



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	Day 1	Month April	Year 2018		Day 31	Month March	Year 2019

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

High Wycombe Society

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

257897

Charity's principal address

41 Bassetsbury Lane
 High Wycombe
 Postcode **HP11 1QZ**

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Jackie Kay	Chairman		
2	Tony Hatton	Secretary		
3	Malcolm Connell			
4	Willie Reid			
5	David Snoxell			
6	Nigel Phillips			
7	Eileen Walters		Until November 2018	
8	Brian Tranter			
9	Colin Hingston	Treasurer		
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Examiner of Accounts	Alan Bolton	Add address here

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Trust
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Elected by General meeting of the Society or appointed by the Trustees

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

<p>You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees; • the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works; • relationship with any related parties; • trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them. 	<p>Trustees tend to be drawn from the Society membership and are already familiar with much of the manner in which the charity is governed. Trustee induction includes provision of information about where to find Charity Commission resources including the Essential Trustee guide. New Trustees are also encouraged to participate in training provided by Community Impact Bucks.</p> <p>The Charity subscribed to ANTAS the Association of North Thames Amenity Societies and remained a member until that organisation ceased operation following a decision taken at its AGM in September 2018. The Society also subscribes to the Chiltern Society and the Open Spaces Society. It is a partner within the Revive the Wye project and contributes to the Wycombe Arts Festival each year.</p> <p>The trustees have renewed an insurance policy including Buildings, Buildings Contents, Employee Liability (including the volunteer millers), Public Liability and Trustee Indemnity cover. Risk Assessments are routinely reviewed and updated for events.</p>
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Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

<p>The charity's objects ('the objects') are for the public benefit in High Wycombe and the surrounding area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment, in particular the public realm and the historic environment; • to encourage high standards in the management and development of the built and natural environment; • to promote sustainable development by the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment, and the promotion of the prudent
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use of resources (sustainable development being development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs);

- to foster civic pride and stimulate and educate the public, in particular by promoting understanding of the beauty, history, geography and character of different localities;
- to develop the capacity and skills of individuals and communities to understand and take action to conserve, protect and improve the quality, beauty and character of their locality;
- to promote such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined by the Trustees, including the assistance of other charities.

SUMMARY

The High Wycombe Society pursues its objectives in five broad activity areas: Planning, Transport, Milling, Heritage and Environment. In addition, it organises a more general public programme of events including talks, exhibitions and outings.

A Planning Group comprising 8 members of the Society have met regularly throughout the year to review planning applications and determine appropriate responses. They have met with developers and contributed to various planning consultations throughout the year, consulting more widely both within and outside the Society when required. The group have maintained a close interest in the progress of the Local Plan following the Society's official feedback to the Publication version last year. The Planning Group has also been proactive in seeking meetings with Wycombe District Council Planning officers and other local organisations such as HWBidCo – the Business Improvement district company, on matters of concern such as the state of the High Street. Individual members have continued to serve on Reserve Site Liaison Groups set up by the District Council to help ensure that good planning decisions are taken in relatively newly released development sites – and several members of the group have participated in Wycombe District Council initiatives such as their "Quality Counts!" event. Individual members have helped support activities of a Task and Finish group.

A Transport Group comprising 4 members of the Society have met irregularly during the year according to need and have contributed their expertise to various Strategic transport matters. Through membership of Rail Future (a National Rail lobbying body) and the Chiltern Railways passenger Board they have ensured the town's interests are included. They have also commenting where necessary on planning applications. They have represented the Society at the infrastructure forums considering the effects of the large developments on the 'Reserve sites' mentioned above. The group has also contributed to work towards the Air Quality Monitoring Area.

The Pann Mill Restoration Team comprising 8 members of the Society have undertaken a major refurbishment of the water wheel in addition to the regular maintenance work throughout the year enabling Pann Mill to open to the public to see the watermill used to grind grain to make flour on a number of days including Open Days for families and various other visiting groups. The Pann Mill gardeners have maintained the area surrounding Pann Mill which is open to the public throughout the year.

Members of the Society with an interest in history and heritage have

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

undertaken research and published articles in support of the Society's educative objects. In addition to the Society's own 'newsletter' (a quarterly journal of activities and developments on a wide range of topics including heritage), contributions have also included several articles for the local newspaper and other local magazines.

The Society has supported the Revive the Wye partnership activity and has also supported the local council in its initiatives on enhancing its green spaces.

In all the above activities, the trustees have had continual regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. Wherever possible, opportunities have been provided for the general public to participate and learn about our town.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

2018-19 will be remembered as the Golden 50-year anniversary of the formation of the Society, a cause for celebration and a trigger for new projects, publications and activities.

It was the year in which the millers at Pann Mill undertook a major refurbishment project to restore the condition of the waterwheel, replacing the 48 "buckets" which scoop the water to drive the milling machinery...

and it was the year in which work began on preserving and making accessible a collection of historic films of High Wycombe. Originally created by the High Wycombe Film Society in 16mm format, a major project was begun to digitise their contents with a view to making them more widely accessible.

Meanwhile the Society continued its programme of systematically walking the recognised Rights of Way within the town's unparished areas to verify the Definitive Map in advance of legislative changes and to identify and report any issues.

The Society's general programme of events addressed a wide range of interests ...

Our contribution to the Wycombe Arts Festival (2018) was a joint meeting with the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society. On that day the Society also unveiled an information board in the town centre near the site of Bridge Mill.

In the Summer school term, a new initiative offered guided walks to parties of schoolchildren.

In July 2018 the Society supported an initiative by the Women's Local Government Society to celebrate the local contribution to the cause of Women's suffrage. This included a "Suffrage march" led by a Society member; a visit to the parish church to study the stained-glass memorial to the service of women; and a ceremonial planting of a Dove tree to commemorate Wycombe's foremost suffragist, Miss Dove.

In place of the Society's usual annual outing in 2018, the Society celebrated its Golden Anniversary with a ticketed event at Wycombe Abbey. Wycombe Abbey has played an important role in the history of our town and those who attended were able to take part in guided tours to learn more about the buildings and their former inhabitants.

Return visits to learn more about Wycombe Abbey were arranged for specific purposes: to examine the hatchments in storage; and to visit Daws Hill house.

An informative talk later in the year was arranged with guest speaker, Dave Scott who spoke about the man who created AirCo, Holt Thomas, a local aviator.

In November 2018, the Society joined forces with Wycombe Wildlife group to host visiting speaker Ted Green from the Ancient Tree Forum.

At the start of 2019, the Society hosted a talk about some of the lesser-known grand houses of the area and their past residents.

The Society's Newsletter has been produced each quarter carrying news of all the Society's activities. Copies of the newsletter are made available to the general public via High Wycombe library and also provided online.

In commemoration of the end of World War I, a leaflet was designed and printed giving interpretative information about the stained-glass memorial window at the Guildhall. A similar leaflet detailing those women honoured in the Dove Window at All Saints church has also been designed and printed.

The Society has continued to develop its use of website and online media channels to inform the public of our activities and items of interest, and many of its members now happily contribute to live local radio programmes. A new initiative during this year has been the scanning and publication of a number of items from the archives including a set of donated Auction brochures.

The Society's Planning Group has considered in the region of 300 planning applications in the High Wycombe area, commenting and raising a number of objections. In addition to regular monthly group meetings, members of the Planning group have contributed regularly to three WDC reserve site liaison groups: Abbey Barn, Gomm Valley & Ashwells, and Terriers Farm. The group has participated in WDC public meetings, contributed to the formal meetings regarding the inspection of the Local Plan and has continued to raise concerns about High Wycombe town centre with WDC and develop proposals to improve it. The group has proactively sought to engage the wider community using the local newspaper and social media to generate interest and enthusiasm in planning-related matters; an example of this is an ongoing social media campaign to raise awareness of the choices being considered by WDC regarding the possible de-culverting of the River Wye.

The Transport Group has continued to respond formally to infrastructure change proposals related to the 'Reserve site' developments. Contributions to the Society's newsletter during the year have helped spread understanding about transport issues. Ongoing detailed communications with BCC have addressed a number of traffic light related issues.

The Group had engaged in discussions with Network Rail and Chiltern Railways about the future use of the Brunel train shed, a listed building which is currently not used, and are supportive of WDC's plans to purchase and restore the building. The Group is represented on the Chiltern Railways Passenger Board, the Thames Valley Railfuture committee (a national rail lobbying group) and the Marlow & Maidenhead Passenger Association, who have an interest in High Wycombe and are actively promoting the 'missing link' between High Wycombe and Bourne End, and significant improvements at High Wycombe station.

Three Open Days were held at Pann Mill in which demonstrations of milling were given. Volunteers ran many supporting stalls which contributed to fundraising. We were delighted once again to welcome the Mayor at one of these events which are now a recognised contribution to the town's calendar.

Heritage research by individual members of the Society has included an investigation into the context in which Jews were expelled from Wycombe in 1234AD; a look at the surprising past history of a well-known local

music-venue on the occasion of its redevelopment for housing; and an overview of a number of fireplaces which have witnessed local (and not-so-local) history.

The Society has maintained its interest in and support of Wycombe Museum which is now maintained by the Wycombe Heritage and Arts Trust.; and also in a local project being undertaken by the Buckinghamshire Historic Buildings Trust to renovate a medieval building on the High Street.

The Society has also maintained a close interest in the on-going restoration and redevelopment work at All Saints Parish Church (through one of its Trustees who is a member of the Church's Fabric Group). This Grade I listed building at the heart of the town is the oldest building in the town.

Society members have assisted with several Revive the Wye working parties during the year.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Society has maintained a level of reserves that in the view of the trustees provides adequate cover for programmes and events such as:

- (a) Continuing repairs and renovations to Pann Mill;
- (b) Taking advantage of opportunities to engage in further projects that may arise in the future.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Section F

Other optional information

Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)		
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)		
Date		