful for his enormous efforts and advice.

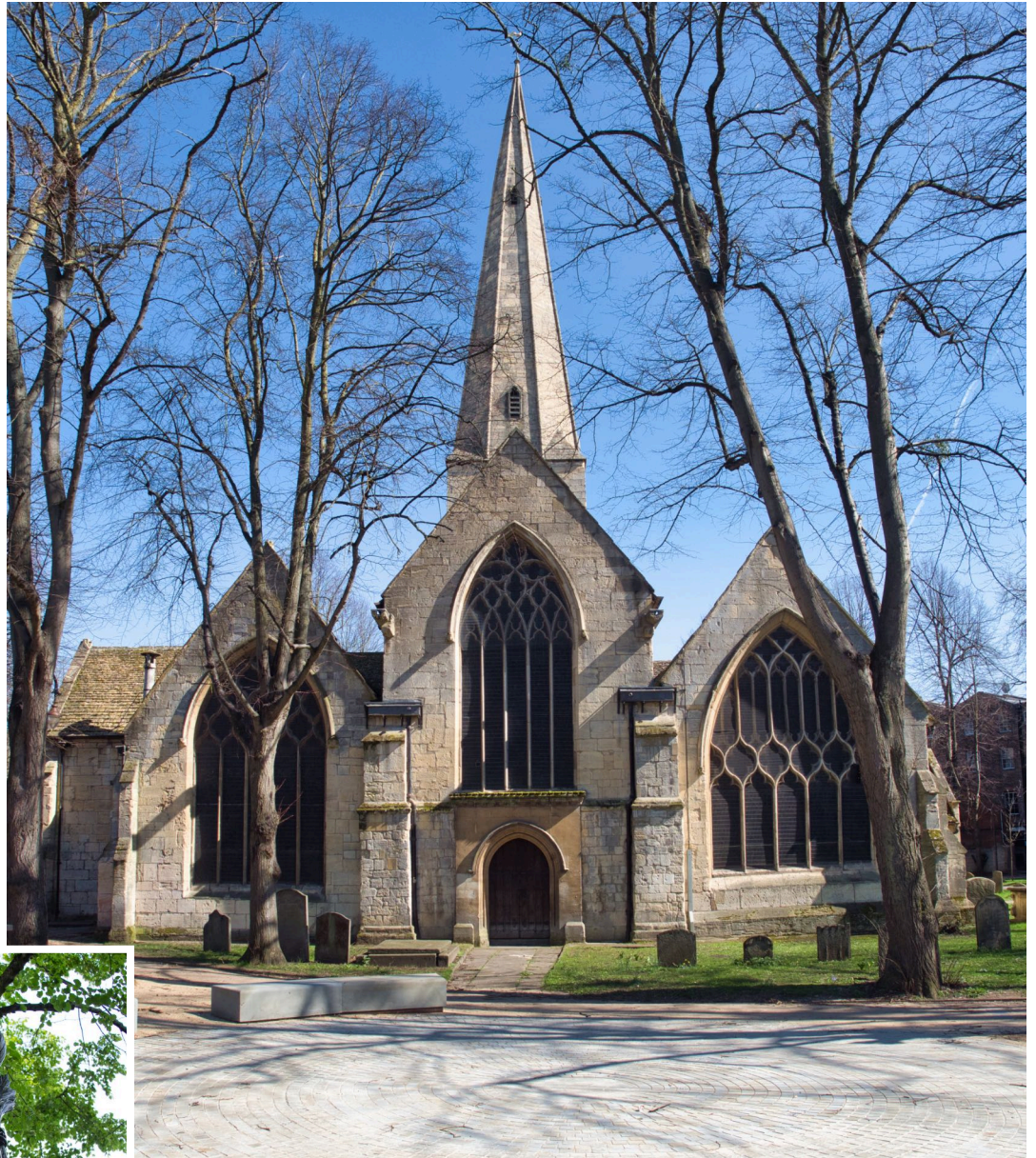


# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### FRIENDS OF THE MINSTER QUARTER

We handed over the reins of the Quarter Party, the Friends of the Minster Quarter, to Dave Winter and his team. They follow a line of other groups, such as Friends of Montpellier Bandstand and Gardens (FOMBAG), that were started by the Civic Society to become independent and specific.



One of Minster Gardens' five recently restored 'Dragon and Onion' street lamps.

The Minster Mondays working group has already had a significant impact on the area's presentation and care. We look forward to maintaining a productive relationship.



# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership has remained static at around 400. This is a little disappointing in a town of over 120,000 people, but we are part of a rich matrix of community groups including three local history societies and many 'Friends' groups, all of which have overlapping interests.

So we continue to be the group that maintains a view of the whole town and support local groups as required.



Prior to our AGM at the Everyman Theatre in April 2023, some of our members gathered in the Circle ready for a back stage tour.

We also acknowledge that fewer activities have reduced the personal contact we have enjoyed with members, for which online tools such as WhatsApp will never be a substitute.

We urgently need to find a Membership Secretary to allow Hugh Curran to focus on the **Successful Streets Group (SSG)**. If you think you could play a part, please contact Andrew Booton.



# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### SUCCESSFUL STREETS GROUP (SSG)

Having made the councils and councillors sit up and take notice with 2022's punchy Town Centre Manifesto, Hugh Curran's SSG has followed up with regular meetings, phone calls, site visits and evidence databases of areas that needed attention.



Members of the Civic Society work with volunteers from Cheltenham BID to spruce up The Strand on one of SSG's town centre street clean-up mornings.

Faced with mixed results, inconsistent application and the ever-ready excuse of resources by both CBC and GCC, the work has continued, including two clean-up mornings in the town centre, doing the job that the council should be doing but is not.



# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Heritage Open Days continue to inspire, enthuse and delight us. Twenty open venues (including six new ones) – a record number – hosted tours, exhibitions, musical performances and even heritage train journeys! They were joined by 18 guided walks, (including six new ones), self-guided trails, three plays and 21 talks.



The HODs stall in the Promenade.

We welcomed back some venues/walk leaders who hadn't been involved since pre-Covid as well as a host of regular venues who threw open their doors. Over 600 people booked for walks and talks and there was a waiting list for over half of the over-subscribed events – we could have filled some events two or three times over.

Excellent feedback from the venues showed that most experienced improved visitor numbers. Some reported their best-ever numbers and first-time venues have said they want to be involved again.

We estimate that over 1,700 people visited the venues over the ten days. A huge thank you to all the volunteers who opened venues and laid on activities, and to Sarah Harvey and her team for their tireless dedication.

# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### THE PLANNING FORUM

The Planning Forum has maintained its tempo by considering some 67 planning and listed building consent applications in its 11 meetings, as well as submissions to a number of appeals and consultations.

Adrian Phillips has led the Forum with verve and imagination as it seeks to improve the quality of architecture, planning and appearance of the town, and to learn lessons and improve planning processes.



The Planning Forum led the Society's objection to 131's appeal to keep its sea of more than 20 tents in the Prom. The Planning Inspector agreed that the tents obscured three of the town's finest Grade II\* Regency villas and ordered them to be removed. But at the time of writing 131 has yet to comply.



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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### COMMUNICATIONS

Steve Bryson continues to drive our slick Communications and PR efforts. Our top-quality quarterly newsletter OurTown and polished website are backed up by active social media and a lively WhatsApp discussion group.



The Civic Society's produces highly influential newsletters, which are circulated to our members, local councillors, the media and other interest groups.

We continually seek fresh articles, captivating photographs with captions, and new contributors for both.

One of our principles is not to show NIMBY negativity. But where we object to proposals, we always offer alternative ideas to improve outcomes.

We would love to hear your ideas and observations so please help to sustain our high-quality content and to offer ways to improve the town.



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## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### BLUE AND GREEN PLAQUES

Mike Rigby, our imaginative and erudite Plaques Officer, has been tending some slow-burning fuses by researching and building up cases for deserving commemorations. We hope to unveil at least one next year



The Civic Society last unveiled a blue plaque in 2022, when this plaque was put up in St Anne's Road to record the antiquarian, carriage builder, preacher and local councillor, Alfred Miles.





# Annual Report 2023

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### CIVIC SOCIETY ADMINISTRATION

The administrative tasks of the Society may not be perceived as particularly glamorous. However, Claire Attenborough, our Honorary Treasurer, has consistently upheld our efficiency and enhanced our management systems.

Regrettably, Philippa Jones had to step down from her role as Honorary Secretary for health reasons following a brief tenure. Efforts to find a replacement volunteer foundered but the Trustees have persevered, collectively shouldering the responsibilities in the interim.

Unfortunately, it highlights the challenge the Society faces in convincing members to step forward and help out. While we have a core of about 40 people (10% of membership) who contribute enormously, we are frequently unable to find more people to play a part, especially in the Society's leadership.

Once again, I appeal for help with finding a new Honorary Secretary, a new Membership Secretary and a small Events Team. It would be great to raise the contributing proportion to 20% of members.

# Annual Report 2023

## AND FINALLY . . .

### LOOKING AHEAD

I extend my gratitude to our dedicated Trustees for their unwavering commitment, wise decision-making and diligent efforts. Their guidance and leadership not only benefit our Society but, by extension, strengthen our community.

I am also deeply appreciative of the tireless work put in by all our volunteers, whose contributions significantly enhance the vitality and well-being of Cheltenham.

Looking ahead, we hope to occupy Parmoor later this year and to resume our talks and activities. We will be seeking to capitalise on our town centre location to reach new audiences and to try new ideas. It will be an exciting new chapter in the Society's history.

**Andrew Booton**





# Annual Accounts 2023

# Annual Accounts

YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
<b>Civic Society Income</b>						
Membership	£4,088	–	£4,088	£2,292	–	£2,292
Corporate Members	£1,225	–	£1,225	£1,250	–	£1,250
Room Hire	–	–	–	£497	–	£497
Donations	£729	£1,500	£2,229	–	–	–
Bank Interest	£3,269	–	£3,269	£243	–	£243
Sundry	£110	–	£110	£97	–	£97
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£9,421</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£10,921</b>	<b>£4,379</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>£4,379</b>
<b>Civic Society Expenditure</b>						
Property expenses						
Utilities, inc. water	(£435)	–	(£435)	£3,889	–	£3,889
Business Rates	–	–	–	£13	–	£13
Council Tax	–	–	–	£382	–	£382
Maintenance	–	–	–	£1,968	–	£1,968
Insurance	£2,690	–	£2,690	£2,717	–	£2,717
Garden	–	–	–	£138	–	£138
Storage	–	–	–	£1,471	–	£1,471
Notice to quit	–	–	–	£2,400	–	£2,400
Property Storage	£626	–	£626	–	–	–
Cambray Project	–	–	–	£841	–	£841
Newsletter	£2,487	–	£2,487	£2,607	–	£2,607
Website	£983	–	£983	£742	–	£742
Events	£269	–	£269	£20	–	£20
HODs	£90	–	£90	£37	–	£37
Printing/Stationery	–	–	–	£372	–	£372
Subscriptions	£1,285	–	£1,285	£677	–	£677
Sundry	£470	–	£470	£1,022	–	£1,022
Legal Fees	£607	–	£607	£3,470	–	£3,470
Plaques	£162	–	£162	£249	–	£249
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£9,235</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>£9,235</b>	<b>£23,015</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>£23,015</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>						
<b>before other movements</b>	<b>£187</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£1,687</b>	<b>(£18,636)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(£18,636)</b>



# Annual Accounts

## YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023

Other Receipts and Payments	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Sales proceeds from Parmoor House	–	–	–	£1,427,924	–	£1,427,924
Purchase of 26 Cambray Place	–	–	–	(£873,720)	–	(£873,720)
Improvements to 26 Cambray Place	(£21,741)	–	(£21,741)			
<b>Total Other Movements</b>	<b>£21,741</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(£21,741)</b>	<b>£554,204</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>£554,204</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) after other movements</b>	<b>(£21,555)</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>(£20,055)</b>	<b>£535,568</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>£535,568</b>

Please note that the accounts have been prepared on a receipt and payment basis.

## Reconciliation of closing reserves

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Opening Reserves	£593,019	–	£593,019
Surplus per above	(£21,555)	£1,500	(£20,055)
<b>Closing Reserves</b>	<b>£571,464</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£572,964</b>

## Reserves made up of:

Cash at bank	£147,555
Deposit	£425,000
Cash	£200
PayPal	£209
	<b>£572,964</b>

The financial statements on pages 22 and 23 of this document were approved at the Annual General Meeting of Cheltenham Civic Society CIO (registered charity no. 1166580) on 18 April 2024.

