

Creation Science Movement [CSM] Trustees' Report for the Year ending 31st August 2024. Charity No. 801745

17 The Hard, Portsmouth PO1 3DT

Public Benefit

The Trustees have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006, to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in December 2008, and have maintained the aims of CSM, as stated in our Trust Deed.

CSM is the publisher of educational materials, books and journals that examine the scientific basis of various views within the origins debate. There are no restrictions on who can receive our mailings; we get requests through various channels and they are also made available to other charities for them to distribute. We are reliant on donations for all aspects of our work.

Accounts

This annual report and these accounts are an interim report. The decision to sell the property at 17 The Hard has been taken and we are in the final negotiation phase of the sale. It is possible that the publication of our 2023/24 accounts would affect the completion of that task, moreover, the trustees have limited time resources and all available management time has been directed towards selling the property. To that end, the trustees judged that it was in the best interests of the charity if the 2023/24 accounts were not published until after the sale is concluded. The trustees confirm that the funds available were adequate for our 2023/24 needs, and that CSM has adequate cash flow and loan facilities to meet our operational needs until August 2025 and beyond. We anticipate the sale will conclude early in the 2025/26 FY.

The Expo

Until COVID, CSM ran a small museum, known as the Expo, on The Hard in Portsmouth, and it is now some 30 years since we bought the premises. A decision to refurbish and expand the Expo was taken over ten years ago by the then trustees and first steps for that work were taken prior to the pandemic. However, COVID accelerated the digital engagement by society, which was already gathering pace, and a new world has emerged. By the time the current trustees came onboard the project was already in execution and it was no longer possible to reconsider decisions which by then had already been made. The pandemic led to the doubling of building costs which transformed an affordable but expensive project into one that was unaffordable. It became the tipping point between prioritising a physical exhibition Vs returning to an itinerant conference programme.

As reported last year, the unexpected increase in refurbishment costs led to a review of CSM's long-term strategy and crystallised the decision to close the facility; a decision taken because the only way the Expo could be salvaged was by raising additional funds several times the organisation's annual turnover. That was an unlikely outcome and taking any other decision would be irresponsible.

September 2024 was the second anniversary of the emergency board meeting held in September 2022. During 2023 the board explored all other funding options and possible partnership ventures before concluding that a sale was the likely outcome. We decided that CSM could begin the necessary preparatory work for a potential sale but that we would wait until the second anniversary before taking irreversible actions or dismantling any displays. In parallel we would

continue to explore alternative uses for the building. We began dismantling the displays in October 2024 while still searching for alternative uses for the building. A prospective independent school were looking for premises came to our attention. Our search ended in January 2025 when they decided that the change in VAT regulations had created even more uncertainty which only added to the difficulties presented when renovating the space into something suitable for an independent school. Moreover, this discussion highlighted the costs of bringing a listed building back into service and just how unreachable it would be for almost any conceivable charitable use.

Consultations with donors during Q4 of 2023 and Q1 of 2024

As previously reported, the trustees shared the financial situation with our donors during late 2022 and throughout 2023. During the summer of 2024 the trustees offered tours of the premises to donors who have supported CSM over the years. Full updates were issued during 2022, 2023 and early 2024.

Shop Stock

CSM ran a small on-premises bookshop selling books and knick-knacks. We still hold stocks of topical DVDs but the market for these has evaporated. We also held a stock of 'gift shop' grade mantle-piece minerals and miscellaneous small fossils which were unsellable. Some of the unsold items are not relevant to CSM's future work and will be disposed on wholesale terms. The shop stock includes some books titles that are now 20 years old, bought in bulk, which have become slow-moving items. Consequently, the stock doesn't hold any intrinsic value and the income generated doesn't cover the cost of storage let alone the staffing costs to process orders.

CSM published several books but was unable to establish significant sales channels beyond its in-house shop or day conference events. Alternative arrangements for distribution are being examined, but will need to cover sales and distribution costs.

The Setting of Reserves for 2024/25.

Looking forward to 2024/25 we will have significant selling up legal costs. Before the building can be sold substantial works are called for as it needs to be returned to the so called 'white shell' condition so that buyers can see what they are buying. Moreover, we have to bear CSM's and the Expo's running costs until the Expo is sold. Most of that work has been completed and those costs will be reported in the 2024/25 FY accounts. We set the required reserves for 2024/25 at £50k, which we had available at the start of the FY. It is possible that the costs will exceed the funds available and some additional short-term finance required to complete what amounts to minor building works. Suitable loan facilities are in place should additional funds for the work be required.

CSM's Management Structure: Past, Present and Future.

The Team

Steve Mountain having given a year's notice of intended resignation left as a trustee in January 2024. CSM had one long standing employee who undertook our admin work, he retired in December 2023. After his retirement CSM took on a part-time admin assistant who only stayed for a few months before leaving. CSM's admin work had to be taken over by the trustees. Shutting down a building is a task of immense proportions; as part of the anticipated closedown,

we had 25 years' worth of records and archived materials to sort through, catalogue and dispose of. Moreover, onsite attendance by someone with decision making powers and authority was required at all times since the task had many unknowns. The full building closedown report is available on request. One of the trustees ended up completing the equivalent of a year's FTE work between June 2023 and June 2025 which will be detailed in the 2024/24 FY report. All this work needed to be completed in a few months. One of the trustees worked extensive hours to do so and prepare the building for sale.

At the end of FY2023/4 the trustees were:

- Mr Christopher Wainwright. (Charities Commission contact)
- Mr David Shires
- Mr Richard Broadberry.

Richard Broadberry resigned in April 2023 through frustration given the board's inability to make difficult decisions and as a result Christopher Wainwright took on trustee responsibilities in May 2023. Richard returned to the board in December on the understanding that difficult decisions were taken. David Shires continues to provide his publishing expertise and has given many days a week over many years writing, editing and overseeing CSM's publications. Nevertheless, Richard and David, both of whom are in their 70s, have asked that the board seek replacements. Christopher Wainwright is leading on the Expo's clearance and sale.

Recruitment

Our previous CEO fulfilled this role as a post-retirement pro-bono arrangement, which allowed him to steer CSM for 30 years after his retirement as a university professor. Reliance on retirees to run an organisation is not always possible and looking forward we have no candidate retirees on the horizon able to take on the leadership of CSM. Consequently, CSM may need to recruit one or more people to provide input beyond what is possible from volunteers. The organisation requires remodelling from the inside out, and whoever CSM employs will need to approach the role as their passion and not just see it as a job. We have tried for some years to recruit volunteers from our membership network and failed for various reasons. Even finding someone to employ in a junior role is challenging, we took on a good employee in November 2023 but were unable to retain her once a better job came along.

Employing someone in a senior role who doesn't have a passion for the work will not be effective, if they aren't doing the work as their passion then they will simply leave when a better job offer comes along. Our next CEO will have to be an experienced professional yet CSM is not in a position to compete on commercial terms with companies offering the unrefusable alternative job. Hiring from the open market where salaries routinely exceed £60k is unaffordable for CSM but anyone working for something significantly less will either not have the skills necessary, or only be doing so because they personally identify with CSM's goals.

The Future Legal Structure

The board notes that new younger trustees are urgently required and an informal approach was made to a similar organisation to see if they were willing to share trustees. As it transpired, they too were in a similar position having ageing trustees looking to reduce their commitments.

Asking people to take on unlimited liability for decisions taken by people who have since left is not realistic. Therefore, incorporation is a necessary step if we are to have any success with

recruitment. The incorporation of CSM was first proposed in 2016 but not taken forward at that time. Steps towards incorporation will be taken during 2025.

Submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Wainwright', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Dated 17th June 2025

Christopher Wainwright, Trustee.
Creation Science Movement
Charity No. 801745