

Hampshire History Trust

Registered Charity Number 1191377

Registered Address Winchester Business Hub, 32 St. Thomas Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9HJ

Trustees' Annual Report

1st November 2024 to 31st October 2025

Trustees

- Elizabeth King (chair)
- Paul Blackburn (treasurer)
- Madeleine Cowell – resigned 10th December 2025
- Mike Dymond – appointed 10th December 2024
- Dr Andrew Earwaker – appointed 23rd December 2024
- Sharon Gray
- Simon Mildinhal
- Richard North
- Mark Page
- Christopher Turner

The Trust is required to have at least 3 and no more than 12 trustees.

Background

Heritage Open Days was established in England in 1994 (as a contribution to the European Heritage Days) and has since grown into the country's largest community heritage festival. In 2016, when local residents Nicky Gottlieb and Becky Brown decided that Heritage Open Days should be an integral part of Winchester's cultural calendar, they set about creating a programme of events in and around the city. Expanding and diversifying from less than a dozen events in 2015 to over 200 in 2025, Winchester Heritage Open Days are now flourishing.

Hampshire History Trust was set up as a registered charity in 2020 to oversee Winchester Heritage Open Days, and to take on other projects to create opportunities to discover and celebrate Hampshire's rich and diverse history and heritage, giving long-term sustainability to those aims and the work required to make them happen.

Description of the charity's trusts

1. Hampshire History Trust is governed by a constitution document that was in place when the charity was incorporated and approved by the Charities Commission on 21st September 2020.
2. Hampshire History Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (governed by the Foundation Constitution document).

3. The founding trustees were appointed from the people who had developed the original projects (Winchester Heritage Open Days) and brought them to the current size and scale. Further trustees have been appointed to build a wider team with the appropriate skills and knowledge to support the aims of the charity and run it effectively.

Additional governance information

1. New trustees are provided with the appropriate guidelines and information to allow them to undertake their roles effectively.
2. The formal business of the charity is conducted through regular trustee meetings (typically quarterly) and actions are agreed and followed up regularly.
3. Additional meetings of trustees (working groups) take place outside the boardroom to carry out the work of the trust and, where necessary, board decisions can be made via email.
4. In the financial year the charity employed one part-time administrator to coordinate the Winchester Heritage Open Days festival alongside one of the founding trustees. The two main projects (Winchester Heritage Open Days and Hampshire HistBites) are supported by up to 20 part time volunteers at any one time.
5. All Trust policies are accessible online by all trustees and key policies for volunteers are sent to them prior to them signing their volunteering agreement.
6. The Trust has a risk management policy and associated risk register which is used to develop appropriate policies and procedures.

Objects

Hampshire History Trust has the following stated objects:

1. To advance the arts, heritage, and culture for the public benefit by promoting and organising events, festivals, and workshops in and around Winchester, Hampshire with a particular focus on the development of a Winchester History Festival.
2. To advance the education of the public (and particularly amongst those living in, working in, or visiting Hampshire) in the subjects of history and heritage by providing lectures and talks, guided walks, staging exhibitions, educational materials, podcasts and other similar educational activities and projects as the charity trustees think fit.

Activities

2024/5 saw a full programme of activities. Hampshire History Trust:

1. Coordinated and promoted Winchester Heritage Open Days as a full live festival of events.
2. Successfully developed fundraising activities
 - a. Growth of our Friends scheme, to give supporters access to information and events as a thank you for their financial support.

- b. A series of 9 talks about local heritage and history between August 2024 and June 2025.
 - c. Development of sponsorship opportunities for local businesses.
- 3. Work to strengthen the HistBites podcast team.
- 4. Continued to develop the board structure and foundations of the Trust.

Achievements and performance

Winchester Heritage Open Days – 2025 Festival Review

The Festival

This year's tenth annual Winchester Heritage Open Days festival, organised by Hampshire History Trust, took place from Friday 12 -Sunday 21 September 2025. The 2025 theme was 'Architecture' and the festival was fittingly launched at the offices of Design Engine Architects whose contribution was much appreciated.

With 204 free events available across Hampshire ranging from museum and historic property open days, walking tours, talks, crafts, there was something for everyone to enjoy. Measuring overall attendance is becoming more difficult as many venues elect to operate their own ticketing, but we estimate that there were over 33,000 individual "visits" across the festival period.

How did it go?

In 2025 34% of festival events were based around the city of Winchester (compared to 41% in 2024). Events again spanned the whole of Hampshire and across into the New Forest. 37 towns and villages in Hampshire hosted at least one of our events.

As ever, the most popular events included those allowing access to places not normally open to the public. Merton Castle again proved extremely popular as did a range of activities based around Hyde 900.

71% of those who completed our feedback survey attended 2 or more events during the festival and 48% of visitors travelled more than 10 miles to attend an event.

Behind the Scenes

Our website, attracting 68,000 visits, remains the key tool for attracting visitors and providing them with information about the Open Days events.

Our regular e-newsletter now has 2,540 subscribers, an increase of 8% on 2024. Our e-newsletters keep our supporters up to date with all the latest festival news including forthcoming events, volunteering opportunities, and other activities.

Social media engagement was very similar to 2025, with a slight increase in Instagram engagement offset by a small dip in X (Twitter).

We are also proud that of how the festival reaches into society with 35% of visitors from a C2DE background and 21% identifying as having a disability.

Feedback

We again received some wonderful feedback from attendees. As in previous years, there is still room to include more places that are not normally accessible, walking tours, more family friendly events and more on early Winchester history.

We have looked at our processes and identified a number of potential improvements:

- Website usability
- Event scheduling to spread events better across the whole festival and to try and avoid clashes
- Tour ticketing – try to expand the number of tours and improve availability
- Exclusive access – try to secure more venues not normally available to the public and use them better to promote the festival
- Ticketing process – try to streamline the Ticketsource process to make it more customer friendly

Sponsors

Hampshire History Trust is grateful for the continuing support of our sponsors and funders. In the year we were supported by:

- Adam Architecture
- Andrew Smith & Son
- Bangkok Brasserie and Kyoto Kitchen
- Gentian
- Hampshire County Council
- Peter Marsh Consulting
- Warrens of Winchester
- Winchester BID
- Winchester Round Table
- Wykeham Arms

Supporters

Our Friends Scheme, launched in 2023, allowing individuals to contribute to supporting our work, grew again during the year.

Rick Stein again supported the Trust by hosting a networking coffee morning, Design Engine Architects hosted the 2025 festival launch at their Winchester office and Wykeham Arms donated

funds from the sale of their filtered water to diners. We also received a donation from Winchester & District Round Table.

We were delighted to be selected by Mayor of Winchester, Russell Gordon-Smith, as one of his mayor's charities for his term in office (2024-25). Funds from these activities of £3,202 were received after this financial year and will be included in our 2025-26 accounts.

We were also supported by Hampshire Cultural Trust with venue space at no charge and by the Hampshire Chronicle newspaper who ran a 3-month campaign for us in the lead up to the festival.

Fundraising Talks

We held a series of 7 talks during the year:

- November'24 – Mappae Mundi – Carolin Esser-Miles
- December '24 – Evidence of Neolithic Activity and a WW1 camp in Winchester – Matt Garner
- January'25 – HMS Agamemnon – Mary Montagu-Scott
- February '25 – Blood & Misery – the English Civil War in Hampshire – Dr Alistair Dougall
- March'25 – I am Jane Austen – Louise West
- April'25 – The East India Company – John McAleer
- June'25 – County House Libraries – JJ Heath-Caldwell

Thanks go to all the speakers who provided excellent talks on a wide range of historical topics.

Adam Architecture hosted a number of the events at their offices, and we are most grateful for their continuing support.

The "Midweek Musings" talks will continue in 2026.

Patrons

John Pilkington is a renowned explorer and broadcaster who made his name in the 1980s as a travel writer and photographer known for his captivating talks and documentaries. He holds the Royal Geographical Society's Ness Award for popularizing geography.

Dan Snow is a British popular historian, broadcaster, and television presenter known for making history accessible through BBC and Channel 5 documentaries, books, and his History Hit platform.

Hampshire HistBites

After a successful re-launch in the autumn of 2024 with series 9 of Hampshire HistBites, we once again struggled to recruit enough qualified volunteers to produce a full series in 2025. At the start of 2026 we are back up to strength and look forward to releasing new episodes in Spring.

Financial review

Reserves

Hampshire History Trust have a reserves policy which aims to support the charity in balancing short-term expenditure needs with longer-term support for our activities and planned future events. Because our income is not ongoing or guaranteed, we need to hold reserves to ensure that we can continue to support our charitable activities in future months and years.

1) Definition

Reserves are unrestricted funds that are available to spend on our charitable purposes.

2) Reserves will be held for 4 main purposes

- a) Contingencies – to ensure that HHT can respond to unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency or unforeseen event.
- b) Cash flow management – to ensure that we have funds to manage (expected) future commitments in line with our programmes of activities and events and to meet short term costs.
- c) Conservation of donated funds which are intended to provide long-term benefits or benefits over several years so that such funds are used appropriately.
- d) Closure – we will ensure that there are sufficient funds to meet any outstanding financial commitments in the event of the closure of the charity.

3) Process

Reserves and funding requirements will be reviewed by Trustees as part of the annual budget setting process and through regular Trustee meetings. Reserves will be needed to meet:

- a) Underlying (semi) fixed costs such as IT infrastructure and insurance.
- b) Planned costs to run the annual Winchester Heritage Open Days and maintain the availability of the Hampshire HistBites podcasts (e.g. part-time administrator costs, promotional activity, venue costs).
- c) Costs of fundraising or other events on behalf of the Trust throughout the year

Details of any funds materially in deficit

- 1. None to report

Financial review details

- 1. Income for the year was £15,134 which was slightly down on the previous year. However, costs were also reduced, allowing a small surplus to be achieved.
 - a. Sponsorship income was generated from Winchester BID and a number of local businesses (as detailed in the Annual Report)
 - b. A grant from Hampshire County Council also supported our work.

- c. Fundraising events, the Friends scheme and other donations made up the balance of income.
- 2. The main outgoings in the period related to the production and promotional costs of the festival events and activities along with the costs of a part-time administrator to co-ordinate festival creation and running of the activities. Costs also include the software subscriptions to continue to host the HistBites podcasts.
- 3. The overall net surplus of £2.3K reported shows a year-on-year improvement but we are conscious of needing to work hard on fundraising if we are to be able to expand our activities and the areas of Hampshire that we can cover.
- 4. The trust ended the year with £16.7K of funds to support the growth of the charity and to provide the programme of Heritage Open Days in 2026.
- 5. Detailed figures are provided in the accounts below.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Hampshire History Trust

1191377

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from

01-Nov-24


To

31-Oct-25

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					
Sponsorship - Local businesses	2,850	-	-	2,850	-
Sponsorship - Winchester Business Improvement District	2,000	-	-	2,000	-
Grant - Hampshire CC	500	-	-	500	-
Grant - Round Table	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
Other local business support	2,253	-	-	2,253	-
Fundraising Events	3,317	-	-	3,317	-
Friends Scheme	1,464	-	-	1,464	-
Donations	1,750	-	-	1,750	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	15,134	-	-	15,134	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	15,134	-	-	15,134	-
A3 Payments					
Heritage Open Days Festival	-	-	-	-	-
Marketing	968	-	-	968	-
Festival co-ordinator costs	7,924	-	-	7,924	-
Venue costs	216	-	-	216	-
IT Costs	883	-	-	883	-
Other costs	-	-	-	-	-
Histbites Podcasts	904	-	-	904	-
Fundraising Events	784	-	-	784	-
Overhead Costs	-	-	-	-	-
IT Costs	589	-	-	589	-
Insurance	354	-	-	354	-
Other	174	-	-	174	-
Sub total	12,796	-	-	12,796	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	12,796	-	-	12,796	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,338	-	-	2,338	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	14,382	-	-	14,382	-
Cash funds this year end	16,720	-	-	16,720	-

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	Bank Account	15,977	-	-
	PayPal Account	743	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	16,720	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Prepaid IT costs	363	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Other costs	Unrestricted	150	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Elizabeth King	8/4/26
			Paul Blackburn	8/4/26