

THE WILTSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST
Registered charity no. 1102882

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2019**

Introduction

Each year, the trustees of the charity are required to approve an annual report and accounts prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission. This document, which must be made available to the public, covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. Its purpose is to review the charity's activities against the charity's aims and objectives. Specifically, it contains information regarding the charity's trustees and their appointment, constitution, and financial affairs. It also includes a statement of the charity's public benefit.

Charity name

The Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust

Charity registered no.

1102882

President of the Trust

On 14 May 2018 the Trustees invited Mr Michael Wade OBE to become President of the Trust with a remit to work with others to raise funds to enable faster progress to be made on completing work on the Wiltshire VCH. Mr Wade accepted this invitation.

Trustees

The Trust's constitution, powers and the way it operates are set out in the Deed dated 29 November 2002, as amended on 16 October 2013, 23 October 2017 and 23 July 2018. The Deed stipulates a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 15 trustees, two of whom are nominated by Wiltshire Council (WC), and one by the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (WANHS).

Those trustees appointed upon nomination from other organisations serve until the latter nominate replacements. The remaining trustees serve for a four-year term at the end of which they are eligible to be re-appointed.

During the period to which this report relates, the following trustees held office. Except where otherwise stated below, the trustees served throughout the whole of the period.

Mrs R Addington (from 14 May 2028)
Mrs G Alder
Mr J d'Arcy
Mrs M Barnett
Mr C Caswill
Prof M Hicks
Mr M Hodges
Mr J Holden
Mrs V Landell-Mills
Mr D Moss (from 14 May 2018)
Mr C Newbury
Mr W A Perry (nominee of WANHS)
Mr M Stone
Cllr I Thorn (nominee of Wiltshire Council, appointed 23 October 2017)
Cllr S Wheeler (nominee of Wiltshire Council)

Mrs Vicky Landell-Mills held the position of Chairman until 12 October 2018 when she was succeeded by Mr D Moss. Mr M Hodges held the position of Vice-Chairman for the whole of the period.

Hon. officers

The Treasurer and Secretary of the Trust were Mr J Holden (a trustee) and Mr K Strickland (a volunteer) respectively for the whole of the period. Mr Strickland retired at the end of the period and has been succeeded by Mr H Wright. Both Treasurer and Secretary are honorary positions.

Offices

As it neither owns nor leases any premises, the Trust has no office of its own. During the year, Trustees' meetings were held at the Wiltshire Museum by courtesy of WANHS. Correspondence may be addressed to the Secretary, whose postal address is 5 The Paddock, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1FN.

The Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre at Chippenham kindly provides facilities for researchers and others engaged on Trust business, and as a depository for the Trust's official records.

Objectives, public benefit and review of activity

As set out in the Deed previously referred to, the purpose ("object") of the Trust is "to apply such monies, investments and property as the Trustees receive in their capacity as Trustees ... for the research, preparation and writing of the Victoria County History of Wiltshire".

The Victoria County History (VCH) was established in 1899 to publish a history of every community in England. Working from original documents and extensive fieldwork, professional historians produce a comprehensive history of each parish, including its physical features, ways of life, economic activity, transport, local government, key institutions and buildings, courts and leisure activities. The production of the histories is under the aegis and technical supervision of the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London.

Wiltshire is among the leading counties with 18 completed volumes to date. Work commenced in 1947 with financial support from local authorities (and for nine years, the University of the West of England). Following restrictions on spending by local and public authorities, the Trust undertook from 2013 to raise funds for future research and publications.

The Trust has responsibility for commissioning the historical research for future volumes. During the year it has been able to let research contracts on the next volume (Vol. 20) covering the Chippenham area.

In addition, the Trust has been keen to support the work being undertaken by the Institute of Historical Research to complete Vol. 19 (Mere and neighbouring parishes) and has made a financial commitment to it.

Completed volumes of the VCH form a definitive record of Wiltshire's history. They are a resource for current and future generations of historians, both professional and amateur, and the public at large. As such, it is the trustees' belief that the work of the Trust is for the "public benefit", the criterion used by the Charity Commission to assess charitable status.

Fund-raising

There continue to be two principal strands to the Trust's fund-raising. First, a "Friends of the Wiltshire VCH", open to all on payment of an annual subscription. Second and very much linked to the first, a programme of one-off events most of which are open to the public at large. Mrs G Alder (a trustee) assisted with the administration of the Friends, associated activities and newsletter during the year to which this report relates.

Fund-raising is crucial to the ability of the Trust to progress work on the VCH volumes. A small group of trustees meets regularly to consider ways of raising funds and to review the outcomes. With the appointment of Mr Wade as President, this work will be supplemented in the coming year by special efforts to raise sufficient funds to start work on Volume 21 (Alderbury and neighbouring parishes).

Commissioning

As demonstrated in the accounts which follow, the funds available to the Trust have enabled work on Vol. 20 to be progressed, a mark of the Trust's success in meeting its aims and objectives. Trustees' plans for 2019-20 are to continue to commission work on further sections of Volume 20 as and when funds permit, in one case working with a local history project group; and, subject to success in raising sufficient extra funds to commence work on volume 21. Subject to strategic approval by the trustees as a whole, this aspect of the Trust's work is overseen by a Project Group with advice from a consultant editor and an academic adviser.

It is important that the Trust has funds to meet known commitments. Trustees have an approved policy of maintaining sufficient funds to meet the full costs of all known commitments plus a working reserve of £2000.

This report was approved by the trustees on [10 June 2019].

[signed] David Moss
Chairman