

The Cromwell Association – registered charity no. 1132954

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31st December 2020

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the twelfth annual report of the trustees (the Council) of The Cromwell Association, which was registered as a charity on 25th November 2009 following the decision of the 2009 annual general meeting (AGM) to proceed with registration.

1.2 The report is for calendar year 2020, which is consistent with the charity's financial year.

2. Administrative details

2.1 The trustees who served during the year were:

Professor Peter Gaunt	President (appointed 28.4.18)
Mr John Newland	Minutes Secretary (appointed 28.4.18)
Mr Geoffrey Bush	Treasurer (appointed 28.4.18)
Mr John Goldsmith	Chairman (appointed 28.4.18)
Dr Maxine Forshaw	Editor of Journal (appointed 28.4.18)
Mr Paul Robbins	Membership Secretary (appointed 28.4.18)
Mr Richard Warren	Secretary (appointed 27.4.2019)

ordinary trustees, non-office holding,

Mr John Gibbon	(elected at the 2018 AGM)
Dr Jonathan Fitzgibbons	(elected at the 2017 AGM)
Dr Miranda Malins	(elected at the 2017 AGM)
Mrs Serrie Meakins	(elected at the 2019 AGM)
Mr Richard Warren	(elected at the 2019 AGM)
Dr Ismini Pells	(elected at the 2019 AGM)
Dr Charlotte Young	(elected at the 2019 AGM)

Officers and other trustees are three-year appointments.

2.2 For the purposes of charitable registration, the Secretary is also the charity correspondent and his home address the contact address used by the Charity Commission.

2.3 The governing document is the constitution formally adopted by the Association at the AGM held on 25th April 2009 at Naseby Village Hall.

3 Public benefit statement

The trustees have complied with the guidance of the Charity Commission on public benefit.

4 Objectives and activities

4.1 The object of the charity is to advance the education of the public in both the life and legacy of Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), politician, soldier and statesman, and the wider history of the seventeenth century.

4.2 The trust has undertaken to carry out the following activities for the benefit of the public:
To campaign for the preservation and conservation of buildings, sites and relevant to Cromwell

To commission, on behalf of the Association or in collaboration with others, plaques, panels and monuments at sites associated with Cromwell.

To support and encourage the Cromwell Museum and Cromwell Collection library in Huntingdon.

To provide, within the competence of the Association, advice to television, radio, press and other media on all matters relating to the period.

To encourage interest in the period in all phases of formal education by the publication of reading lists, information and teachers' guidance.

To publish news and information about the period, including an annual journal and regular newsletters

To organise an annual memorial service, day schools, conferences, lectures, exhibitions and other educational events.

To provide an Internet resource for researchers in the period including school students, genealogists and interested parties.

To offer, from time to time, grants, awards and prizes to individuals and organisations working towards the objectives stated above.

5. The Council met in January with no idea that it would be the only time it met in person during 2020 as a consequence of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Even in early March there seemed no reason why a meeting planned for later that month could not go ahead, but events moved very swiftly, and the March meeting was cancelled. Subsequent meetings of Council in June and November have been virtual meetings held via Zoom. Advice has been taken from the Charity Commission as to the most appropriate way to conduct our business, and Council is confident that all decisions have been taken in the best interests of the charity.
- 5.1 The decision to postpone the 2020 Annual General Meeting, that was planned to take place in Bridgwater, Somerset on Saturday 25th April, was not taken lightly, but there was in the end no choice. As papers had already been circulated in the Spring mailing, all members had to be contacted to advise of the cancellation. Inevitably this incurred extra expenditure. It was hoped that it would be possible to hold the AGM in early September but that too proved to be impossible. In November it was agreed that an actual AGM in April 2021 would also be very unlikely and that plans should be made for a virtual AGM to be held via Zoom.
- 5.2 Given the strange circumstances it was inevitable that the Association was not able to deliver the same range of activities as it had done in previous years. The option of delivering more content to members via the Internet was discussed, but rejected, on the grounds that the Association has not the capacity to pursue this in a meaningful way. This decision may have to be re-visited. The activities that the Association has been able to carry out are described below.
- 5.3 Members have received two copies of *The Protector's Pen*, edited by John Goldsmith supported by Mr Simon Blake as Production Editor.
- 5.4 The journal *Cromwelliana* edited by Dr Forshaw was distributed with the summer mailing. The articles included the 2019 Cromwell Day address by Professor Edward Vallance, and papers from the Study Day held in Lincoln in June 2019 on the theme of 'The Civil war in Lincolnshire 1642-60'. There were also the regular features of reviews and bibliographies of both book and journal articles, and the essay from the Schools Essay competition.
- 5.5 The planned school's event, which has proved to be increasingly popular, was another victim of the Pandemic, but the Essay Competition did go ahead, with some excellent entries, and the prizes were generously provided by life-member Frederic L. Borch III.

- 5.6 It was impossible to proceed with the planned annual Cromwell Day Service that should have taken place at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Hopefully a service can be held there in the future. In lieu of a service a wreath was laid by a bust of Cromwell in the Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon. The Curator of the Museum filmed the wreath being laid and recorded a very brief address, which was then placed on the Association's website on 3rd September. Many thanks to Stuart Orme for helping to make this possible.
- 5.7 A new interpretative panel for the Cromwell Museum, complementing the recent refurbishment, was funded by the Association, and erected outside the building on the east side facing Grammar School Walk.
- 5.8 In October work started on the design of a glass panel to be inserted into a window at St Giles', Cripplegate, to commemorate the marriage of Oliver Cromwell to Elizabeth Bourchier in August 1620. The design work was completed by December and it is hoped that the panel will be installed in the Spring of 2021.
- 5.9 To improve communication with members between mailings, a new form of email was introduced utilising the MailChimp platform. Over 75% of members have now supplied email addresses.
- 5.10 Good relations have been maintained with other organisations, which included an invitation from the National Army Museum for members to join them for a series of three lectures on the civil wars, given by Dr Ismini Pells.
- 5.11 Council kept a watchful eye on events that led to vandalism of various statues of historical figures, and made a response to the Policy Exchange on the issue. The Association will continue to maintain a watching brief and take action as necessary.
- 5.12 After lengthy consideration, with reluctance, the annual subscription for members was increased with effect from 3rd September. The price rise was significant, and the first for well over a decade, but unavoidable, and of sufficient size so that hopefully it can remain at the new level for some years to come.
- 5.13 The Association also continues to have a social media presence and has responded to a range of enquiries throughout the year.
6. Financial review 2020
- 6.1 2020 was another record year for attracting new members to the Association with 79 new subscriptions of which 15 were from overseas. However, the number of renewed subscriptions was a little down on the previous year. We believe that the new rates introduced in September 2020 are in line with those of other similar societies, representing good value for money, and ones which we hope to hold for some years. Subscription income in total was 25% higher than in 2019 reflecting the rate rise and the increased number of new members but partly offset by fewer subscriptions renewed.
- 6.2 As in past years very many members made generous donations for which the trustees are most grateful. And thanks go also to the many UK taxpayers who completed and returned Gift Aid forms so enabling the Association to reclaim tax of over £1,000.
- 6.3 Merchandise income was reduced by the simple fact that, in the absence of any of the usual meetings, the Association's new range of wares could not be displayed. However, our merchandise is being made available for purchase via the Cromwell Museum website.
- 6.4 For several years running the Association's finances have benefited from the Study Days and Schools' Conferences, but sadly not in 2020. However, we have not suffered any cancellation costs other than that of the special mailing to all the membership to announce the postponement of the AGM.

- 6.5 By far the most important cost is that of printing and mailing the publications. Not only have we suffered some significant increases over the years but have been dissatisfied with the service received. Therefore we are trying out a new supplier for the Spring edition of The Protector's Pen.
- 6.6 Our income exceeded our expenses by over £2,000 in 2020 so contributing to a healthy bank balance. Therefore the trustees have committed to donations of £5,500 including the glass panel in St Giles' Cripplegate referred to above.

7. Conclusion

The Association has continued to fulfil its charitable objectives across a wide range of activities. The Trustees are open to suggestions for further development within the inevitable constraints of finance and capacity.

8. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above

Signed on behalf of the Charity's trustees:-

Signature

Full name John Goldsmith, Chair

Signature

Full name Richard Warren Secretary

Date