



The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

Report of the Trustees for the period ended 31st December 2020

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the period from 1st January 2020 to the 31st December 2020

- 1) The Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the United Kingdom Charity Commission under registration number 1183397. Its governing document is a Constitution dated 8th May 2019
- 2) The Society's registered address is 18 Thames Street, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3HZ
- 3) The Society was registered as a charity on May 14th 2019
- 4) The objects of the Society are:
For the benefit of the people of Abingdon-on-Thames
 - To promote high standards of planning and architecture
 - To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, culture and architecture of the area
 - To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features or areas of historic or public interest

Examples of the ways we seek to achieve these objects are:

- Organising events and publishing articles to foster civic pride and promote the civic life, heritage and environment of the town
- Monitoring and commenting on planning applications and lobbying the relevant authorities to encourage high standards of historic conservation, planning and development worthy of the town's civic tradition and character
- Contributing in whatever way we can to help make Abingdon a great place to live, work and visit

- 5) The Trustees who have served during the period were:

Hester Hand (Chair)	Appointed May 8 th 2019
Caroline Bullock	Appointed May 8 th 2019
Keith Butler (Secretary)	Appointed May 21 st 2019
Bobbie Nichols	Appointed May 8 th 2019
Olga Senior (Treasurer)	Appointed June 11 th 2019

6) Summary of the year

- i. **Governance** – The Committee met bi-monthly during the year, with all but the first two meetings of the year being held via videoconferencing owing to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to these, the Trustees met on two occasions again via videoconferencing.
- ii. **Finance** - The bank balance at the end of the period was £9,983: full details are in the accounts.
- iii. **Membership and members' meetings** – the Society has c265 members, with just over half being life members. The Committee has continued to try to engage and inform the membership of the Society's activities, although owing to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic only one members' meeting could take place. This included a talk by Councillor Alison Rooke on new developments in the town and was well attended. Communication with members was also maintained through a regular newsletter.
- iv. **Survey of Members** – during the year the Society conducted a detailed survey of what members wanted it to focus on and what it ought to be doing. A total of 55 responses to the survey were received, and the principal findings were as follows:
 - 1) The overwhelming majority of members feel that the format and frequency of members' meetings was about right.
 - 2) There is a desire in the membership to learn more about the history of Abingdon. Some issues (e.g. Old Abbey House and The Upper Reaches) were indeed referred to by several members.
 - 3) The amount of communication with members was felt to be appropriate. The Society was felt to be an important source of information as to what is happening in the town
 - 4) Transport issues and the availability of cycle routes were a clear concern

The committee were reassured by these findings and are focussing on continuing to deliver in these areas given the restrictions imposed by the pandemic
- v. **Public Benefit**
 - **Planning** – the Committee is fortunate to have several members with extensive experience of planning issues and the Society has thus monitored planning applications in the area and made submissions and comments where appropriate, with the aim of preventing developments which we believe would be detrimental to the town's character or vibrancy or to the wellbeing of residents in general.
 - **Conservation** – Society members have made a major contribution to the Conservation Area Appraisal for the Albert Park area.
 - **Neighbourhood Plan** – the Society is represented on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and will thus be able to play a part in the plan's development
- vi. **Old Abbey House** – the Society led a campaign to preserve the site for the community and stop it being sold to developers. A petition was organised and extensive publicity obtained to persuade the Council to consider alternatives to a sale, or to sell to a community group or groups. A decision was however, made in December 2020 to sell to a developer for conversion to an hotel.
- vii. **Heritage Festival** – as part of the national Heritage Open Days, the Society participated in organising the Town's Heritage Weekend, and ran an information stall in the Market Square



- viii. **Relations with Town and District Councils** - the Committee agreed that the Society should continue to be a “critical friend” of the Councils and has commented on several council initiatives
- ix. **Community Freespace** – the pandemic restrictions meant that usage of the freespace was severely curtailed during the year. It was, however, used as a centre for Abimeds, who were a group of volunteers who arranged for deliveries of medicines to those unable or unwilling to attend pharmacies. Owing to the lack of willingness by the landlord to extend the licence for use of the unit, the occupation ceased in November 2020.
- x. **National Organisation** - The Society is a member of the national organisation for Civic Societies which gives access to the experience of other similar groups and to information about national developments in the areas of planning and development.

Hester Hand

On behalf of the Trustees of Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

June 2021



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01-Jan-20

To

31-Dec-20

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Subscriptions	1,242	-	-	1,242	310
Donations	473	-	-	473	275
Heritage Festival	-	-	-	-	157
Grants	-	2,101	-	2,101	9,400
Members Lunch	-	-	-	-	385
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,715	2,101	-	3,816	10,527
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	1,715	2,101	-	3,816	10,527
A3 Payments					
Room Hire	24	-	-	24	125
Heritage Festival	347	605	-	952	10,140
Insurance	353	-	-	353	353
Members Lunch	-	-	-	-	495
Community Free Space	-	682	-	682	50
Members Survey	228	-	-	228	-
Archive Project	-	434	-	434	-
Local Events	141	-	-	141	-
Subscriptions to organisations	264	-	-	264	-
Refunds	210	-	-	210	-
Sub total	1,567	1,721	-	3,288	11,163
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	1,567	1,721	-	3,288	11,163
Net of receipts/(payments)	148	380	-	528	636
Old Charity allocation	-	-	-	-	10,091
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	6,136	3,319	-	9,455	-
Cash funds this year end	6,284	3,699	-	9,983	9,455

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		6,284	3,699	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	6,284	3,699	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			

[illegible]

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

[illegible]

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Print Name _____

Date of approval

HESTER HAND

27.1.2021

27.1.2021