

# ***The City of Rochester Society***

**The Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society**

**will be held at**

**THE GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET, ROCHESTER**

**on**

**WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE 2024**

**at 7.30 for 8.00 pm**

**Please bring this booklet with you to the AGM. It contains:**

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is hereby given** that the 55th Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society will be held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 26 June 2024.

### A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 28 June 2023 and to consider any matters arising from that meeting which are not covered elsewhere on this agenda. A copy of the minutes accompanies this agenda.
3. To receive the report of the Executive committee for the year 2023/24, a copy of which also accompanies this agenda, and to discuss any matters arising from it.
4. To approve the accounts for the financial year 2023/24.
5. To elect a President of the Society.
6. To elect a Vice President of the Society.
7. To elect the officers of the Society:
  - (i) Chairman;
  - (ii) Vice Chairman;
  - (iii) Honorary Treasurer;
  - (iv) Honorary Secretaryincluding holding ballots if necessary.
8. To elect up to seven members of the Executive committee including the holding of a ballot if necessary.
9. With regard to the Society's Rules & Constitution, item 4, the Executive committee wishes to recommend for members' approval the raising of subscription rates to commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 as follows:

Yearly membership (adult):	£15.00
Yearly membership: (junior: under 16):	£6.00
Life membership (adult):	£150.00
Corporate membership:	£45.00
10. Any other business, during which members may raise points for discussion upon any

aspect of the Society's activities or policies.

***Addendums to the Agenda***

- Item 4 above:** A summary of the accounts forms part of the Executive committee's report. Copies of the final accounts, which will be presented for members' approval at the AGM, may be obtained after 1st June from the Hon Treasurer, Barbara Fisher at the address given in the Society's Newsletter or by email: bcfisher@btinternet.com
- Item 7 above:** **Nominations for election as an officer of the Society are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election as an officer of the Society should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 8 above:** **Nominations for membership of the Executive committee are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election to the Executive committee should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 9 above:** If members wish to raise matters of substance requiring the gathering of information it would be helpful if they could advise the Secretary in writing in advance of the meeting.

**Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society  
held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester  
at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 28 June 2023**

The number present at the meeting was 50.

The Chairman welcomed members and outlined the course of events for the evening.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from the Mayor, Cllr Nina Gurung, and from the following members:

Chris Buckwell, Terry Clennell, Hugh Hawkins, Brian and Audrey Hext, John Hill, Angela Howe, Bob Howe, Laurence McVeigh, Andy Ratcliffe, Kathleen Richter, Jean Skilling, Chris Webb, Jan Webb, Mr and Mrs T Wood, Malcolm Wright.

**2. Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2022 were within the booklet containing the Annual Report which had been circulated to members. The minutes were agreed as a true record, duly endorsed and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters arising**

On behalf of members, Vice President John Allison enquired about the position regarding the Society review being undertaken by Terry Clennell, who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. The Chairman responded that several meetings had been conducted with the Executive committee and that membership views would now be sought. The consultation aspect was due to commence shortly and details of how to become involved would be circulated to members.

John Allison also expressed his concern regarding the craft fairs and the present uncertainty regarding the June event. James O'Donoghue took the opportunity to introduce himself to members and explained that discussions were taking place with Council representatives. The need to know events dates in good time to allow for planning ahead was also discussed.

**4. Annual Report of the Executive committee**

The Annual Report had been distributed to members following the May *Newsletter*. It was endorsed by members present and signed by the Chairman.

**5. Finance**

The accounts for the year 2022/23, which had been signed off by the independent examiners, were presented by the Treasurer.

**6. The President and Society Officers**

The Executive committee had proposed that Alan Moss should be invited to remain as President of the Society for a further year and this proposal was enthusiastically agreed by

members. The four officers of the Executive committee, who will also act as Society Trustees, are:

Chairman: Rob Flood  
Vice Chairman: Paul Anderson  
Honorary Treasurer: Barbara Fisher  
Honorary Secretary: Christine Furminger

Five other members were appointed to the Executive committee for the coming year:

Odette Buchanan  
Terry Clennell  
James O'Donoghue  
Ian Smith  
Chris Webb.

## **7. Any other business**

### **Town Crier Competition**

Mike Billingham, the Town Crier, updated members on preparations for the Town Crier Competition which had been delayed and was now planned to take place on Saturday 7 October 2023.

### **Guided Walk**

John Bradshaw and Terri Zbyszewska would be conducting a new walk which would include the Chatham and Luton Forts.

### **Strood High Street**

New member Roger Backway expressed his concerns about prominent unoccupied buildings in Strood High Street which were becoming increasingly unkempt and an eyesore for residents and visitors. It was agreed that the Planning sub-committee would investigate the situation.

### **Presentations**

The Chairman made a presentation to Martin Dodsworth in grateful recognition of his many years of involvement with the Society. An active member of the Executive committee, Martin was a walking tour guide and organised the Society's booked tours. Jean Skilling, the Society's previous Treasurer, had been unable to attend and a gift was later made to her at home as a token of thanks for her hard work on behalf of the Society.

The President expressed his thanks to the Guildhall Museum's staff for their assistance with arranging the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting drew to a close and members re-grouped in the Members Room, adjoining the Court Hall, to enjoy the opportunity to socialise with the aid of a raffle organised by Eileen Allison and light refreshments organised by Sarah and Paul Anderson.

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date

# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

## 2023/24

**President:** Alan Moss

**Vice-Presidents:**

John Allison   Derek Barnard   Robert Howe   Colin Whyman

**Executive Committee – 2023/24**

**Chairman:** Rob Flood

**Vice-Chairman:** Paul Anderson

**Treasurer:** Barbara Fisher

**Secretary:** Christine Furminger

Odette Buchanan  
Terry Clennell  
James O'Donoghue

Ian Smith  
Chris Webb

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## Introduction

This report of the Society's activities over the past year is presented for members' approval. Any matters concerning the report should be addressed to:

*The Secretary, 165 High Street, Halling, Rochester, Kent ME2 1BT*

### 1. Chairman's Report

**Rob Flood**

- 1.1 Welcome to our 2023-24 annual reports. I hope that many of you will find the time to read them through and we always welcome your comments.
- 1.2 Although Covid restrictions seem a long time ago now, we are suffering from a substantial decrease in the number of members stepping forward to volunteer. Having said that, most of our members meetings are well-attended.
- 1.3 Executive committee member Terry Clennell (also the Chair of the Friends of Rochester Churchfields and Esplanade) has continued his work looking at the purpose and scope of the Society and its activities. We've consulted with the wider membership through two well-attended discussion meetings and Terry is working on the results.
- 1.4 The Summer Dickens and Dickensian Christmas Festivals took place in 2023 although in changed guise. The Summer Festival was much reduced and we didn't receive sufficient notification to allow for a Craft Fair of any size. We were moved from the Castle Gardens to the Moat for the Christmas Festival, and again the Craft Fair was much reduced in size. My gratitude goes to Ian Smith, James O'Donoghue and John Allison for their hard work and patience in endeavouring to make the best of an unsatisfactory situation.
- 1.5 As previously reported, Ian Smith's intention to stand down as Craft Fair organiser was thwarted last year. After the Summer Festival, Executive committee member James O'Donoghue stepped up and worked alongside Ian and John on the 2023 Dickensian Christmas event. James will be taking over the day-to-day organising of the Craft Fair for 2024. Unfortunately, we were notified in early March 2024 that the Summer Dickens Festival has been removed from the events calendar so James is now concentrating on the November/December event.
- 1.6 The Craft Fair is an important part of the Society's work and creates most of the income that enables us to fulfil our charitable purposes as well as keeping membership fees artificially low. I'm hopeful that we will be able to find a way of working with the Council that makes the Craft Fair sustainable to all parties.
- 1.7 I know I say this every year but if you think you may be able to assist at the Craft Fair, perhaps for a morning or afternoon - just an hour or two will be most useful - either before, during or after the event - please do get in touch with any member of the Executive committee. All and any help will be gratefully received.
- 1.8 I am sorry to have to report that Odette Buchanan has decided to step down from the Executive committee after many years of active involvement. Odette has been a member of the committee since June 2008 and was involved with walking tours for many

years. Her commitment, enthusiasm, sense of humour and energy have always been a great asset to us and her involvement as Society Archivist, with the Publishing and Publicity sub-committee and links with other local organisations such as the Friends of Broomhill have proved very useful. We are aware that she will keep a keen eye on our activities in the future.

- 1.9** My thanks go once again to Christine who has organised some great members meetings. We are now settled in to the Vines Church Hall and I'm pleased that we have access to a hearing loop for our hard-of-hearing members.
- 1.10** I was delighted to be invited by the Mayor of Medway Cllr Nina Gurung to join her at the Mayor of Gravesham's fundraising event.
- 1.11** I have continued to attend Civic Voice's excellent Zoom seminars which have focused on planning and design.
- 1.12** The Society has continued to participate in the Chatham Intra High Street Heritage Action Zone Area, half of which is in Rochester. The HSHAZ project came to an end in February 2024 but the group's committee decided to form an Intra Community Interest Company and I will still be taking an active role.
- 1.13** The Society continues to run free walking tours of Historic Rochester. When Martin Dodsworth moved from Rochester last year, he stepped away from booked tours. I am delighted that Geoff Ettridge has now taken on the role. Martin is owed many thanks for his commitment over the years. My thanks are due to both John Bradshaw (open walks), Geoff (booked tours) and to our superb team of volunteer guides who continued their excellent work throughout this year. In March, John organised another brilliant 'Guides Day', this time with a tour of Rochester Cathedral followed by a meeting at Eastgate House. Special thanks are also due to James O'Donoghue, press and publicity officer for the Tours sub-committee, for his sterling work spreading the word.
- 1.14** The 2023 Conservation Award discussion resulted in our deciding to give two awards again. The first of these went to Shepherd Neame for their excellent renovation and restoration of The Crown public house at the junction of the High Street and the Esplanade (now called "The Royal Crown"). The second award went to another public house, The Ship on Rochester High Street in Chatham Intra. Sign writer extraordinaire Mick Pollard has done a tremendous job of restoring The Ship exterior and this building really stands out as a superb example of what can be done with a lick of paint (and some not inconsiderable skill).
- 1.15** I have been pleased to represent the Society at Medway Champions meetings. The Society once again sponsored the 2023 Medway Open Studios event.
- 1.16** My grateful thanks must go, yet again, to our President and Newsletter Editor, Alan Moss. As ever, Alan has remained indefatigable in his approach and has produced great copies of our much-loved Newsletter against all the odds. My thanks are also due to Phil Dodd for pulling the Society's 2024 calendar together which has been very well-received.
- 1.17** I would like to express thanks to my fellow Trustees - our Vice-Chairman Paul Anderson, Treasurer Barbara Fisher and Secretary Christine Furminger, for their constant support and assistance over the past year.



- 1.18** Last, but by no means least, I want to express a debt of gratitude to the Executive committee. The energy and the commitment of everyone involved is inspiring.
- 1.19** Shortly before this Annual Report went to print, and too late to be included in the May issue of Newsletter, we were extremely sorry to learn of the recent death of John Liddiard. John joined the Executive committee in June 1986. He chaired the Society's Planning sub-committee for a great many years, standing down in 2021. His love of Rochester and wealth of knowledge regarding planning was invaluable to the work of our widely well-regarded planning team. John's enthusiastic involvement was greatly appreciated by all of us and his retirement from the team left a large gap. We are now building up the Planning sub-committee to a strength we believe he would have approved and we remain indebted to his interest and commitment.

## **Reports of sub-committees and officers**

### **2. Festivals sub-committee Ian Smith**

- 2.1** Last year's Craft Fair (2023) was a little different from previous years, due to Medway Council evicting the Craft Fair from the Castle gardens and moving us to the moat. Several meetings between the City of Rochester Society and Medway Council took place to discuss the reason for the move and the implications.
- 2.2** The result of all the discussions was that we could only have 17 stalls (previously we had 42 per weekend) and stall holders had to remove their stock at the end of each trading weekend. We ended up having a total of 54 stalls over the three weekends. This included two charity stalls and one stall hosting two different stalls.
- 2.3** James O'Donoghue, the new Craft Fair Organiser, was introduced to the stall holders and was well-received by all. Following the event, James sent out a questionnaire to those taking part and the comments received by James showed that the City of Rochester Society came out of the consultation very well but the Council did not.
- 2.4** We are already in discussion with Medway Council for Christmas 2024 and when details are available these will appear in the Society's Newsletter.
- 2.5** Attendance figures for the whole trading period are not available but the Council have indicated a total figure of 240,000.
- 2.6** Finally, 2023 was my final Craft Fair as organiser and I would like to thank all those from the Society who have helped and supported me, to all stall holders past and present for supporting the Craft Fair over the years and finally to James for picking up the baton as Craft Fair Organiser and I wish him well for the future.

### **3. Finance & General Purposes sub-committee Rob Flood**

- 3.1** This sub-committee comprises the Society's Trustees (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary). The Trustees have remained in regular contact this year, via both email and telephone, to discuss matters of finance and issues which do not fit easily

into other categories. Recommendations or proposals may be put to the Executive committee from time to time as a result of such discussions.

#### **4. Planning sub-committee**

**Paul Anderson**

- 4.1** This report covers the period from the previous one, i.e. from April 2023 until March 2024. I am pleased to report that our Planning sub-committee goes from strength to strength. The sub-committee has benefited this year from the addition of Rosie Beattie as a member, adding to the experienced team of Alan Moss, John Hill, Chris Webb, Nina Robinson, Chris Furminger and Paul Anderson. Rosie brings deep knowledge of the St Margaret's Banks area of Rochester.
- 4.2** With a large team, inevitably conflicts of interest can arise from time to time. It is important to note that in the case of conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, the relevant sub-committee member or members will declare the interest, then absent themselves from discussions of that item, while the remainder of the group then forms an independent view. An example of an item under discussion this year which fell into this category was the "Rochester Triangle" site, where Paul Anderson took no part in discussions.
- 4.3** The Planning sub-committee continues to focus specifically on planning proposals which impinge on "our" area – in effect within what used to be the old City of Rochester wards. The aim for the sub-committee is to give constructive feedback to planning proposals and consultations, so as to best preserve and enhance the City for current and future inhabitants and visitors. With the help of Chris Webb's experience in Licensing matters, the sub-committee is also keeping an eye on applications, and raising concerns/requesting clarifications where deemed necessary.
- 4.4** The Planning sub-committee receives a weekly list of all planning applications from Medway Council which we digest and comment upon, as appropriate.
- 4.5** Over the last year, there have been a number of high-profile developments that have gone to planning, some of which have been subsequently changed, resubmitted, etc. Where appropriate, the Planning sub-committee has formed a view and written a formal response to Medway Council for consideration.
- 4.6** The minimum number of letters of objection needed to trigger a hearing by Medway Council's full Planning Committee has been raised from three to five, meaning that fewer planning applications will in future be considered by that Committee. It is therefore more important now for written objections to be submitted by members if they want applications to be considered by the Committee rather than by a Planning Officer.
- 4.7** The major proposals considered this year have included the initial plans for Strood Waterfront (where the single point of vehicular access on to the A2 has been highlighted as a major concern), the raised deck at the rear of Ye Arrow (the sub-committee viewed this as inappropriate location for such a structure) and the infill development next to the old NatWest Bank at 38-40 High Street, Rochester (where comments were made on the detailing of the proposal).
- 4.8** Many other smaller, but no less significant, schemes have also been considered, and

where felt appropriate, the Planning sub-committee has submitted a response, e.g. to the plans for 255-257 High Street, Rochester regarding a change from a “dwelling house” to a “house of multiple occupation”, as well as making various comments regarding, in the sub-committee’s opinion, the inappropriate use of UPVC double-glazed units in renovations of historic buildings.

- 4.9 In the St Margaret’s Banks area, an objection was written regarding the retrospective application for a subterranean basement excavation for which there were structural worries for the property itself and its immediate neighbours. The sub-committee has expressed its extreme concerns about the state of the historic wall holding back the ground to the right when going up The Cut from Delce Road to City Way. Councillors have been flagged regarding the poor state of a couple of vacated properties, most notably the units between Boots and Iceland, on Strood High Street.
- 4.10 Previously considered schemes at Bardell Wharf and the former Grays Garage, both on the High Street, have shown little progress. The lack of enforcement of the planning violation at the City Wall Wine Bar has also been pursued. At the time of writing, the covered structure has at last been removed. Concerns have also been communicated to Medway Council regarding an historic right of way in that area that seems have been ignored by the owner of the land, and which continues to be impacted by the remaining planters, seating, etc. Feedback has also been submitted regarding shopfront planning at the Vape Shop opposite La Providence, which appears to the sub-committee to be totally out of character for the area.
- 4.11 Other significant items that have been discussed have been the ongoing derelict state of Rochester Pier, and the importance of getting the Society involved in the development of the Draft River Strategy that was due to be developed by Medway Council.
- 4.12 Once again, the Planning sub-committee has considered potential schemes for the annual City of Rochester Society Conservation Award. This year, two developments really stood out, both of them Public Houses. The two schemes flagged up were The Ship Inn restoration on Rochester’s High Street/Intra area, and The Royal Crown renovation on the junction of the High Street and the Esplanade. The sub-committee found it difficult to choose between the two developments, and therefore agreed that both schemes be recommended to the Executive committee for two awards to be made again.

## 5. Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee

**Rob Flood**

- 5.1 The Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee did not meet en masse this year although we stayed in touch via email and I have met individually with Phil Dodd and Alan Moss to discuss certain projects. Alan Moss has continued to work tirelessly to bring us our quarterly Newsletter, ably assisted by our printer Jon Barker.
- 5.2 With thanks to Phil Dodd, we managed to publish our excellent calendar. The 2024 theme celebrated the ‘best of Rochester’.
- 5.3 I’m delighted that we were able to publish ‘*Hidden Histories – The Stories of 100 Medway Women*’ by Medway Archives Centre’s Senior Archivist, Helen Worthy. This is a wonderful piece of work and if you haven’t yet bought a copy, I really recommend it.

## **6. Tours sub-committee**

**James O'Donoghue**

- 6.1** Geoff Ettridge assumed responsibility from Martin Dodsworth as the Society's booked tour co-ordinator in July 2023.
- 6.2** In the calendar year 2023, 30 booked tours were undertaken. A total of 637 visitors attended these tours, raising £2,812 for the Society.
- 6.3** The individual charge for a booked tour remains at £5 per person with a minimum charge of £30. The Society makes no charge for tours arranged by local schools for their pupils. A charge is made if the tour has been arranged via a tour company.
- 6.4** The Society continued with its model of free open tours on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, plus tours during the summer and Christmas Dickens Festivals and Christmas Markets. Voluntary donations are always welcome at the end of the tours, made to the registered charity of *The City of Rochester Society*. In 2023, 570 visitors attended, raising £1,916.22 for the Society.
- 6.5** During 2023, John Bradshaw organised and conducted two 'special tours' with support from Rosemary Dymond and Terri Zbyszewska. The '*Mystery of Edwin Drood*' tour was attended by three visitors and raised £70 in donations for The Dickens Chalet Fund. The tour of the '*Forts of the Medway Towns*' was attended by 9 visitors, raising £45 for the Society.

## **7. Members' meetings**

**Christine Furminger**

- 7.1** I am pleased to report that members' meetings this year have been very successful. Following last year's AGM, our first meeting took place on the afternoon of 10 October in the Bridge Chapel of Rochester Bridge Trust. This combined talk discussed the work of the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Estates Officer and the Education Manager in "*A year in the life of the Trust*" who shared some fascinating 'behind the scenes' details with us regarding the work of this unique organisation.
- 7.2** In November, we became familiar with our new meetings venue - The Vines Church. The church hall building stands to the rear of the original church in Crow Lane. Some members may recall it was previously known as Belsey Hall. While entrance for pedestrians can be gained from Crow Lane, the building has the benefit of its own secure car park with an entrance from Victoria Street and The Terrace, plus an excellent kitchen, screens and a sound system.
- 7.3** The November afternoon meeting was closely followed by another in the evening, enabling our working members to attend. Executive committee member Terry Clennell has been focusing on the Society's future and plans for progress and as much input from members as possible was, and is, required. The outcome of these discussions and an accompanying questionnaire is being analysed. We look forward with interest to Terry's report in due course.
- 7.4** In December, we enjoyed a visit from Rochester Choral Society who entertained us with a variety of songs and carols and then stayed to share seasonal refreshments with us.

- 7.5 In February, in a departure from the advertised programme, Geoff Ettridge talked to us about “*Richard Watts – a Man of his time, a Charity of its time*”. Geoff is an experienced local walking tour guide and can be relied upon for his excellent research for his talks.
- 7.6 In March, we welcomed Philip Badman, Secretary to Halling Historical Society. Philip provided an interesting talk on “*The History of Halling*”. Many members were unaware that the little local church of St John the Baptist houses some of the most wonderful medieval wall paintings to be found in the country, or that the remains of a Bishop’s Palace adjoins it.
- 7.7 Dave Burton gave us a fascinating talk in April, focusing on “Aveling & Porter”. Beginning with Thomas Aveling’s early inventions he led us through the development of Wingets steam rollers. His slideshow included images from a rare set of glass plate photographs and he accompanied his talk with some beautifully constructed models.
- 7.8 Another speaker alteration in May resulted in a welcome return visit from David Carder. David’s wide research always results in interesting talks to which we can relate. “Life in the Workhouse” was no exception, and information about these old buildings, many of which still remain and are close to home, was both chilling and fascinating.
- 7.9 Members meetings will continue at the Vines Church for the foreseeable future – it is proving to be a comfortable venue, where members can enjoy both afternoon and evening meetings.

**8. Treasurer** **Barbara Fisher**

- 8.1 The Independent Examiners have completed their work and no problems were identified.
- 8.2 We ended 2023 with a surplus of income over expenditure of £1,508. However, this was only achieved with the revaluation of profit on investments. The net income shows a loss of £4,174 most of which arose out of the loss on Craft Fairs.
- 8.3 The Craft Fairs held in 2023 made a loss of £2,869. This was due to Medway Council changing the relationship with the Society whereby they only allowed our stalls in the Moat.
- 8.4 Donations of £5,163 were received from our popular guided tours and £2,976 was received from the sale of publications.
- 8.5 With the exception of publications, costs were similar to 2022.

**9. Membership Secretary** **Rosemary Clemence**

- 9.1 Membership as at 31 March 2024 stands at 470, which takes account of those moved away or some who have not renewed their subscriptions, together with deaths.
- 9.2 I am pleased to report 22 new members including several life members.
- 9.3 Each year I send out quite a lot of letters to those members who have forgotten to renew

their subscription and this is obviously costly to the Society. It would be far easier for the Treasurer if more people paid by standing order - a form is available, and renewing online would be even easier. This would also mean that you have one thing less to remember. If you have an e-mail address, please let me have it so you may receive any necessary notifications.

**10. Society Grants** **Barbara Fisher**

- 10.1 The Society was pleased to provide financial support during the 2023 year for one community project.
- 10.2 We were able to assist Medway Open Studios with sponsorship in the sum of £750.00 for their Arts Festival.

**11. Website and Social Media** **Rob Flood**

- 11.1 The Society's on-line presence in 2023/2024 has continued to be an important way for the public to interact with us.
- 11.2 Our website - [city-of-rochester.org.uk](http://city-of-rochester.org.uk) - continues to receive good traffic. James O'Donoghue is now helping with website updates.
- 11.3 Our MailChimp posts have been slightly more regular, primarily as a tool to promote our task programme.
- 11.4 On X (formerly Twitter), the Society's account @CORochesterSoc still sits at just over 2,700 followers.
- 11.5 Our Facebook account has grown again to 1,690 followers with 1,467 people liking the page.

**Reports of Society representatives on other organisations**

**12. Civic Voice** **Rob Flood**

- 12.1 The Society remains affiliated to Civic Voice, the umbrella organisation for civic societies, which was founded following the demise of the Civic Trust in 2009. Civic Voice has a significant role in the world of amenity societies and has a voice in Parliament through the All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies.
- 12.2 Civic Voice has continued to offer remote talks in addition to actual meetings.

**13. Medway Tourism Association (MTA)** **James O'Donoghue**

- 13.1 The Medway Tourism Association incorporates a wide range of organisations engaged in the leisure and tourist industries in the Medway Towns. There is also input from

representatives from Visit Kent and Medway Council. Councillor Harinder Mahil is the portfolio holder.

- 13.2 A meeting took place on 3 October 2023. A new informal and relaxed approach has been adopted with the focus on networking and presentations from stakeholders. There were presentations on several topics, including the community-led regeneration scheme in Chatham Intra and art and culture as a tourism asset.
- 13.3 It was pleasing to note that the tourism industry is getting back on track with visitor numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- 13.4 It is not known, at the time of writing, if there will be a new MTA focus, following the closure of The Visitor Information Centre in Rochester on 19 April 2024.

**14. Rochester City Centre Forum (RCCF) Alan Moss/Rob Flood**

- 14.1 The Society continues to be represented at meetings of the RCCF, a non-political coming together of Rochester traders, community groups and residents to discuss the well-being of the city centre. The forum is chaired by Sarah Tranter, and the Society's Chairman is a member of the forum's management committee. The Society's President has attended most meetings.
- 14.2 Among the forum's initiatives has been the establishment of the monthly Rochester City Artisan Market, which continues to flourish, together with the floral displays in the baskets and planters along the High Street.
- 14.3 The forum meetings provide an opportunity for members to hear from, and to question, representatives of bodies involved in, for example, law-enforcement, the care of the homeless and the licenced trade.

**15. Dickens Chalet Stakeholder Group Alan Moss**

- 15.1 This group was set up in 2021 following Medway Council's appointment of Rachel Kerr as the project co-ordinator for the repair and restoration of the Dickens Chalet. The group includes representatives of this Society, the Friends of Eastgate House and the Rochester and Chatham Dickens Fellowship.
- 15.2 Medway Council's Head of Culture & Libraries, Paul Cowell, has now taken over responsibility from the Council's Heritage team for the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Priority Place initiative.
- 15.3 It is hoped that a stakeholder get-together will be organised shortly, the May meeting having been postponed due to illness.

.....  
Secretary

.....  
Chairman

.....2024

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the Executive committee of the Charity, 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 Executive committee'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 Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

Richard Abel FCA CTA  
Aggarwal & Co Ltd, Chartered Accountants  
5 London Road  
Rainham  
Kent  
ME8 7RG



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
<b>INCOME</b>			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		18,910	37,205
- Subscriptions		2,285	2,895
- Life membership		200	300
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		430	454
- Income from tours		5,163	3,566
- Sale of publications		2,976	2,188
		29,964	46,608
Donations and legacies		174	380
Investment income		839	115
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>30,977</b>	<b>47,103</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		21,779	20,353
- Costs of meetings and book club		497	484
- Cost of tours		385	233
- Publications		4,078	870
- Newsletter printing		4,172	3,953
- Grants and sponsorship		750	2,250
		31,661	28,143
<b>Other costs</b>			
- Committee and AGM expenses		856	1,123
- Affiliations and subscriptions		532	554
- Insurance		75	75
- Website costs and amortisation		644	663
- Independent examiner's fee		528	510
- Other costs		875	180
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>35,151</b>	<b>31,248</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		<b>(4,174)</b>	<b>15,855</b>
Loss on revaluation of investments (2022 : profit)	6	5,682	(2,016)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>1,508</b>	<b>13,839</b>
Total funds brought forward		104,809	90,970
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>106,317</b>	<b>104,809</b>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted

funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

### BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023		2022
		£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
- Intangible fixed assets	7		500	1,000
- Investments	8		46,630	40,948
			<u>47,130</u>	<u>41,948</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
- Stocks		3,413		4,824
- Debtors and prepayments		399		305
- Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221		9,221
- Cash at bank and in hand		49,719		51,379
		<u>62,752</u>		<u>65,729</u>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within 1 year</b>				
- Creditors and accrued expenses		658		598
- Deferred income		2,912		2,270
		<u>3,565</u>		<u>2,868</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>59,187</b>	<b>62,861</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			<u><b>106,317</b></u>	<u><b>104,809</b></u>
007				
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>				
Unrestricted funds				
- General funds	9		102,066	101,802
- Designated funds	9		4,251	3,007
<b>TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS</b>			<u><b>106,317</b></u>	<u><b>104,809</b></u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 16 April 2024 and signed on their behalf

Mr R Flood  
Chairman

Mrs B Fisher  
Treasurer

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**1. STATUTORY INFORMATION**

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

**2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**(a) Basis of accounting**

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

**(b) Going Concern**

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

**(c) Income and debtors**

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities**

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

**(e) Expenditure and liabilities**

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

**(f) Investments**

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

**(g) Other financial instruments**

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

**(h) Intangible fixed assets**

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

**(i) Stocks**

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

**(j) Funds structure**

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

**3. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION**

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

**4. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

**5. TAXATION**

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

## 6. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Website costs	£	
Cost - at 1 January and 31 December 2023	<u>1,500</u>	
Depreciation		
- at 1 January 2023		-
Charge for year	<u>500</u>	
- at 31 December 2023	<u>500</u>	
	<u>1,000</u>	
Net book values		
- at 31 December 2023	<u>500</u>	
- at 31 December 2022	<u>1,000</u>	

## 7. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Market value at beginning of the year	40,948	42,964
Net loss on revaluation (2022: Loss)	5,682	(2,016)
Market value at end of year	<u>46,630</u>	<u>40,948</u>

Investment comprises a global growth OEIC fund.

## 8. STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

	General funds	Designated funds	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2023	101,802	3,007	104,809
Income	29,733	1,244	30,977
Expenditure	(35,151)	-	(35,151)
Loss on investments	5,682	-	5,682
<b>Balance at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>102,066</b>	<b>4,251</b>	<b>106,317</b>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

Fixed assets	47,130	-	47,130
Cash	45,468	4,251	49,719
Net other current assets	9,468	-	9,468
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>102,066</b>	<b>4,251</b>	<b>106,317</b>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

**RULES AND CONSTITUTION**

**Charity Registration No 252603**

**June 2017**

## **RULES AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

- 1. Name.** The name of the Society shall be “The City of Rochester Society”.
- 2. Objectives.** The objectives of the Society shall be to promote:
  - (a) public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of Rochester and its surroundings;
  - (b) the development of a live, modern community, with the highest standards of architecture and planning;
  - (c) interest in cultural activities;
  - (d) the re-instatement of Rochester’s city status;
  - (e) other features of general amenity, including preservation, conservation and education, for the benefit of both residents and visitors; and to do all such lawful acts and things as are incidental to the attainment of the objectives of the Society. It may, if it deems it fit, do such acts or things in conjunction with any person, body, institution, authority or otherwise.
- 3. Membership.** Membership of the Society shall be open to all who are interested in the aims of the Society and shall be in the following categories: life membership, yearly membership (adult), yearly membership (junior) – for those under 19 years of age, yearly membership (corporate). Membership shall lapse if the full subscription is unpaid by 31<sup>st</sup> July in the relevant year. The executive committee may also elect honorary members as it deems appropriate. Honorary members shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 4. Subscription.** The rate of subscription shall be as recommended by the executive committee and approved by a majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting. A new member joining the Society and paying the first subscription between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription until 1<sup>st</sup> April in the following year. Otherwise, all yearly membership subscriptions shall be renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The Society shall have power to accept donations for any purpose not inconsistent with its aims.
- 5. Meetings.** An annual general meeting shall be held, on a date appointed by the executive committee, between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June of each year, to receive the executive committee’s report and audited accounts and to elect members of the said committee. The committee shall decide when members meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give at least fourteen days’ notice of such meetings to all members.

Special general meetings of the Society shall be held at the request of ten or more members. Thirty members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a general meeting of the Society. Corporate members shall be entitled to send two delegates, each delegate entitled to one vote, to the annual or special general meeting of the Society.

- 6. Management of the Society.** The management of the Society shall be vested in an executive committee consisting of a chairman, vice-chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary and up to seven other members.

The executive committee may appoint other members of the society to serve on the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may also appoint other members of the society as officers, in addition to those defined above, but without voting rights. The executive committee shall decide whether such additional officers shall be required to attend meetings of the executive committee.

Five members of the committee shall constitute a quorum provided that one of that number is an officer of the Society.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall constitute the trustees of the society.

- 7. Committee.** The Society shall, at every annual general meeting, elect individually the four officers as defined in rule 6 and up to seven other members to constitute the committee for the ensuing year. The executive committee shall take office at the end of the meeting at which they are elected and shall hold office until the end of the next annual general meeting.

Members of the executive committee may be re-elected for a further term or terms of office, save for the four elected officers, as qualified in rule 8.

The executive committee shall determine the upper spending limit that each of the sub-committees defined in rule 9 may be permitted to spend on their own authority on individual purchases and transactions, though not as a component of a project or item which would in total exceed the permitted upper limit of spending.

- 8. Election of officers.** The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall serve for a period of time not exceeding the following:

Chairman and vice-chairman – three years;  
Honorary treasurer – seven years;  
Honorary secretary – five years.



If a nomination for any of the above positions is not forthcoming before the date of the annual general meeting, the above periods of office may be extended by a maximum of two years, subject to the approval of the annual general meeting.

Members of the society who have served the permitted continuous period in any of the elected offices and are therefore debarred for re-nomination will qualify for nomination to that office after a period of at least two years.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall form the finance and general purposes sub-committee of the executive committee and shall meet as required. It shall have authority to spend society funds when such a decision cannot await the next meeting of the executive committee.

**9. Sub-committees.** The executive committee shall create the following sub-committees for the efficient running of the society:

- Planning;
- Members meetings/events;
- Tours;
- Publications, Publicity and Promotions;
- Festivals.

The minimum size of respective sub-committees shall be three and each sub-committee may co-opt other members of the society who have special interests or skills which are deemed to be of benefit to the society, subject to the approval of the executive committee.

At its first meeting following the annual general meeting, the executive committee shall appoint an elected member of the executive committee to each sub-committee.

There shall be no limit on the number of sub-committees upon which an elected member of the executive committee or a member of the society may serve.

The chairman of the society shall be an ex-officio member of all sub-committees.

Each sub-committee shall elect its own chairman at its first meeting following the annual general meeting.

An elected member of the executive committee from each sub-committee shall report to the executive committee, usually in writing, on significant issues or when an executive committee decision is required. In the event that an elected member of the executive committee who is a member of the sub-committee is not available, then a substitute may attend and report to the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may create working groups as necessary to undertake specific projects.

- 10. Election of President and Vice-Presidents.** A president may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. He or she shall serve in that capacity for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election for one or more further terms. One or more vice-presidents may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. Such vice-presidents shall be elected for life. The president and vice-presidents shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 11. Appeals.** The executive committee shall have the power to make appeals, solicit donations and canvass monies for carrying out the objectives of the Society.
- 12. Expenses and administration.** The executive committee shall, out of monies received by the Society, pay all proper expenses for the management of the Society and shall use the residue of such monies as it thinks fit for or towards the objectives of the Society.
- 13. Investments.** All monies belonging to the Society at any time which are not immediately required for Society purposes shall be invested by the Trustees on behalf of the Society in such investments, securities or property as they consider fit, always complying with the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- 14. Borrowing.** The executive committee may borrow for the objectives of the Society such monies at such rate of interest and in such a manner as it may think fit, provided that the consent of a general meeting of the Society shall first be obtained.
- 15. Amendments.** The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting provided that ten days' notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to all members and provided that nothing therein contained shall authorise any amendment permitting the expenditure of funds of the Society on any object which is not a charitable object at law.
- 16. Winding up.** In the event of the winding up of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objectives similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as may be chosen by the executive committee and approved by the Charity Commission.

***Explanatory note***

***(This note does not form part of the Rules and Constitution)***

*The City of Rochester Society was founded in 1967. Its area of interest is that of the City of Rochester as it existed immediately prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1974, which may be described as the urban area of Rochester and Strood.*

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>INCOME</b>			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		18,910	37,205
- Subscriptions		2,285	2,895
- Life membership		200	300
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		430	454
- Income from tours		5,163	3,566
- Sale of publications		2,976	2,188
		<u>29,964</u>	<u>46,608</u>
Donations and legacies		174	380
Investment income		839	115
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<u><u>30,977</u></u>	<u><u>47,103</u></u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		21,779	20,353
- Costs of meetings and book club		497	484
- Cost of tours		385	233
- Publications		4,078	870
- Newsletter printing		4,172	3,953
- Grants and sponsorship		750	2,250
		<u>31,661</u>	<u>28,143</u>
Other costs			
- Committee and AGM expenses		836	1,123
- Affiliations and subscriptions		532	554
- Insurance		75	75
- Website costs and amortisation		644	663
- Independent examiner's fee		528	510
- Other costs		875	180
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<u><u>35,151</u></u>	<u><u>31,248</u></u>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		(4,174)	15,855
Profit on revaluation of investments (2022 : Loss)	6	5,682	(2,016)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<u>1,508</u>	<u>13,839</u>
Total funds brought forward		104,809	90,970
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u><u>106,317</u></u>	<u><u>104,809</u></u>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Intangible fixed assets	6		500		1,000
Investments	7		46,630		40,948
			<u>47,130</u>		<u>41,948</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Stocks		3,413		4,824	
Debtors and prepayments		399		305	
Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221		9,221	
Cash at bank and in hand		49,719		51,379	
		<u>62,752</u>		<u>65,729</u>	
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within</b>					
Creditors and accrued expenses		653		598	
Deferred income		2,912		2,270	
		<u>3,565</u>		<u>2,868</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			59,187		62,861
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			<u><b>106,317</b></u>		<u><b>104,809</b></u>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>					
Unrestricted funds					
- General funds	8		102,066		101,802
- Designated funds	8		4,251		3,007
<b>TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS</b>			<u><b>106,317</b></u>		<u><b>104,809</b></u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 16 April 2024 and signed on their behalf

Mrs B Fisher

Treasurer

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**1 STATUTORY INFORMATION**

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

**2 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

(b) Going Concern

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

(c) Income and debtors

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

(e) Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

(f) Investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(g) Other financial instruments

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

(h) Intangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

(i) Stocks

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

(j) Funds structure

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

**3 TRUSTEE REMUNERATION**

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

**4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

**5 TAXATION**

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**6 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

**Website costs**

	£
Cost	
- at 1 January and 31 December 2023	<u>1,500</u>
Depreciation	
- at 1 January 2023	500
- charge for year	<u>500</u>
- at 31 December 2023	<u>1,000</u>
Net book values	
- at 31 December 2023	<u><u>500</u></u>
- at 31 December 2022	<u><u>1,000</u></u>

**7 FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS**

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value at beginning of the year	40,948	42,964
Net gain on revaluation (2022 : Loss)	<u>5,682</u>	<u>(2,016)</u>
Market value at end of year	<u><u>46,630</u></u>	<u><u>40,948</u></u>

Investment comprise a global growth OEIC fund.

**8 STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Total £
Balance at 1 January 2023	101,802	3,007	104,809
Income	29,733	1,244	30,977
Expenditure	(35,151)	-	(35,151)
Gain on investments	5,682	-	5,682
Balance at 31 December 2023	<u><u>102,066</u></u>	<u><u>4,251</u></u>	<u><u>106,317</u></u>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

- Fixed assets	47,130	-	47,130
- Cash	45,468	4,251	49,719
- Net other current assets	9,468	-	9,468
- Total funds	<u><u>102,066</u></u>	<u><u>4,251</u></u>	<u><u>106,317</u></u>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT  
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF  
THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, 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 Executive committee'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 Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

*Richard Abel*

Richard Abel FCA CTA  
Aggarwal & Co Ltd  
Chartered Accountants

29 August 2024

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