

The Petersfield Society

**Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31 March 2010**

www.petersfieldsociety.org.uk

The Petersfield Society is a registered charity, no. 213404.

Section 1 – Overview

Charity information

The Petersfield Society

Registered as a charity with the Charity Commissioners, no 213404.

Principal correspondence address:

27 Woodbury Avenue

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President

Christopher Napier

Trustees

David Jeffery

Chairman

Alastair Stewart

Treasurer

Jackie Phillips

Committee member

Vincent Edberg

Committee member

Christopher Hitchcock

Committee member

John Milman

Committee member

David Scurfield

Committee member

Tony Struthers

Committee member

Secretariate

Yvette Gibbons

Minutes Secretary

Sue McNaughton

Membership Secretary

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc

Market Square

Petersfield

Independent financial examiner

Andrew Perrins

Overview

The Society is an unincorporated association, managed by an executive committee that comprises the trustees and Membership Secretary. The President may elect to attend meetings of the executive committee at his option.

The Society operates in accordance with its published Constitution. Decisions concerning the routine operation of the Society are considered and made at executive committee, with matters presented to the Annual General Meeting of members where either required by the Constitution or deemed necessary by the executive committee. Where urgent decisions are required and there is insufficient time to convene a formal meeting of the executive committee then voting is undertaken by email.

Trustees are appointed following evaluation by the executive committee and on appointment are provided with copies of the Society's constitution and financial policy and procedures document. Trustees are advised to read guidance on the responsibilities of a trustee published by the Charities Commission but no formal training is provided.

Financial Policy

During the financial year ended 31 March 2010 the executive committee established a financial policy that provided for establishment of the following reserves:

- General reserve – past and current surpluses of income retained to provide for non-specific future expenditure, including the funding of surpluses of expenditure and acquisition of specific assets. The balance of this reserve at 31 March 2010 was £2,441.
- Contingency Reserve – a specific reserve to provide for the funding of legal and other professional costs that may arise in connection with the fulfilment of the Society's objectives. The balance of this reserve at 31 March 2010 was £5,000.

Custodian Trustee

We are required to report any situation where the Society has acted as a Custodian Trustee i.e. has held funds on behalf of another charity. There have been no such occurrences during the past year.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of the Society believe that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Objectives

The Society's constitution records that its aims are to:

1. Safeguard and improve the environmental quality of Petersfield and the surrounding countryside; in particular to:
 - a. Encourage the protection of buildings of architectural or historical interest and to ensure that any modification is carried out sympathetically;
 - b. Ensure that permitted new development is sensitively sited and of harmonious design;
 - c. Protect the landscape of the area and the features of historical and scientific interest
2. Safeguard the environmental amenities enjoyed by people living in or visiting the Petersfield area;
3. Enhance communication between local public opinion and local and public bodies;
4. Do all such lawful things as may help to achieve these aims.

Activities

The main activities undertaken by the Society to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit are:

- To review and monitor planning applications.
- To identify, evaluate and review major development proposals.
- To liaise with town, district and county council officers as necessary to represent considered views and ensure that statutory duties affecting the environment are properly discharged.
- To monitor the condition of roads, streets and the countryside and take action to address any issues that may be identified.
- To work closely on the development and implementation of policy strategies as they affect Petersfield and the surrounding areas.

Section 2 – Report for the year ended 31 March 2010

Chairman's report

Achievements

- During the past year, the Society has objected to a number of planning applications, with some success. The building most notably affected is the Georgian property at 22 High Street, Petersfield, where two objections have been lodged and the applications rejected. Other sites include 197 The Causeway, where we opposed a development at the rear and side of a private house; this, too, has been rejected by the EHDC.
- The Society has objected to one major new development in the area, the large housing development on (approximately) half of the Causeway Farm site. Our objection forms part of a group of objections brought by nearby householders, whom we have supported officially as a Society. A decision is currently awaited from the statutory body (EHDC and, possibly in the future, the new South Downs National Park authority).
- The Society objected to, but failed to prevent, the felling of an ancient oak tree on the Hangers Way in the area of Ashford Chace in Steep. It also successfully objected to the felling of two oak trees on the Herne Farm estate. In addition, it has planted an oak tree on the Sheet roundabout to mark Petersfield's inclusion in the new National Park.
- A considerable amount of work has been undertaken by the Society with regard to street furniture, signage, and the removal of inappropriate advertising. Efforts have been concentrated on the centre of Petersfield.
- The Society has made a sizable contribution to communications with the EHDC through its close involvement in the Petersfield Town Design Statement. This process has also brought public opinion to bear upon decision-making by the council.

Commentary

My recent report for the Society's Newsletter contained thoughts on our progress and achievements over the past three years of my chairmanship. Our new-blood committee, with its change of Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Minutes Secretary is paying dividends: we will hopefully soon see some long-needed modifications to our Constitution, a revamping of our Newsletter, a shift in the pattern of our lectures over the year, and potentially membership of the newly-created Civic Voice organisation, whose Director, Tony Burton, we are delighted to welcome as a guest speaker at our AGM.

Most of you will know that we finally achieved Petersfield's inclusion in the South Downs National Park, and the publication (but not yet adoption) of the Town Design Statement. These have been many years in the discussion, consultation and finally, writing, stages but have lent the Society some kudos in its aim to promote the best design and development for Petersfield and surrounding area in the years to come.

Compared with these longstanding commitments, our other activities over the past year may seem minor, but we feel that each step does make some progress. I am thinking of last year's efforts to bring the (almost) warring parties together to discuss establishing a Youth Centre for the town – we have now left the stage to the politicians, so suspect that particular show will run for a while. There

have also been our efforts to control poor design and unsightly advertising in the town, which have met with some success. Two smaller actions have been, or are about to be, completed: the planting of an English oak tree on the Sheet roundabout to mark the inclusion of Petersfield in the National Park and the formal naming of Hobbs Lane, off Chapel Street. We are also continuing to celebrate National Heritage weekend every September and this year will be arranging a visit to the outstanding medieval Courthouse in East Meon.

As a committee, we have become perceptibly more professional over the past year. Our restructured Constitution and finances, our website overhaul, our new publicity display stands and our emerging business plan are ensuring that we may face the public with purpose and the future with confidence. However, I am concerned that the committee is overstretched in the amount it attempts to deal with week by week. We urgently need more active participation by members and hope that this autumn's new initiative in that direction will spread the workload and, hence, the effectiveness of the Society in the eyes of the press and the public.

We have an energetic and dedicated committee, whose efforts I salute on your behalf. We hope that we can count on your loyal support in the coming year and that you may spread our gospel far and wide to ensure that, after 65 years' existence, the Petersfield Society can continue to pursue its aims of preserving and enhancing the town and its neighbourhoods for the benefit and enjoyment of all of us.

*David Jeffery
Chairman
May 2010*

Treasurer's report

Between 2000-2009, the Society's reserves – cash in the bank– fell by more than half from £12,000 to just over £5,500. Or to put it another way, over this period the Society spent £6,500 more than it generated in income. This was clearly unsustainable and your committee has tackled this directly over the last 12 months.

2009-10 saw a number of decisive moves to stem excess expenditure and manage the Society's funds more closely, with a number of subscriptions to various bodies cancelled and other costs reduced or avoided. The Society was fortunate to receive a generous legacy of £2,000 from the estate of the late Arthur Gill, a former Chairman of the Society, which enables us to report a surplus of income over expenditure of £2,001. Aside from the legacy, had there not been some expenditure carried over from 2008 there would have been a surplus of £350, the first of any consequence since 2001.

During the past year the executive committee has agreed a statement of financial policy and procedures and implemented budgetary controls with updates at every meeting of the Trustees. The role of the Society is such that major developments and other issues can occasionally and at short notice make it essential to seek expensive professional advice, and a Contingency Reserve of £5,000 has therefore been established to provide for such a situation, should it arise. The Society has developed a business plan to set out its future activities and estimated costs, but as its income is fully committed has of course little money available for new projects.

The Society's year to the end of March 2011 will be a challenging one, just as I suspect it will be for our members and the nation as a whole. Difficult decisions will need to be taken if the Society

is to avoid drawing on its reserves: some elements of expenditure will need to be further reduced and new ones postponed or avoided if we are not to incur further losses. Whilst fundraising is the first recourse of any charity, there is little scope for the Society to increase sales of its branded goods nor has the Society raised funds by any other means for more than 11 years. In a constrained financial environment the prospects of raising any substantial funds must be minimal, and the Society will need to manage its affairs accordingly.

The good results for this year are unlikely to be repeated in 2011. However, you can be sure that your treasurer and committee will continue to work for a positive outcome, throughout the year managing the Society's funds in a sensible and prudent manner.

*Alastair Stewart
Honorary Treasurer
May 2010*

Financial accounts

The following pages contain the balance sheet and profit and loss statements for the year ended 31 March 2010, together with the independent examiner's certificate.

Balance Sheet
for the year ended 31 March 2010

2009		2010
	Current assets	
5,440	Cash at bank	7,323
	Petty cash	43
	Prepayments	200
		<u>7,566</u>
	Current liabilities	
	Sundry creditors - see below	125
<u>5,440</u>	Total assets	<u>7,441</u>
	Represented by	
	General Reserve	
6,366	Opening balance	5,440
<u>-926</u>	Surplus of income over expenditure	<u>2,001</u>
5,440		7,441
<u>0</u>	Transfer to Contingency Reserve	<u>5,000</u>
5,440	Balance carried forward	2,441
	Contingency Reserve	
	Opening balance	0
	Transfer from General Reserve	<u>5,000</u>
	Balance carried forward	<u>5,000</u>
<u>5,440</u>		<u>7,441</u>
	Details of sundry creditors	
	Gratuity for independent inspection of accounts	25
	Provision for oak tree plaque, Steep roundabout	50
	Provision for engraving awards	50
		<u>125</u>

**Profit and Loss Account
for the year ended 31 March 2010**

2009		Notes	2010
264	Blue Plaque trail leaflets		113
77	Petersfield bags		116
381	Tea towels		241
7	Postcards		5
188	Mugs		132
0	Pictures	1	10
0	Previous year sales income	2	6
917	Sales		623
667	Less Purchases		0
250			623
Other income			
1,515	Members' subscriptions		1,480
	Other subscriptions	3	10
167	Interest on bank account		51
60	Unspecified income at meetings		33
	HM Revenue & Customs - gift aid		
537	repayment		314
25	Donations		186
	Legacy		2,000
51	Transfer from Petersfield Heritage Fund		0
2,355			4,074
2,605	Total income		4,697
Expenditure			
248	Affiliation fees	4	97
300	Secretary's honorarium		0
0	Event costs	5	304
0	Award engraving etc		50
208	Post and telephone		17
89	Printing and stationery		28
0	Website	6	65
145	Meeting costs		324
0	Youth Centre meeting costs	7	24
113	Publicity		137
380	Insurance	8	0
774	Newsletter	9	961
590	Donations to others	10	68
0	Gratuities	11	85
684	Community benefits	12	187
0	Previous year expenditure not accrued for	13	349
3,531	Total expenditure		2,696
-926	Surplus of income over expenditure		2,001

Notes to the accounts

1. A stock of pictures acquired some years ago but not offered for retail sale has now been reintroduced to the inventory.
2. Sales income that should have been reported in the previous financial year.
3. The Constitution provides for membership to be offered only to individuals, however during the year a subscription was accepted from a corporate body not qualifying for membership.
4. During the year the following subscriptions were paid:
 - £40 Open Spaces Society
 - £25 South Downs National Park campaign
 - £32 The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
5. The figure shown comprises pitch fees at events of £43 together with the purchase of a display tent for £261.
6. Website expense represents costs incurred by Mr J Hamilton to divert all web traffic from www.petersfield.info to the Society's website.
7. The Society facilitated a series of meetings to support the development of the Youth Centre at a cost this year of £24.
8. The insurance premium of £180 relating to the financial year 2009-10 was paid in the 2008-9 financial year and was not shown as a prepayment at that time. The cost of 2010-11 insurance is shown as a prepayment in the 2009-10 balance sheet, so there is no cost to report in the profit and loss account for 2009-10.
9. Newsletter costs include payments of £270 to a Trustee for services provided.
10. During the year the following donations were made:
 - £18 Protection of Ancient Buildings
 - £25 Civic Society Initiative (now renamed Civic Voice)
11. During the year the following gratuities were authorised:
 - £25 Mrs R Clarke, retiring Treasurer
 - £25 Mr R Crane, retiring Chairman, South Downs National Park Campaign
 - £10 Winton Players, for loan of display boards
 - £25 Mr A Perrins, for independent inspection of accounts
12. During the year the following specific community benefit costs were incurred:
 - £187 Planting of an oak tree to mark Petersfield's inclusion in the National Park
13. Expenses incurred in 2008-9 but not accrued for and therefore charged to the 2009-10 financial year:
 - £128 Newsletter costs
 - £150 Secretary's honorarium
 - £25 Gratuity for inspection of accounts
 - £46 Engraving of 'Owl' award

Independent Examiner's statement

Report to the trustees and members of The Petersfield Society on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2010, charity no. 213404.

Respective responsibility of examiner and trustees

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's report

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Acthave not been met ; or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Andrew K Perrins
12 May 2010

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