

The Cromwell Association – registered charity no. 1132954

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31st December 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the sixteenth 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 This report is for the calendar year 2024, 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 (until 27.4.24)
Dr Ismini Pells	President (from 27.4.24)
Mr John Newland	Minutes Secretary (reappointed 27.4.24)
Mr Geoffrey Bush	Treasurer (until 27.4.24)
Mr John Goldsmith	Chair (reappointed 27.4.24)
Dr Maxine Forshaw	Editor of Journal (reappointed 27.4.24)
Mr Paul Robbins	Membership Secretary (reappointed 27.4.24)
Mr Richard Warren	Secretary (reappointed 23.4.2022)

Ordinary trustees, non-office holding:

Mr John Gibbon	(until 27.4.24))
Dr Jonathan Fitzgibbons	(re-elected 27.4.24)
Dr Miranda Malins	(re-elected 27.4.24)
Mrs Serrie Meakins	(re-elected 27.4.24)
Dr Ismini Pells	(until 27.4.24))
Dr Charlotte Young	(elected at the 2022 AGM)
Mr Geoffrey Bush*	(elected 27.4.24)
Mr Michael Hardy	(elected 27.4.24)
Mr Waseem Ahmed	(elected 27.4.24)

* Mr Bush kindly agreed to cover the vacant Treasurer's post

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 is 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 and sites 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. Review of the Year

5.1 Council met four times during the year, three were hybrid meetings, and the June meeting only by Zoom. All meetings were well attended.

5.2 The Annual General Meeting was held at The Coronium Museum in Cirencester on 27.4.24 and was attended by 28 members. This was the lowest number for several years despite an attractive venue and programme for the day. The lack of a direct railway connection to Cirencester may have been a contributory factor. Two new members were elected to Council but the Treasurer's post was not filled. Council is grateful to Mr Bush for continuing to cover the post until a new appointment can be made. The meeting was memorable as it was the last of Professor Gaunt's presidency. He was warmly thanked for his long service to the Association.

- 5.3 Membership numbers were broadly maintained with 514 at the beginning of the year and 526 at the end. A small number of members outside the UK took up the option of digital only membership when offered. As well as increased postage costs there have been persistent problems sending mail to countries in the European Union.
- 5.4 Direct member benefits were provided by our publications, and by the circulation of an emailed update from time to time to those who have provided their email address, which is now the great majority. Members have received two copies of *The Protector's Pen*, edited by John Goldsmith supported by Mr Simon Blake as Production Editor.
- 5.5 The journal *Cromwelliana*, edited by Dr Maxine Forshaw, reverted to a more typical sized edition. The 2023 Study Day held jointly with the History of Parliament Trust, on the theme of the history of Parliament 1640-1660, provided the main content, along with a range of other articles, reviews, and the annual bibliographies of both books and journal articles.
- 5.6 The Association's education work, led by Serrie Meakins, has continued to develop beyond all expectations. An event specifically for teachers of 17th Century history at 'A' level, was held at the National Civil War Centre in Newark in May, in response to requests for support. The objective was to increase their knowledge of current scholarship of the period, and to highlight some new methods of teaching the subject.
- The following month the annual School's Conference took place in Huntingdon, with an enthusiastic and engaged audience of students. The Association is grateful to all the historians who participated in the events and made them successful, as well as to our hosts, the NCWC and the Cromwell Museum. In addition, the annual essay competition, generously supported by Frederic L. Borch III attracted a good number of entries.
- Mindful of the significant workload in continuing to deliver and develop our education work, and because of a generous commitment of external funding from a benefactor, Council agreed to the appointment of a free-lance specialist to assist in 2025.
- 5.7 Following low numbers at the 2023 Annual Service, and the difficulties of holding it at the traditional venue of Cromwell Green at Westminster, the membership was asked for its views via an on-line survey. The response demonstrated some support for the event, and a preference for it to be held in London. The 2024 service was held in St Ives, Cambridgeshire with a good attendance of just under 50. The future of the service continues to be a subject of debate.
- 5.8 The Annual Study Day was held in October in the familiar surroundings of the Friends Meeting House in Oxford, a popular and friendly venue. The theme was the trial and execution of Charles I, to mark the 375th anniversary of the Regicide. Despite the very late withdrawal of one speaker the programme was excellent and very well received.
- 5.9 Council was pleased with the response to the Post-Graduate Research Grant scheme, with £1,500 awarded split between three applicants. Two of them were from universities in the USA and the third from Scotland. It was agreed to continue the scheme for a further year.

- 5.9 The Association also continues to maintain and develop the website www.olivercromwell.org which attracted over 230,000 separate visits during the year, an increase of more than 50,000. We have a social media presence on X formerly known as Twitter, and other social media platforms, administered by Dr Charlotte Young. Council is mindful of concerns about X. The Association has responded to a range of enquiries throughout the year. .

6 Financial review 2024

6.1 Membership income.

Income from subscriptions was broadly in line with that of 2023 and continued to contribute well over half our receipts. Members' donations were substantially lower than those of last year very largely because the Marston Moor monument repairs to which a specific large donation was attached were completed in 2023.

As ever, Council is most appreciative of the many members who contribute over and above their dues.

6.2 Income from events

Once again we recorded a sell out for Study Day. Despite continuing to hold down charges both to members and non-members to a modest level we recorded a surplus of nearly £2,000. Likewise the Schools' Conference was again successful with a surplus of over £1,000 despite a charge of just £15 a head. An additional event was held for teachers, the Inset Day, which made a very satisfactory financial return for a first time outing.

Council tries to attain break even on our Annual General Meeting and this was achieved this year in the very pleasant surroundings of Cirencester's Corinium Museum - but only thanks to generous support from a member.

It is only right to emphasize the Association's reliance on the professional historians who give so much of their time to the meetings and to record our thanks to them.

6.3 Costs

By far our largest annual cost is that of publishing and distributing the two editions of *The Protectors' Pen* and of *Cromwelliana*. Cost pressures have somewhat slackened this year but it was a smaller edition of *Cromwelliana* than last year and a somewhat smaller distribution (to those life members who had indicated they did not want to receive further print copy) that led to a 17% reduction in costs.

Council authorised two donations, each of £500. The first was to the Dugdale Society as a contribution to an edition of Warwickshire civil war loss accounts. These were estimates sent to Parliament in the immediate post-civil war period by individual parishes, stating the cost of wartime depredations. The second donation was to the Cromwell Museum Trust towards its purchase of Cromwell's watch.

The annual Essay Competition Prize was again financed by the generosity of Frederic L Borch III.

Post Graduate Research grants totalling £1500 were awarded to three applicants this year. This brings to four the number of students to have benefited from this scheme in recent years.

6.4 The Association's finances

The continued support of our members through timely payment of subscriptions, numerous donations, successful educational events and Study Day together with a tight control of costs have all contributed to boosting the Association's bank balances such that it is not proposed to raise subscription rates this year. Furthermore there is ample scope for further grants and projects in pursuit of the Association's objectives.

THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £
RECEIPTS			
Renewed subscriptions		8,344	8,616
New members' subscriptions		1,493	1,455
Donations received		1,644	2,660
Gift Aid refund		1,390	1,208
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<i>Total membership income</i>		12,871	13,939
 Sales of merchandise		208	330
Miscellaneous receipts		44	93
Bank interest		450	257
	<i>Gross</i>		
<i>Events:</i>	<i>receipts</i>	<i>Surplus</i>	<i>Surplus</i>
Annual General Meeting	656	48	26
Study Day	3,327	1,906	1,328
Cromwell Day	123	-312	-293
Schools' Conference	1,950	1,079	715
Teachers' Inset Day	1,625	328	-
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TOTAL NET RECEIPTS		16,622	16,395
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PAYMENTS

Secretarial, meeting room hire	751	648
<i>Cromwelliana and newsletter</i>	7,186	8,619
Website and IT	736	647
Insurance	261	249
Paypal charges	239	300
Sundry	387	184

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<i>Total - members' services</i>	9,560	10,647

Monument repairs	0	4,500
Replacement information panel	0	130
Donations made	1,000	1,090
Essay prizes	350	250
Post Graduate Research grants	1,498	0
Promotion/announcements	342	120

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TOTAL PAYMENTS	12,750	16,737
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NET CASH INFLOW/OUTFLOW	3,872	-342
Bank balances brought forward	22,788	23,130

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BALANCES AT 31ST DECEMBER	26,660	22,788
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REPRESENTED BY:

Bank deposit account	10,833	6,882
Bank current account	725	5,879
Bank term deposit	15,000	10,000
Paypal account	102	27

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TOTAL FUNDS AT 31ST DECEMBER	26,660	22,788
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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 report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's trustees:

Signature *John Goldsmith*

Full name John Goldsmith, Chair

Signature *Richard Warren*

Full name Richard Warren, Secretary

Date 13/1/25