



The Stratford-upon-Avon Society

Trustee Report and Accounts for the Year ending 31st December 2021

JUNE 1, 2022

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON-SOCIETY

Registered Charity No: 251182

**THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182**

CONTENTS

Charity Information	2
Trustees Report	3-13
Independent Examiners Report	14
Treasurers Report and Income & Expenditure Account	15
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	16

**THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182**

President	Dr Kevin Bond
Vice Presidents	Professor Ian Heggie Dr Roger Pringle
Chairman	Dr Lindsay MacDonald
Vice Chairman	John Scampion CBE
General Committee (Trustees)	Jonathan Devereux (Treasurer) Margaret Cund (Planning) Ian Fradgley (Membership) Steve Turner (Planning) Dr Robert Bearman MBE (Civic) Dr Diana Owen OBE (Environment) Ian Prosser (Civic)

Note

Charity Number	251182
Hon Secretary	Olga David
Transport	Jann Tracy
Publicity	Helen Elliott

Bankers	Barclays Bank plc Market Cross Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire CV37 0EA
----------------	---

Independent Examiner	Wende A Hubbard FCCA 8 Elm Court, Arden Street Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6PA
-----------------------------	--

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Trustees report for the year ended 31st December 2021

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2021.

Constitution, Objects and Policies

The Society is constituted by Trust Deed dated 19th January 1966 and is registered with the Charity Commission, Registration Number 251182.

Appointment of Trustees is governed by the constitution of the Charity. The Board of Trustees to fill vacancies arising through resignation or death of an existing Trustee.

The Trustees comprise the officers of the Stratford-upon-Avon Society and are responsible for managing the business of the society according to Charity Law.

The Charity is Established for the public benefit which through its objects and principal activity is within the area of Stratford-upon-Avon and its surroundings

- To promote high standards of planning and architecture
- To educate and stimulate public interest in the geography, history, natural history, and architecture of the area
- To encourage the preservation, protection, development, and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area The society will through its general committee
 - Consult and work with the local planning authority, planning committees and all other statutory authorities, educational institutions, voluntary organizations, charities and persons having similar aims to the society
 - Pursue these aims through meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, other forms of education, publicity, and promotion of schemes of a charitable nature
 - Raise funds for the furtherance of charitable objects through contributions from person or persons by way of subscription, donation, or other contribution.

Annual Review

Chairman's Report for 2021

The year of 2021 saw the Stratford Society adopt a pattern of regular meetings, with 12 monthly member events and no summer break. Because of the ongoing covid pandemic and lockdowns imposed by Government, however, all of the meetings were virtual, conducted online by the Zoom facility. Participants eventually became accustomed to these, but they always seemed more like business seminars than gatherings of members of a society with shared interests. There is no substitute for physically meeting together in a room with a friendly atmosphere!

We did manage to meet outdoors for three memorable events. The first was a Spine Walk, led by Dr Robert Bearman, from the top of Bridge Street along High Street, Chapel Street, Church Street, Old Town and thence to Holy Trinity Church. Such was the demand that two groups were organised, one in each direction. The second event was at the invitation of the Friends of Shakespeare's Church, where we had the rare privilege of being able to climb up the scaffolding to the top of the north transept to inspect the restoration of the masonry. The third event was the Garden Party, held in September, where we were the guests of Tony and Janet Bird in the lovely gardens of their home in Billesley.

The Committee met six times by zoom during the year, at two-monthly intervals. There is a great deal of talent, experience and commitment among committee members, and we are fortunate to have such a strong group to lead the Society. My sincere thanks to all of them for their hard work and many contributions throughout the year. Thanks, in particular to Dr Diana Owen, as she steps down from the Committee, for leading our work relating to the environment, which has opened up new avenues.

As we are now nearly halfway through 2022, there are encouraging signs. We are meeting together in person again, and there are three activities in which the Society is taking the lead:

- Consultation by Warwickshire County Council for the reconfiguration of High Street and Bridge Street, based on extensive discussions in the Town Strategic Partnership, in which our Deputy Chairman, John Scampion, has played a major role.

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Chairman's Report (continued)

- Progression of plans for the installation of six new pavement plaques in front of key buildings along the Historic Spine.
- Grant from Historic England for an important historical research project to investigate the rebuilding of timber-framed houses in High Street and Chapel Street following three disastrous town fires in 1594, 1595 and 1614. This project was masterminded by Dr Robert Bearman.

The tension continues between the needs of preservation of the historic town centre and contemporary pressures for development. An example is the site of the former Debenhams store in High Street, to be turned into a large hotel. But instead of re-using the existing building, which has significant heritage value, the District Council has approved a plan for its demolition and a new building to be constructed. This is needlessly destructive, being both environmentally damaging and against the guidance of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Another example is the site on the corner of Greenhill and Arden Streets, which should be cherished as a low-rise space, welcoming pedestrians coming from the station. Yet the owner is pressing for a monstrous high-rise development that would loom over the surroundings. The Society is fearless in expressing its opposition to such developments through the representations of Margaret Cund, our Planning Officer.

The main concern at present is that our membership continues to decline, and the number of new members joining during the year was outweighed by the number who resigned or deceased. Fewer than 100 members are contactable by email. Of these, fewer than half respond to requests or participate in meetings. Somehow we need to reach out to younger generations of residents to get them involved. The issues of planning, tourism, traffic, roads, house building, conservation, the river and the environment remain as important as ever to well-being and quality of life in Stratford. I encourage everyone who can suggest relevant topics for meetings, excursions or campaigns to get involved.

Lindsay MacDonald, Chairman
June 2022

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Programme Report

The whole year of 2021 was affected by the covid pandemic and consequent lock-downs, making it impossible to meet indoors. The monthly member meetings were therefore 'virtual', held by the online zoom facility. They are listed at: <https://www.stratfordsociety.co.uk/events/meetings-2021>

18 January How can the High Street recover from covid? – Joseph Baconnet

15 February Pandemics Past and Present – Nicholas Fogg

15 March Stratford in the National Census – Mairi Macdonald and Sally Bannister

19 April The Old Tramway Revived, from Stratford to Shipston – Andy Fincham

17 May Helping the Homeless at the Fred Winter Centre – Paul Spooner

21 June A Tale of Ten Jobs – Richard Howarth

7 July AGM – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

19 July Repurposing Stratford Town Centre – James Brookes

16 Aug Developments on the Canal – Russell Poulton

20 Sept Tourism Then and Now – Helen Smith

18 October The Stratford Marina – Neil Warren

17 Nov What's happening to our Town Centre? – Geraldine Collinge, John Scampion, John Myatt

20 December Christmas Quiz – devised by Margaret Cund

Other activities in 2021 (all outdoor)

24 August Walk through town along the Historic Spine, led by Dr Robert Bearman

11 September Garden Party hosted by Tony and Janet Bird in Billesley

24 November Climb up scaffolding to view restoration of north transept at Holy Trinity Church

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Planning Report

Stratford District Council (SDC) planning applications for 2021 on which the Stratford Society submitted comments are listed in the attached annex showing the line taken and the outcome, where already known. Using the application number, our comments can be read on-line at E-Planning – Stratford District Council.

Where we are able, the Society is willing to support planning applications. However, it is regrettable that some of the proposals to which we objected were approved by the Council. To take one example, the application for the further extension of approval for the erection of an Observation Wheel in Swan's Nest Lane was opposed not only by the Society but also by some 50 residents of the town. Undeterred by this, the Council gave approval for the Wheel to remain in place for six months in each of the coming five years, beginning in 2022.

It was also disappointing that, in considering the future of the Debenhams' site in High Street, neither the developers nor the Council made any mention of this forming part of the Historic Spine through the town. Furthermore, in approving the planning application, no account was taken of our urging that conversion would be preferable to demolition – to avoid the emission of thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide (as recommended in a report by the Royal Academy of Engineering).

More positively, the Council did refuse permission for a development at the rear of Meer Street. Here, as in some more recent cases, it has been helpful that the Town Council and the Society have been at one in their objections. In other more recent cases, the Society has been able to support the views of the Town Transport Group.

One application which is still outstanding relates to the proposed construction of a five-storey apartment block on the corner of Greenhill Street and Arden Street, which is on the edge of the Conservation Area. When consultation on this was re-opened, the Society supported the provision of more residential accommodation in the heart of Stratford but objected both to the height of the building and to the failure to take account of the agreed Neighbourhood Development Plan. Under this, the aim is to provide high-quality pedestrian and cycle links at this junction, which is a major gateway into the town centre. No decision has yet been taken on this application.

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Planning Report (Continued)

The Society is deeply concerned by the volume of traffic, including HGVs, using Clopton Bridge. There can be no doubt about the desirability of reducing traffic in the town centre, particularly those vehicles which are merely passing through. It would seem that the option of building a south-west relief road remains on the cards, though consultation on this closed in 2018 and no decision has yet been taken. A further report is awaited on ways of mitigating additional traffic arising from the development of a Garden Village at Long Marston. The Society will continue to follow this important issue closely.

**THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182**

Planning Report (Continued)

SDC PLANNING APPLICATIONS 2021

(where Stratford Society has commented)

		Consultation closure date (Society's line)	Committee/ Decision date
18/01883/FUL	South-western Relief Road	[Revised Target Date for Determination of 31/03/22 not met]	
<u>2021</u>			
21/00456/FUL	Observation wheel	April (Object)	28/4/21 (Permission)
21/00557/FUL	Bancroft Gardens market	End-May 2021 (Object)	-
		Late February 2022 (Object)	21/3/22 (Permission)
21/02322/LBC	Debenhams redevelopment	End-September (Object)	14/4/22 (LBC – Consent)
21/02447/FUL	Greenhill St/Arden St	End-October (Object)	-
		Late-April 2022 (Object)	?
21/03126/FUL	The Lench Meadow (Riverside Project)	November (Support)	24/11/21 (Permission)
21/03559/FUL	1-7 Trinity Close	End-December (Support, subject to conditions)	9/3/22 (Refusal)
21/03615/FUL	Rear of Meer Street	Mid-January 2022 (Object)	8/2/22 (Refusal)
21/03502/REM	Swan's Landing (Canal Quarter)	Mid-May 2022 (Object)	8/6/22 (Committee)

LBC = Listed Building Consent REM = Reserved Matters

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Environment Report

The Stratford Society Environment Group (SSEG) was formed following the 2021 AGM and is led by Diana Owen with Kevin Bond, Bob Bearman, Jann Tracy, Margaret Cund, Elaine Newbold, Jonathan Devereux, Steve Turner & Robin Sankey. The group has met three times, in October and November 2021 and in January 2022.

The SSEG has considered its scope and purpose and does not wish to duplicate the work of other Society sub-groups, principally planning and transport. The group recommended that the Society might consider expanding its remit to include 'the natural environment' and might lead a debate in the town to agree what sort of growth we wished to see in the area and how best to achieve a balance between economic growth, the environment and quality of life.

The SSEG recommends that the Stratford Society:

- support other local groups active in protecting the environment and promoting sustainability,
- should press for reinstatement of sustainable building standards in planning consents & all new developments should embody the highest environmental standards,
- encourage SDC / WCC to meet climate change targets, and
- that the Society should support re-use rather than demolition and rebuild.

The SSEG looked for best practice in comparative towns in the UK and has not yet identified a good case study to learn from. The group also identified speakers for the Society and has contacted three local secondary schools to ask them if their young people might be willing to present to the Society their ideas for priorities and actions needed in a local climate change action plan. This schools project is on-going.

The SSEG is also a forum for the exchange of information and ideas including the lack of car charging points, the weight limit on the Clopton Bridge, the Riverside Scheme, solar panel 'farms', cycle routes and the possibility of community renewable energy schemes.

Finally, the group has agreed to prepare a set of guidelines for the Society outlining our position on a range of Environmental matters. Should the Society adopt these, we would seek to present these in all and any consultations.

Diana Owen

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

The Town Centre Report

There have been two main areas of interest for the society in the town centre this year:

- The Town Centre Strategic Partnership, and
- The Plaques Scheme along the historic spine with an exciting new initiative relating to tree ring dating of timber framed buildings.

As reported last year the partnership was established taking forward a proposal in the neighbourhood development plan. Its purpose is to bring together all the main interests in the town to find an agreed vision and a set of priorities for ensuring that the town flourishes and becomes safer and more engaging for residents and visitors. It is much about presenting to government and to investors a strong sense of a town that knows what it wants and is unified in seeking to achieve it. So far it has concerned itself with the Bridge Street High Street improvement scheme on which a public consultation has been recently with 1000 responses. And a second bid to government for funding will be going forward in the next few weeks.

The Partnership has recently turned to creating an investment workshop bringing together the experience of business and local government in seeking out new possibilities for investment in the town. Though it's too early to speculate on the outcome of this initiative it is certainly an important move to try to break some of the traditional restrictions on getting investment into the town.

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

The Plaques Scheme:

It's been an active year for this scheme. Last year we reported that the General committee had committed £4000 from reserves to complete what is essentially the first stage of the scheme, originally envisaged as some 20 to 25 ceramic plaques celebrating the key buildings along the historic spine all of which contribute to the towns heritage as expressed through its historic buildings, Six further plaques have been agreed and designed; they are now with the mason and should be in place before the end of the year. They are at:

- Holy Trinity Church
- Harvard House
- The Alms Houses
- The Old Vicarage- within the King Edwards School and adjoining with Guild Chapel
- The Shakespeare Hotel
- The Dower House

This society have contributed one half of the cost of three of the buildings with the remaining three financed by the owners and the Society will meet the costs of laying all of them. Together they will pay £2700 to complete the first phase of the scheme.

And finally, due to the initiative and efforts of Dr Bob Bearman a significant grant has been obtained for a scheme of tree ring dating or dendrochronology on key timber framed buildings. It is a significant achievement and there is a full report on it elsewhere in the agenda.

John Scampion
Deputy Chairman and
Society Representative on the Town Centre Strategic Partnership

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Stratford Town Transport Group Report

The Town Transport Group (TTG) represents various Stratford interest groups such as Accessible Stratford, Climate Action, the Cycle Forum, the Neighbourhood Plan, the Strategic Partnership, Stratforward, Town, District and County Councillors, and the Stratford Society. Meetings take place once a month, and since the first lockdown via Zoom, but will soon continue in-person at the Town Hall.

Topics recently discussed include the public consultation on proposed changes to High Street, Union Street, Bridge Street, a sustainable parking strategy, the local cycling and walking infrastructure plan and current and proposed roadworks. Updates are given to the TTG by the relevant councillors at various times.

Very often at the beginning of a scheme reports are made to the TTG that are not yet in the public domain, so cannot be disseminated. As the County Council and Highways England are the organisations that actually implement changes to the road system there seems to be a disconnect at times between what is expressed in meetings and what can actually be achieved. When appropriate the TTG expresses doubts and/or frustrations with proposed and outstanding issues, as recently seen in the *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*. As a transport group, buses and trains are also included in the remit and are frequently discussed.

Although meetings often contain nothing of immediate concern to the Stratford Society, I think that as a Civic and Historical interest group we should still be represented.

Jann Tracy

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2021 which are set out on pages xx and xx below.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or*
- 2. The accounts did not accord with those records.*

I have no concerns and have come across no other matter in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

Wende A Hubbard FCCA

8 Elm Court

Arden Street

Stratford-upon-Avon

CV37 6PA

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Financial Report for 2021

Bank position at: 31 December 2021.

Deposit Account £9,319

Current Account £3,901

Total £13,220

Receipts during the year of £4,052 included £1,450 held as contributions towards further plaques at the Dower House, Holy Trinity and the Alms Houses. Expenditure during the year was £2,595, which included a print run of the Historic Spine leaflet (£470) which is sold by the Society. Again, the year saw reduced activity caused by the pandemic with a modest £694 (£827 - 2020) spent on member meetings and events, and £168 for plaques (£0 - 2020). Administration and Governance of the trust amounted to £663 (£600 2020). A contribution of £600 was made to the Town Centre Strategic Partnership.

Ahead of the accounts being signed the Society has been awarded a grant of £40,000 for a four-year dendrochronology project, with the first £10,000 interim payment having been received.

Reserves remain healthy after allowing for completion of existing commitments to plaques and those prioritized in tandem with research findings as the dendrochronology project progresses. Sales of the historic spine leaflet had exceeded the outlay in 2021 by April 2022 with the potential to make a further £525 in sales from stocks held.

Jonathan Devereux
Treasurer

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Receipts and Payments Account for year ended 31st December 2021

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2021 Total	2020
Receipts		£	£	£
Subscriptions		2,327	2,327	2,036
Plaques	1,450			
Gift Aid				407
	1,450	2,327	3,777	2,443
Sales - misc		275	275	-
Bank Interest		1	1	7
Total Receipts	1,450	2,603	4,053	2,450
Payments		£	£	£
Governance & admin				
Insurance		385	385	334
Inspection		276	276	264
commission and charges		3	3	1
	-	664	664	599
Talks, Presentations and communications				
Zoom Fees		144	144	144
Website		300	300	310
Speakers and accomodation		50	50	373
	-	494	494	827
Events and Visits				
Summer Party		200	200	-
	-	200	200	-
Projects				
Pavement plaques		168	168	
Town Centre Strategic Partnership		600	600	
Historic Spine		470	470	
	-	1,238	1,238	-
Total Payments	-	2,596	2,596	1,426
Net of (Payments)/ Receipt	1,450	7	1,457	1,024
Cash Funds at 31.12.20	-	11,763	11,763	10,739
Cash funds at 31.12.21 (20)	1,450	11,770	13,220	11,763

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 251182

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Assets - Cash funds		
Barclays Bank - Current Account	3,901	2,445
Barclays Bank - Deposit Account	9,319	9,318
Total Cash	<u>13,220</u>	<u>11,763</u>
Reserves		
	Restricted	Unrestricted
		2021
		£
Plaques Donations	1,450	1,450
Plaques Designated		4,000
General Reserve		7,770
Reserves at Year End	<u>1,450</u>	<u>11,770</u>
		<u>13,220</u>
		<u>11,763</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on

June 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

Lindsay MacDonald
Chariman

Jonathan Devereux
Honorary Treasurer and Trustee