



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2021

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NOTE: This Report is available on the Society's website and will also be available in the Society's folder in the Benson Library.

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF 2021

The events of not just 2021 but 2020 have given us all problems and have caused us all to constantly change our plans - the driving force behind the changes having, of course, been the pandemic of COVID-19. Since we know that the various particles of a virus can't communicate with each other it has been a great demonstration of Darwinism in action, with the virus being far better at changing its point of attack than our defences, good as they are, can cope with quickly enough – hence the ever changing rules we all have to operate under.

As you all know, we had by now expected to have had a joyful WELCOME BACK PARTY but the Delta and Omicron variants put paid to that by causing delays in materials and labour to finish the Parish Hall extension and the new Community Hall, these being the only local venues capable of holding our party. The Parish Council has now announced that the Parish Hall will be open for bookings from the 1st March and so our AGM and WELCOME BACK PARTY will now be on **Friday the 25th March**.

As communicated earlier the party will be a FREE party with a finger food buffet being supplied by an outside caterer, our usual bar (also free) and with the possibility for each member to bring a guest who, hopefully, when they see what a great bunch we are will join our merry band.

Now to proceed to the review of the year that this communication is supposed to be about.

Firstly, with regards to the date of the AGM: As stated above, this will be on **Friday the 25th March**.

We have sent out communications on all the relevant subjects that have emerged from our 4 Committee meetings since the last AGM. We had some feedback but not a lot and would appreciate more so that we can better understand members' views.

Key issues during the year were few but comprised the following:-

We wrote to the BPC regarding the use of CIL money, asking how the residents could have their views taken into account and for a public meeting to be held to discuss the subject. I am pleased to say that this achieved its aim and the BPC plan to hold such a meeting, probably in early March. Information as to time, place and agenda will be placed on their website prior to the meeting. We will also notify members as soon as we know.

We took the decision to stop offering Outings as Government rules regarding meetings were forever changing. However, even when we reach a stable environment we still need volunteers to come forward to plan and execute outings. Until that happens, the best suggestion we can offer those that enjoy such trips is to join a local U3A, as this entitles them to go on any trip organised by any U3A of which there are two branches in Wallingford.

During the year, your Committee has carried out several reviews, all but one have been completed. A review of the Constitution has led your Committee to propose replacement paragraphs under SUB COMMITTEES to bring us in line with Small Charity good practice and also to make clear for our insurers what the Society owns. These changes are being put as a resolution at the AGM, as our Constitution requires.

We have reviewed our Health and Safety Policy and have co-opted Pete Eldridge onto the Committee to become Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

Barbara Verdon, our Catering Liaison member, and others have reviewed our Catering Guidelines and we now have an amended set of rules and procedures in place that, as with the H&S policy, take account of the extra care that must be taken due to Pandemics.

The uncompleted one is a review of our GDPR policies and Cyber Security relating to member's information. A team of George Verdon (VP), John Tchighianoff (Membership Secretary) and Richard Peters (Treasurer) are putting proposals to the January 11th Committee meeting. We will complete any necessary management changes during 2022 and bring any Constitutional changes as resolutions to the AGM for 2022.

At this point I would like to thank Fenella for working so hard to put on our Zoom talks. It was not easy finding speakers who could deliver interesting subjects effectively on Zoom – but she did and ran the evenings so smoothly.

Thanks also go out to those members who contributed to our COVID-19 ENTERTAINMENT LINKS. We sent out 29 in all. Judging by the feedback we received they were very welcome distractions in a prolonged period of confinement and lack of being able to attend entertainment venues.

I am pleased to say that our annual accounts, ably tended by Richard Peters, have been passed by our Independent Examiner Heather Emerson and our thanks go to her for a speedy turnaround and to Richard for his year-long administration. Heather has also volunteered to continue in her role for 2022

John Tchighianoff, our Membership Secretary, who does a splendid job in keeping the membership up to date with events, has reported that our membership at the year-end stood at 154. I would like to thank John personally for proof reading a lot of my communications to the membership along with offering sage advice as to content.

The History Group sub-committee has remained active despite the limits of Covid-19 regulations. We are actively seeking space with the Parish Council to store the Society's large and valuable archive of documents, photographs and models that have been assembled, documented and in many cases digitised by the HG and with the extra space provided by the Parish Hall extension and the new Community Hall we are hopeful that this will be provided in the early part of 2022.

At our November Committee meeting our President announced that he would be stepping down at the end of the year. There are very few members who have given as much of their time, energy and expertise to our Society as Martyn. However we will not miss his knowledge and wise council, as he has agreed to take on the role of Planning Member until someone can be found to fill the role. This of course means we will be electing a new President at the AGM and nomination forms have been sent out.

That brings me neatly on to the need for some members to 'step up to the plate'. Your Committee has two key vacancies – the roles of Secretary and Planning Member.

The Secretary is an Officer of your Society and a Trustee (as are all Committee members) and without that position being filled we will not be able to function under Charity rules. The role, while essential, is not excessively demanding – we only have 5 meetings a year and an AGM and apart from taking minutes there are few other duties. So please would someone step forward and offer about 10 hours of their time in a year. Secondly, we need someone to keep an eye on local planning applications and their progress. This is a more specialist role but not difficult and tuition and support will be given. Again it is a vital role, as recent developments have shown.

Please don't wait for someone else to volunteer, contact either John Tchighianoff (john.tchighi@tiscali.co.uk or 838777) or myself (david@nythecot.co.uk or 200737)

Finally, may I wish all our members a 2022 that is less encumbered by pandemic-coping regulations and one in which we can gradually get back to the life we used to lead and hopefully help others to do so too.

DAMcGill

David McGill

Chairman

2. BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2021

Balance Sheet Bensington Society as at 31 Dec 2021						
Previous Period Figures				Current Period Figures		
Totals	Sub-Totals	Totals		Totals	Sub-Totals	Totals
			ASSETS			
		£ 679.59	Cash in Hand	£ 580.09		
		£ 6,389.22	Cash in Bank	£ 10,913.67		
	£ 7,068.81		Total Cash		£ 11,493.76	
	£ -		Deposit Accounts			
			Sundry Creditors		£ 12.00	
	£ -		Sundry Debtors		£ -	
	£ 7,068.81		Total Liquid Assest		£ 11,481.76	
			STOCKS			
		£ 326.43	Book 1	£ 250.13		
		£ 656.64	Book 2	£ 505.25		
		£ 1,379.95	Book 3	£ 1,087.41		
		£ 63.25	Book 4	£ 48.88		
		£ 188.00	Bar	£ -		
		£ -				
	£ 2,614.27		Total Stocks		£ 1,891.67	
	£ 9,683.08		Total Current Assets		£ 13,373.43	
			LIABILITES			
				£ -		
	£ -		Total Liabilities		£ -	
£ 9,683.08			Net Working Capital(Current Assets minus Liabilities)			£ 13,373.43
			FIXED ASSETS			
	£ 24,844.53		Investments at Cost		£ 20,000.00	
			Market Value			
	£ -		Capital Property		£ -	
£ 24,844.53	£ -		Total Fixed Assets		£ -	£ 20,000.00
			GENERAL PURPOSES FUND			
	£ 35,365.17		Balance as per Last Balance Sheet		£ 34,527.61	
	.		Add Excess of Income			
	£ 837.56		Subtract Excess of Expenditure		£ 1,154.18	
£ 34,527.61	£ 34,527.61		Accumulated General Purposes Fund		£ 33,373.43	£ 33,373.43
being Net Working Capital and Total Fixed Assets						

NB:- A copy certified by the Examiner can be provided by the Treasurer on request.

3..DRAFT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR 2021

BREAKDOWN £ OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD 1 JAN 2021 - 31 DEC 2021							
Previous Period				Current Period			
Item	Income	Expenditure	Balance	Item	Income	Expenditure	Balance
Investment	419.77		419.77	Investment	128.78		128.78
Donations		1,100.00	1,100.00	Donations		100.00	-100.00
Office		107.20	-107.20	Office		16.80	-16.80
Book depreciation		606.57	-606.57	Book depreciation		472.91	-472.91
HMRC	265.00		265.00	HMRC			
Main Website				Main website		89.35	-89.35
Coventry compns'n	75.00		75.00	Insurance		314.12	-314.12
Insurance		270.35	-270.35	High Sherriff Award		56.00	-56.00
Xmas Quiz		165.00	-165.00				
Cupboard		159.99	-159.99				
			-				
Total General	759,77	2409.11	1,649.34	Total General	128.78	1,049.18	-920.40
Food	787.43	500.00	287.43	Food			
Bar	401.50	76.15	325.35	Bar			
Hall/Licence		321.40	-321.40	Hall		48.00	-48.00
Kitchen Help		270.00	-270.00	Kitchen Help			
Speakers		130.00	-130.00	Speakers		480.00	-480.00
Membership Fees	1,350.00		1,350.00	Membership Fees	88.00	0.00	88.00
Subscriptions		123.00	-123.00	Subscriptions		110.00	-110.00
Monthly Raffle	122.50	40.00	82.50	Monthly Raffle			
Stock revaluation	188.00		188.50	Stock revaluation		188.00	-188.00
Visitors/Bools Woff	8.00	57.32	-49.32	Books Write off		5.43	-5.43
Book Sales	353.75	53.78	299.97	Book sales	358.00	56.26	301.74
Outings		542.50	-542.50	Outings	542.50		542.50
History		285.25	-285.25	History		334.59	-334.59
Totals Funds	3,211.18	2,399.40		Totals Funds	988.50	1222.28	-233.78
Grand Total	3,970.95	4,808.51		Grand Total	1117.28	2271.46	
	Balance	-837.56			Balance	-1154.18	1,154.18

NB:- A copy certified by the Examiner can be provided by the Treasurer on request.

4. TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

The audited Balance Sheet, Breakdown of Income and Expenditure and Examiner's Report for 2021 are attached.

Overall Financial Situation: Inevitably the imposition of Covid restrictions during 2020 and 2021 has affected our financial results. This year we have incurred a deficit of £1,154 of which about 63% (£723) was due to the revaluation of book and bar stocks. Our liquid cash assets amount to £11,482. When combined with our investment and the value of our book stocks our total assets are £33,373 (£34,528 in 2020).

Books: Book sales this year were £358, similar to last year (£354). The stock value of all books at the end of the year was £1,892 having been devalued by an annual 20% in accordance with the Committee's previous direction.

Donations: The Society made 1 donation of £100 to the British Legion Poppy Appeal (total donations £1,100 in 2020).

Monthly Meetings: Although the effect of Covid on our activities in 2022 is still highly uncertain, we are hoping to start face-to-face monthly meetings again as soon as Covid permits and a venue becomes available.

Membership: The Committee has reduced to £2 from £3 the previously-notified increase in the membership fee for 2022, making the new annual membership fee £12 (£120 for Life Membership). Our membership at 31 December was 154 including 22 Life Members.

Investments: Despite the depressed state of investments in general the Committee decided to leave our investment with the Coventry Building Society from which we received £129 in interest which was reinvested. The range of tax-free investments available to small charities like ourselves are more limited than they are to individuals and other corporate bodies. The terms of our investment do not permit any withdrawals during the fixed (1 year) investment period, so in view of the uncertain financial outlook due to Covid the Committee decided to transfer £4,973 from our investment into our Bank Account before the current investment period started.

Outings: The credit of £542.50 shown in the statement of income and expenditure represents the return of the deposit paid in 2020 for a visit to Bristol Aerospace which had to be cancelled due to Covid.

Despite the enforced lack of income for the past two years I believe that our overall financial situation remains sound.

Richard Peters

Treasurer

5. INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Bensington Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Bensington Society (the Society) for the year ended 31st December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Society you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Society's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the 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 Society as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters 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.

Signed: HM Emerson

Name: Heather Emerson

Relevant Professional Qualification: ACA (retired from practising)

Address: 18 Horseshoes Lane, Benson

Date: 4 January 2022

6. GOVERNANCE

Our Society is governed by its Constitution and the Trustees also by the Rule Book, which is reviewed annually. Both of these documents are available on our Society's Website and in its folder in the Benson Public Library.

The Constitution is very largely the general one suggested to our Society by HMRC, when we registered with them as a Small Charity, but it has adapted for our specific Society. We are not registered with the Charity Commission, only with HMRC for Gift Aid purposes.

7. AIMS FOR 2022

- To plan to recommence our Friday evening meetings as soon as it is safe and possible to do so
- To try to attract younger people to our Society
- To involve more of the membership in the running of our Society
- To maintain our link to the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Team.
- To agree with the Parish Council a storage space for our archive of historical papers and artefacts
- To complete the current review and take the concomitant actions required to ensure that all necessary procedures are in place to conform with GDPR legislation and the Cyber Security of member's details
- To support efforts to start the Benson Community Shed.
- To evaluate and respond to requests for a financial donation from local causes whose aims align with the Aims of our Society.
- To review and update the Rule Book.