



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	Day 1	Month April	Year 2016		Day 31	Month March	Year 2017

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 HP13 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	Hon Secretary		
3	Georgina Wightman	Hon Treasurer		
4	Malcolm Connell			
5	David Snoxell			
6	Nigel Phillips			
7	Neil Timberlake			
8	Brian Tranter			
9	Eileen Walters			
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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	Michelle Robins	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 subscribes to ANTAS the Association of North Thames Amenity Societies and the Chiltern 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 recently undertaken a review of the terms of insurance and have renewed a 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

<p>Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document</p>	<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
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and improvement of the environment, and the promotion of the prudent 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. The group assessed the Draft Local Plan providing a comprehensive response to it on behalf of the Society. It has also been proactive in seeking meetings with Wycombe District Council Planning officers on matters of concern such as the state of the High Street. Individual members have served on Reserve Site Liaison Groups set up by the District Council to help ensure that good planning decisions are taken in newly released development sites – and several members of the group have participated in Wycombe District Council initiatives such as their “Quality Counts!” event.

A Transport Group comprising 5 members of the Society have met regularly throughout the year and have contributed their expertise to various Strategic transport matters. Through membership of Rail Future (a National Rail lobbying body) they have ensured the town’s interests are included. They have also commented when appropriate on Public Realm matters, liaising with the Planning Group on matters such as bus and taxi routes, and 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 Pann Mill Restoration Team comprising 8 members of the Society have undertaken 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 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.

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)

The Society has supported initiatives of the Revive the Wye partnership and has also supported the local council in its provision of information boards and in other maintenance initiatives on 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

2016-17 will be remembered as the year in which the Red Lion statue was removed from the High Street and restored. The Society drew attention to the deterioration in condition of the statue and played a supportive role in raising funds for its restoration and raising the level of public awareness and understanding of its significance in the history of our town.

2016-17 may also be remembered as the year in which one of our members started a series of guided walks around Wycombe; and a year in which he and other members of the Society became regular contributors to local radio broadcasts.

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

Our contribution to the Wycombe Arts Festival (2016) was a film show using films from the archive of the High Wycombe Film Society, a valuable resource which had fallen into disuse.

The Society's summer outing (2016) was a coach trip to visit Mary Arden's farm, the childhood home of William Shakespeare's mother.

An informative talk later in the year was arranged with guest speaker Sean Kelly, author of a book on 'Home Bases' who spoke about the work undertaken at the Daws Hill Base among others.

The Society joined forces with Wycombe Wildlife group to host the Queen's Swan marker who gave an educational talk on the tradition of Swan-upping. For this event the Society also contributed an exhibition on material concerning the town's use of the Swan in its coat of arms.

The Society Chairman delivered a talk on "Wycombe's Centaur" covering features of eighteenth century life in High Wycombe as well as that of the local aristocracy, the Shelburnes.

The Society continued its programme of local educative visits with a visit to an engineering company, Instron.

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

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. Public interest in the restoration of the Red Lion was largely responsible for an increase in interest on social media.

The Planning Group 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 regarding the new Local Plan and has continued to raise concerns about High Wycombe town centre with WDC and develop proposals to improve it.

The Transport Group provided a comprehensive response to the consultation on LTP4 (the emerging Bucks County Council local transport plan). The Group has also 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 has 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. The Group has joined with 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 has been instrumental in persuading WDC to commission a high level study of the business case.

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 studies of the history of Italian prisoners of war in High Wycombe, the legendary Tom Burt, the medieval hospital of St John, work of the architect Henry Keene, the artist Francis Colmer, surviving milestones and the old sewage works.

The Society has maintained its interest in and support of Wycombe Museum which is now maintained by the Wycombe Heritage and Arts Trust.

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.

The Society has been consulted and contributed to the content of several information boards now installed in Hughenden Park and a panoramic view from Tom Burt's Hill.

Society members have assisted Revive the Wye partnership in setting up a 'friends' group.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Society has maintained a high level of reserves in the expectation that there would be a need for substantial fundraising to effect the building of a replacement for the current "shed". During 2016 WDC carried out a related feasibility study on the possible provision of toilet facilities in the vicinity of the mill. The trustees will review their reserves policy when the outcome of this study is better understood..

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		