

# The Yateley Society

## Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts

Financial Year Ending 30th September 2023



## Reference and Administration Details

**Charity Name:** The Yateley Society  
**Registered Charity No:** 282397  
**Email address:** secretary@yateleysociety.org.uk  
**Website address:** www.yateleysociety.org.uk

### Names of the Charity Trustees who manage the Charity:

| Trustee Name      | Office                                    |
|-------------------|---|
| Alison Hewitt     | Chair / Planning                          |
| Jo Hill           | Vice Chair/Communications                 |
| Liz Carpenter     | Honorary Secretary                        |
| Elizabeth Hesketh | Honorary Treasurer / Membership Secretary |
| Roger Coombes     | Local History                             |
| Colin Broadley    | Archivist                                 |
| Diane Gardner     | Research                                  |
| Mary Ferriss      | Trustee                                   |



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## 1. Chairman's Report

I feel like my feet haven't touched the ground in my first year as Chair, and I certainly had big shoes to fill!

As a committee, we have worked very hard together to ensure we have provided talks and events for our members across a broad spectrum of topics while continuing to work with our volunteers to progress as many of our on-going projects as possible. You will read an update on most of these later in this report.

Jo (Vice chair) and I have met with the new Yateley Town Council (YTC) Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk twice this year to discuss common ground and are always looking for ways of strengthening our working relationship with YTC. While in April, Liz Carpenter and I attended the Hart Voluntary Action AGM for the first time at the new Yateley United Club House.

Our talks this year have included an inspiring evening with Pete West from the Hampshire Amphibian and Reptile Group (HIWARG); an excellent repeat (and update) of the story of the Viking Vagabond from the Blackbushe Heritage Trust; we've heard from the new CEO of Yateley Industries, Sheldon McMullan, who updated us on the vision for the future for this important part of our community; the Blackbushe Heritage Team invited members to an exclusive preview of their Viking Vagabond that has now been repatriated to Blackbushe Airport for restoration, and we welcomed Pete Woodford from the Starburst Foundation to tell us about what they have planned for Yateley Village Hall.

To round the summer off we held our Late Summer Social at Yateley Industries which was a wonderful warm afternoon that was enjoyed by all, and a thoroughly enjoyable way to support this important part of our community. Thanks go to our own Liz Carpenter (Yateley Society's Secretary) and Yateley Industries CEO, Sheldon McMullan, for masterminding this event.

We organised information stalls at the Yateley May Fayre (May), Great Big Green Week Sustainability Fair (June) and Heathland week event (July) at Wyndhams Pool supporting the Hampshire Countryside Rangers. We were also invited to have a display at the Yateley Camera Club Exhibition in May at Yateley School which was an amazing event to be part of. We can only do all of this with the on-going support of all our Trustees and volunteers for which we are very grateful.

A highlight this year is the recent completion of a memoir of growing up in Yateley and the surrounding area, *'Here There and Everywhere'* by Brian Coxhill. This has been a labour of love and thanks go to Trustee and Local History lead, Roger Coombes and to volunteer Frances Clinch for their endless patience and determination to bring this to completion. We hope that the final publication will be available to buy at our stall at the Christmas Market.

Finally, thank you to everyone that gets involved including our amazing volunteers: Frances Clinch (proof reading/editing), Chris Edwards (Yateley Common Management Committee representative), Alan Kinnaird (planning and local history research), Mike Mann (conservation work party coordinator and all things Asian Hornet related), Abby Roper (local history research and history chat at Café 46), Ute Weyer (pollinator counts), Ally Williams (pollinator counts) and last but not least Chris Willis who hand delivers newsletter to members without internet access.

If you feel inspired by what you read in our Annual Report, then please get in touch with us as the more active members we have, the more we can do in 2024 to continue to make this a great place to live.

*Alison Hewitt, Chair*  
*chair@yateleysociety.org.uk*

## 2. Structure, Governance and Management

### 2.1 Description of the Charity's Trusts

#### **Type of governing document.**

The Society's governing document is our Constitution; the model constitution of the Civic Trust, first adopted at its inaugural meeting on **15th January 1981**. The Constitution was amended at the AGM on the **31st January 1985**, at an SGM held on **14th November 1996** to add the fourth Biodiversity object clause, and to make a large number of detail changes to modernise the constitution, mainly to conform with Charity Commissioner and Civic Trust standards. There were more changes made at the AGMs of **20 February 1997** and **15th February 2001**.

Under the guidance of Hart Voluntary Action, the Constitution was further simplified, and updated to include current information regarding the practises of the Society, and then accepted by the Members at the AGM of **3rd November 2022**.

#### **How the charity is constituted.**

The charity is an **unincorporated association**. The Charity Commission's website details that an unincorporated association is appropriate where the charity:

- is to be relatively small in terms of assets.
- has a membership.
- is to be run by charity trustees who will be elected by members or appointed to hold office for fixed terms.
- wants to take account of the views of residents and organisations through membership or as users.
- wishes to carry out its work wholly or partly through the voluntary effort and contributions of its members.

The appropriate governing document is a constitution – which we have.

#### **Trustee selection methods**

As approved at our AGM of February 2022, we will now be following the standard processes as recommended by Hart Voluntary Action and widely adopted by charities within the UK. Once a Trustee is voted into post at an AGM by Society members, or co-opted during the year, and appointed to the executive committee, they will serve a term of no less than 3 years. This is subject to a maximum of 3 terms (within a specific role), or resignation by said Trustee should their circumstances change, and they are no longer able to support the role

they have been appointed to. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

### **Volunteer selection methods**

In recognition of the pro-active and valuable work undertaken by some of our members who do not wish to be made Trustees, we now have the option to sign them to a new "Volunteer Agreement". It also enables these members to work under the "umbrella of credibility" having been given a Society email address, and the support of the executive committee, with a formal reporting structure to a nominated Trustee. Our current signed-up volunteers include:

- Mike Mann
- Alan Kinnaird
- Ute Weyer
- Hannah Carpenter

## **2.2 Data Protection**

From 25 May 2018 all UK organisations, including charities need to comply with a new data protection law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We continue to monitor our processes to ensure compliance and make our Privacy Policy available to both new and existing members.

## **2.3 Additional Governance Issues**

### **Induction of Trustees**

We have developed a Trustee Handbook intended to provide important information to new trustees and as a point of reference for all other officers and trustees to ensure all can undertake their roles and responsibilities in a diligent manner. It is intended that this document is reviewed and amended as necessary on a regular basis.

In line with our new "Volunteer Agreement" programme, there is a reduced version of the Trustee handbook for our new volunteers.

### **Management and Volunteers**

The charity is administered entirely by volunteers. It does not have access to the financial resources that might allow it to operate in any other way, which affects what may be reasonably expected of the charity in terms of performance and timeliness. Thus, if a volunteer ceases to be willing to carry out the work, resigns from the Society, or leaves the district, it is important to find other volunteers to take on that role to ensure continuity of effort, and to take plans and projects through to their conclusion.

## **2.4 The Charity's Organisational Structure**

The Society is managed by the Executive Committee, which meets on a Wednesday evening approximately 4 times a year (at 8-week intervals). All Society business is discussed to a structured agenda prepared by the Honorary Secretary. Minutes are kept and approved as correct at the following meeting. The work undertaken by The Yateley Society is then focussed on approved "Projects", each with its own project lead, project team, regular meetings, minutes and agendas.

### **Projects - undertaken:**

- **Toad Across the Road**
- **Yateley Village Hall**

- **Tree Planting**

**Projects – in their initial phase:**

- **YCAN**
- **Blackbushe Airport Development**
- **Digital Library**
- **Vicarage Road**
- **Tapestry Lawn**
- **Assets of Community Value Project**
- **Red Cross Fields Project**
- **Pond Project**
- **Oral History Project**
- **NRN Surveys Project**

**Projects – ongoing:**

- **Planning Applications and Issues**
- **Conservation Working Party**
- **Fundraising Strategy Project**
- **Schools & Youth Liaison Project**
- **Increase The Yateley Society Membership**
- **Events and Communications Project**
- **Archives Project**
- **Memories Project**

## **Supporting Organisations**

The Society wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance provided this year by Yateley Town Council, Yateley Country Markets, Hampshire Countryside Rangers, the Yateley Cobbler, EJC Websites and PRINTRIK.

## **3. Objectives and Activities**

### **3.1 Summary of the objects of the Charity**

- i. **To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, and architecture of the area of benefit.**
- ii. **To secure the preservation, protection, development, and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.**
- iii. **To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.**
- iv. **To secure the enhancement of the biological diversity of the ecosystems, the conservation of the natural and semi-natural habitats, and the protection of the characteristic flora and fauna within the area of benefit.**

### **3.2 Statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.**

In planning our activities for the year, we keep in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at our Executive Committee meetings. There is a standard agenda item under which we record the Society's main activities during the year for public benefit and how these relate to our charitable objects.

### **3.3 Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects.**

Each year the Society's objectives and activities seek to further its charitable object clauses.

To achieve object clause **(1)** the Society runs a talks programme which anyone may attend free of charge, publishes books and publications, and has a website, which in addition to providing information, also attracts a steady stream of email enquiries, mostly concerning local and family history, and planning matters.

To achieve object clause **(2)** the Society continues to research Yateley's heritage including the history of old buildings, whether listed or not, and maintaining a database of up-to-date research. The Society continues to monitor the activities of the Local Planning Authority and is actively involved in supporting Yateley Town Council and other community groups in the process of drawing up the Yateley, Darby Green and Frogmore Neighbourhood Plan.

The Society also maintains a watching brief over the registered common land in the parish as an historic feature, carries out historic research, and encourages archaeological research by local experts and maintains a forum for the dissemination of the findings. The Society also monitors the conservation status of Yateley Common, an important part of the Thames Valley Heaths Special Protection Area for Wild Birds, supporting two members as observers on the Yateley Commons Management Committee.

To achieve object clause **(3)** the Society monitors significant planning applications in Yateley, via the Hart Planning website and convenes public meetings to discuss any major planning challenges of concern to agree any necessary action plans.

To achieve object clause **(4)** the Society organises and supports financially a group of Conservation Volunteers. Involvement is not restricted to Society members; everyone is welcome. The volunteer hours are logged annually. Two members regularly attend the Yateley Commons Management Committee as observers.

## **4. Achievements and Performance**

### **4.1 Membership**

At the end of September 2023, The Yateley Society had a total membership of **172** which is made up of 160 paying, 7 lifetime and 5 honorary members. The number has been relatively stable, peaking to 175 from April to July before dropping slightly to the current figure.

Although it is good news that there has not been a significant fall over the year, efforts need to continue to recruit and retain members. Our attendance at local fairs attracts much interest and, together with promoting our profile on social media, helps to increase our membership.



We would be grateful for any fresh ideas on recruiting new members so please get in touch if you can help in any way.

MemberMojo continues to run smoothly, making the administration of the membership records much easier than in the past. We would like to remind members that it is important to renew membership through our website each year to ensure contact details and gift aid requirements are kept up-to-date. This is needed even if an automatic payment method is used, as GDPR regulations mean that we must validate all member records annually.

***Liz Hesketh, Membership Secretary***  
*membership@yateleysociety.org.uk*

## **4.2 Communication**

Various groups meet throughout the year to organise PR activities, talks and events with the objective of raising awareness of the Yateley Society and increasing membership.

### **Newsletter**

The Newsletter editor is Jo Hill, assisted by Frances Clinch as proof-reader with contributions included from the Chair, heads of subgroups, members and affiliated organisations. They are produced bi-monthly and used at events and posted on the website.

### **Website**

Our website is a very useful way of setting out what the Society have, and are trying, to achieve. It has been fundamental in the ability for members and the public to see what Events we plan and for them to book places (and pay for tickets if necessary) with a link to PayPal. A link in the membership section also uses PayPal to facilitate new and renewing memberships.

Funding was given by Yateley Town Council towards updating our website to focus on our projects and launching the new Online Digital Library – these will be launched in October 2023.

### **Social Media**

Facebook enabled us to promote the Society to a great number of Yateley residents and are useful tools for addressing the Society's Object clause (i). All Facebook posts are also shared to other local groups, whose memberships total around 20k allowing us to reach a widening audience outside our own membership.

These steps all help to raise awareness of the Society and its aims, and this is borne out by increasing numbers of followers:

Yateley Society Facebook page –over 1k followers

"Friends of Yateley Society" closed Facebook group - a forum for discussion on local issues and initiatives. This group has attracted 482 members.

It is an ambition in the future to increase our presence on other platforms such as X – 608 followers and Instagram – 65 followers. We will continue to advertise for volunteers to help us with social media.

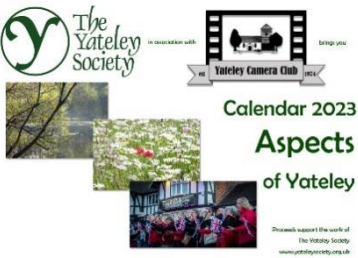


### 4.3 Meetings and Events

A packed schedule of talks and events for Society members and the general public is shown in the table below. As well as these organised events, a local history Coffee and Chat at Café 46 was (and will continue to be) held on the third Tuesday of each month and a monthly Conservation Working party in collaboration with the Yateley Common Rangers was (and will continue to be) held on the last Sunday of each month.

| Month      | Talk/Event   |
|------------|--|
| Oct 2022   | Yateley Great Big Green Week – Sustainability Fair and Eco Talks organised in collaboration with Yateley Climate Action Network (YCAN)   |
| Oct 2022   | Bloomin’ Kids Activity Event - The Yateley Society was awarded a grant by British Aerospace Systems in Frimley to use on an eco-project in our area. BAe were impressed by our wildflower verge project and are keen to promote more eco projects. We invited 40 families with young children to apply for a FREE wild gardening kit worth £30 comprising wildflower seeds, a watering can, bird box, insect guide and bug hotel, which secured a place on our multi-faceted gardening activity held during October half term. |
| Oct 2022   | A talk by Katie Clutterbuck, Wilder Garden Champion from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust about her journey to rewild her garden in Yateley.   |
| Nov 2022   | Be a Part of Our Future presentation and AGM   |
| Nov 2022   | Yateley Christmas Market   |
| Dec 2022   | Christmas mince pies, mulled wine and festive live music, provided by students from Yateley School, at Yateley Cricket Club  |
| Jan 2023   | Blackbushe Heritage Trust ‘sold out’ talk about repatriating their Vickers Viking Vagabond from Austria  |
| Feb 2023   | Hampshire and Isle of Wight Reptile Group – Pete West gave background and good guidance to members to form the Help a Toad Across the Road group.  |
| Feb 2023   | Fascinating History of Reading Abbey with the Finchampstead Society.   |
| March 2023 | A repeat of the Blackbushe Heritage Trust talk for those that missed tickets for the January presentation.   |
| Apr 2023   | Sheldon McMullan, new CEO of Yateley Industries, talked about the history, past trials, and future plans for Yateley Industries.   |
| May 2023   | Yateley May Fayre – with a local history display and merchandise on sale   |
| May 2023   | Yateley Camera Club Show at Yateley School – with local history and biodiversity displays  |
| June 2023  | Blackbushe Heritage Trust hosted a Pre-Air Day for Yateley Society members to introduce the Vagabond repatriated from Austria.   |
| June 2023  | Yateley Great Big Green Week – Sustainability Fair held in collaboration with Yateley Climate Action Network (YCAN)  |
| July 2023  | HIWARG update – Pete West with news of local amphibian activity  |
| Sep 2023   | Late Summer Social – held in partnership with Yateley Industries in their newly refurbished gardens  |

## 4.4 Merchandise

As well as existing books, pamphlets, greetings cards and postcards, wildflower seedbombs:

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <p>The 2023 Calendar showcased a range of photographs taken in and around the Yateley area by members of the Yateley Camera Club.</p>  |
|   | <p>Kits obtained with the grant from British Aerospace were sold at events.</p>  |
|  | <p>The <b>Membership Gift pack continues to be available for purchase for the price of Adult or Household membership. The booklet A Walk on Cricket Hill is included, along with Yateley Trees, a postcard or two, a bookmark and latest newsletter.</b></p> |

**Jo Hill, PR/Communications**  
*vicechair@yateleySociety.org.uk*

## 4.5 Planning

Once again, several key planning issues have arisen that affect the community, which have been discussed at face-to-face meetings and by email. Social media continues to be our primary means of communicating and sharing information to the community, and the "Friends of Yateley Society" Facebook group is where we share that information.

**Planning Application Reviews Project:** A key role of the planning team is to monitor and comment on planning applications where appropriate, with a specific focus on the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings within Yateley, Frogmore and Darby Green. The planning applications listed below are the main applications that we have focussed on this year; however, as a team we have reviewed many others.

### **Yateley Hall:**

There is a very big comparison between Yateley Hall and Minley Manor, in that they are both Grade II\* Listed Buildings, and have been the subject of planning applications over the last year. But the difference is a stark one.

The planning application for Minley Manor was submitted at the same time as an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC), and both applications, which were validated in November 2022, have progressed in parallel, based on an overall vision for the core of the estate, with due consideration and respect for both the buildings and their setting. The applications are exemplary in that they are thorough, and the proposals have been widely consulted upon and proposals modified as necessary to minimize any unwanted impact.

In comparison Hurst Lodge School, who lease Yateley Hall, have adopted a completely different and somewhat counter-productive strategy of undertaking unauthorised landscaping work to expand their car park and erecting a number of unauthorised temporary buildings in the hope of setting a precedent for future development. As a result, several retrospective planning applications have had to be submitted in an attempt to regularise the situation. Whilst a planning application was being considered for the unauthorised 'Cabins' that had been erected in the courtyard between the Grade II\* House and the Grade II Stable Block, a 'Pre-App' was also submitted for a two-storey extension to Yateley Hall within the same courtyard, with the option of erecting two single storey buildings as an alternative. One of which would also be an extension to Yateley Hall, whereas the other building would be situated within the enlarged car park. This largely confirms that the 'Cabins' were pawns in a development strategy. Hart have refused all the retrospective planning applications, which only leaves them to advise on the Pre-App, which we believe is significantly lacking in content, is flawed by conflicting and incomplete drawings, and is of an unacceptably low standard that would harm the existing buildings and their setting.

To date no LBC applications have been submitted and nor has there been a comprehensive retrospective planning application for the whole of the site, which would include the enlarged carpark and use of the parkland as a sports facility. Following the refusals for the cabins, no further planning applications have been submitted whilst the Pre-App is being considered.

However, the accompanying documents make it clear that the long term aim of the school is to extend the Grade 2\* Listed Yateley Hall.

**Gayton House:** You may remember from last year's Annual Report that a planning application for Gayton House (21/02940/FUL Motoright Village Way Yateley Hampshire GU46 7SE) had been submitted. This first application was refused and re-submitted as 22/01062/FUL "*Demolition of Village Service Station, erection of a part two, part two and a half storey building to accommodate 1 no. commercial unit (Use Classes E(a) & E(c)), 20 no. sheltered apartments, communal facilities and associated access, car parking and landscaping, demolition of toilet and utility at ground floor rear of Gayton House, erection of a single storey rear extension to accommodate refuse store and change of use to 2 sheltered apartments, guest suite and buggy store.*"

The key difference between the two applications is that the second application proposed to retain as much of Gayton House as possible, including its prominent main façade, a three storey block adjacent to Harpton Parade became two storeys and, at the planner's request, one flat became a commercial unit. I'm pleased to report that planning permission was finally granted for this development on the 20th September 2023. As a Civic Society, we are delighted with

this outcome for Gayton House, which was originally proposed to be demolished. It is a key property on Vicarage Road with a fascinating history, so it is great news that it will be retained and incorporated into the development as a key feature. Additionally it is good news that the dilapidated Garage & Forecourt, which has blighted Yateley for years, will finally be replaced.

The developer, Lilyford Homes, has confirmed that construction work is expected to take 18 months and that they hope to have a show apartment ready for Autumn 2024. An artist's impression of the new development, from the Lilyford website is shown below:



**Yateley Village Hall:** Earlier this year we were made aware of Yateley Town Council (YTC) plans to lease Yateley Village Hall to a local charity, the Starburst Foundation, who proposed to convert it to a Theatre School. As this is an important community asset and one of our best-known Victorian buildings, we were concerned about what this would entail and shared our main concerns with YTC. We were delighted to welcome Pete Woodford from the Starburst Foundation to a committee meeting in November 2022, followed up with a talk to members in early 2023, during which he shared their vision for the building. These plans have recently come to fruition and the revitalised Village Hall reopened in August 2023 as the new home of the Starburst Theatre Academy, whose mission is to enrich the community by encouraging our youth to 'Dream, Inspire and Achieve,'

**Assets of Community Value:** This on-going project identifies and researches relevant properties that could be listed as 'Assets of Community Value.' Briefly, this means that should the property come up for sale in the next 5 years, the community would have a window of opportunity to try to purchase it. We were very grateful to the local resident who researched the information required to submit the nomination for The Anchor Pub on Vigo Lane to be added to the 'List of Assets of Community Value' and were delighted to have this nomination accepted by Hart District Council on 5/1/23.

We would like to research more potential assets to nominate in the future, but we require more volunteers to work on this important project.

**Blackbushe Airport:** Since it was taken over by new owners in 2015, they have actively sought to develop and expand the airport's buildings and facilities. This is why the airport tried to legally 'de-commonise' all of its lands which, since time immemorial, have been classed as Common Land. A decision on this is now imminent, and in anticipation of some of the land being de-commonised, the airport is currently developing its plans. This, we are led to believe, also

involves swapping some of their Common Land for farmland adjacent to the Common, to enable a significantly larger development to take place.

The first view of the latest proposed buildings can be found at - <https://www.blackbusheairport.co.uk/vision> where this digital artist's impression illustrates a completely new portfolio of buildings, in a new location, with a new access off the A30. In addition to a number of prominent buildings, there is also a line of proposed hangers adjacent to the A30. Collectively, this would amount to the largest commercial development in Yateley for decades. Once the issue over the Common is decided, we expect Blackbushe to reveal its detailed plans, consult on them, and then make several applications relating to both the proposed land swap and planning permission.

In anticipation of all this, the airport's website has just had a makeover and information on their current 'Vision' is still to be added - <https://www.blackbusheairport.co.uk/>. It really is a case of watch this space.

In the meantime, we continue to be represented by one of our Trustees on the 'Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee' that meets twice a year. Details can be found at <https://www.blackbusheairport.co.uk/consultative-committee>.

**If You Would Like To Join Us:** We are a very small friendly team of volunteers, so if you're interested in getting involved in planning, or have any questions about anything mentioned, then please contact Alison Hewitt on [planning@yateleysociety.org.uk](mailto:planning@yateleysociety.org.uk) or Alan Kinnaird on [research@yateleysociety.org.uk](mailto:research@yateleysociety.org.uk).

***Alan Kinnaird &  
Alison Hewitt, Planning  
planning@yateleySociety.org.uk***

## 4.6 Conservation

One of our longest running projects is that of **Conservation Work Parties**. We run monthly volunteer work parties to support Hampshire County Council (HCC) Rangers with the management of Yateley Common. This year, with the support of the Hampshire Amphibian and Reptile Group (HIWARG) we are also liaising with Hart District Council (HDC) and Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP) Rangers looking at ways to enhance the biodiversity of specific areas including Royal Oak Valley and Cricket Hill Pond.

Our **Heathland Conservation work parties** continue to attract several new committed volunteers. However, since HCC Rangers are understaffed (but cover a large area of NE Hampshire) and have experienced considerable work force turnover in recent years, more volunteers would be very welcome. Obviously, the more volunteers that attend a work party, the greater man hours that can be spent tackling the task in hand. Publicising these work parties via social media remains the most effective way to reach new volunteers and it is encouraging to see that volunteer numbers have almost returned to pre-pandemic levels during this recovery year. Regular scrub & tree removal has continued, plus culvert clearance and pond work clearing bull rush overgrowth from pond edges.

A recent change of local HCC management strategy on Yateley Common means that the approach of creating a barrier to dogs & people disturbance between open heath areas and Bridleways/tracks will be abandoned in future by removal of these effective low hedges. It will therefore be increasingly important that **dog walkers keep dogs on leads during**

**ground nesting bird breeding season.** When ground nesting birds are disturbed by dogs, the nest and contents are left vulnerable to predation by watching hungry corvids (crows/jays/magpies) and dog owners commit a reckless offence of disturbance under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. It may be that in years to come penalties are introduced for this transgression.

The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust has approached the Yateley Society with an invitation for volunteers to work on the MOD land to the South of the A30, for which the Trust will have responsibility for habitat & species conservation from Jan 2024. We have agreed to support that volunteer work wherever possible.

A recent a site meeting in the **Royal Oak Valley** with HDC and BVCP Rangers proposed plans to commence targeted conservation work using local volunteers. Yateley Society supports this initiative and the use of mail drops & social media to reach adjacent households. Fly-tipping from adjacent properties continues to be an issue along the valley and evidence of offences has been archived for HDC to prosecute offenders.

Regular surveys of Royal Oak Valley have continued this year and the Japanese Knotweed (JK) which was treated by the BVCP Rangers in 2021 has returned as expected. BVCP are pausing this work due to the uncertainty of the land ownership. The Yateley Society is also in contact with the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) to find out whether the area meets the criteria to be designated as a Site of Important Nature Conservation (SINC) which would afford it some level of protection.

Discussions and plans with HDC Rangers to conduct habitat improvement works at **Cricket Hill (Skater's) Pond** with support from Yateley Society Volunteers is awaiting review on the scale of the works required and available funding decisions from the HDC Ecologist. A recent search of the pond instructed & lead by our local HIWARG Expert failed to locate any Great Crested Newts (protected species) but that was expected at this time of year as most amphibians depart ponds after the breeding season. It is understood that the optimum time for pond maintenance is November & December, however, with unseasonably warm temperatures reaching 25o – 28o C in October 2023 this is likely to be delayed.

Yateley Society volunteers have been invited by HIWARG to train to become surveyors in Spring 2024.

In early 2023 the **Help-a-Toad Campaign** got underway. A trial of equipment, routes & personnel skills was attempted in the Spring of 2023 with the objective of identifying unrecorded high mortality crossing points for Toads, Frogs and Newts. No new crossing points were identified, even where they were known to have existed a few years or a couple of decades ago, indicating confirmation of the general trend of the large decline in amphibian numbers locally.

Raising public awareness of the **invasive Asian Hornet (AH)**, which is very damaging to all pollinators, and particularly bee colonies, continues with emphasis on tracking and eradication of 'foundress queens' in the autumn & spring. Nests have been located and eradicated recently in Plymouth & the Dover area. DNA analysis indicated that they were 'imports' & not yet established in the UK.

A new project for 2023 is to undertake **pollinator counts** in the Community Orchard and wildflower verges. A small team of volunteers have begun to undertake this task with support from the HCC Pollinator and Nature Recovery Network team. The plan is for counts to be undertaken monthly between April and October each year to collate data to highlight the

benefit to pollinators of mowing less and supporting wildflower planting. As part of this project, we regularly attend HCC Pollinator Network meetings which gives us an opportunity to find out what activities other communities are undertaking to support pollinators across Hampshire.

We are very grateful to member Chris Edwards who has been attending and reporting to the Trustees on the bi-annual meetings of the **Yateley Common Management Committee**. Chris is stepping down from this role and we would like to thank him for all that he has done. Would you like to take on this voluntary role and can commit to attending two meetings a year and writing a short report for our committee? Then we would love to hear from you!

If you would like to volunteer or find out more about any of the project mentioned above, please contact [chair@yateleysociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@yateleysociety.org.uk).

***Mike Mann, Conservation Coordinator***

***Alison Hewitt, Chair***

## **4.7 Local History Group**

### **Digital Library Project & Village Hall wall timeline project**

Reporting on these items together because I am working on them simultaneously, providing Jo with subjects, information and images, identifying topics for inclusion on the proposed timeline and the digital library.

### **Vicarage Road Project**

Working with Di Gardner (researcher) we have been creating 'soundbites' for the digital library from the huge amount of information which she and Alan Kinnaird have uncovered.

### **Memories Project and Oral History Project**

These two are connected and have been moving rather slowly. Several people have agreed to share their memories – I have focussed on VE Day and the 1953 Coronation – but very few have produced anything. This underlines the need to make more use of the recording device(s) which the Society possesses because people might be more willing to be interviewed rather than setting down their memories on paper. Several people decline to share their own memories but express great keenness to read the memories of others!

One notable exception is the memories of Brian Coxhill of growing up in the area in the 1960s. I have been working with Brian to publish these in booklet form and 'Here, There and Everywhere' has just gone to the printer. Hopefully it will be on sale by the time members receive this Annual Report.

**Vicarage Road** – Di Gardner is continuing to research and gather information on Vicarage Road, with some findings given to Colin to archive. Liaised with Di about doing a part 1 and how to get that moving. She has been working with Colin on photos, maps and people who lived and were associated with Vicarage Road from the 1810-1900 primarily working on distinct family sets who owned the 4 houses (Yateley Cottage, The White House, Harpton



House & Gayton House) at the eastern end of Vicarage Road – Mascall, Hamilton, Dalzell, Dodd, Lewis and Chapman plus their tenants.

***Roger Coombes, Local History***  
***Roger.Coombes@yateleySociety.org.uk***

## 4.8 Archives

As I record brief details of the updates that I make to the research archive I am able to use these to report on the work done. My earliest figures relate to 25-12-2022 (Strangely enough!). At this point the archive was composed of 28,718 Folders containing 459,928 files. The most recent update, 9th October 2023, was: 28,212 Folders containing 428,300 files.

My predecessor, twice removed, said in one of his reports that there was a lot of duplication in the archive and a lot of unindexed files that were hard to find. Both comments are very true and partly explain the difference in the numbers above but despite new acquisitions coming along all the time (old documents, new photos and public donations of their documents – usually scanned and returned) the totals have gone down by 31,628.

There is further work to do of course but I am getting better at doing it and much change can be detected by our researchers now, in both the layout of the folders and the actual content with descriptive filenames. Examples of the breath of main sections of the Archive are:

**Buildings:** 74 Building Names (1,263 Folders and 23,827 Files).

**Maps:** 468 Folders relating to Maps dating from 1568 through to 2023 (5140 Files).

**People:** 175 Folders relating to 30 Surnames (2,738 Files)

**Places:** This is intended for places like "Royal Oak Valley"; "Butchers (in general)"; "Hampshire Lakes", "Streets (generally and specifically)"; "Urnfield" etc. Currently 119 Folders and 1513 files.

Some of these categories are connected of course but if the name of a person is known by our researcher 'People' is the first point of call which will lead to buildings where the person lived and hence onto maps/plans/photos that relate to the year(s) that they were alive.

Yateley is also a 'place' of course and is included in with all the other places. In that folder are files which relate to the whole of Yateley. Flood Maps; Poor Rates, YCAN, Medical, Wildlife Verges etc.

Michael Clinch one of our volunteers has been beavering away on the physical Maps in the archive and has recorded 275 maps, plans and a few posters. This number does not include a small number of 'stroke numbers' (same map but different in some way). This now completes the recording of all our physical maps that exist in the archive. We can now move on to comparing the archive files to the digital map collection. We have recorded the physical size of each map; the extent of the map using the National Grid system; date of the map, scale, what it looks like and its condition. Many maps are now out of copyright and are available to buy and I aim to make selected purchases of these so that we can discard current maps that are made up of as many as 30 different photographs or scans that don't quite match up. We have the materials to carry out most repairs which have become apparent during this exercise.

I hope to set up a facility of being able to get a list of available maps and their dates relating to a given National Grid reference.

I have dealt with several interesting enquires during the year including one which made its way into a recent Yateley Society newsletter about a horse trapped in a well. It turned out to be a pony rather than a horse and as it was said to have its front legs on the wall of the well, as shown in a cartoon like picture, with water up to its shoulders, I suspect it was not a well at all but the remains of a watering hole in a field to the rear of one of the air ministry camps along Cricket Hill.

Alan Kinnard, one of our researchers has been doing Stirling work on locating 'new' old documents and newspaper extracts for me to hold in the research archive. Newspaper extracts are another category of the main archive and I have added folders for each year for which we have cuttings. These now range from 1784 through to 2003. The online newspaper scans unfortunately leave a lot to be desired especially where there are changes in font, size, headings or absence of vertical lines between columns which all tend to produce garbage but occasionally the word Yateley at which point we extract the information – correcting as necessary. This is actually a very interesting job and often just looking elsewhere on the page containing "Yateley" somewhere will lead on to other items to extract.

If you have some spare time and feel able to help with our archive, please do contact me.

***Colin Broadley, Society Archivist***  
*archivist@yateleySociety.org*

## **5. Financial Review**

### **5.1 Treasurer's Report**

These accounts have been prepared by the Honorary Treasurer, Elizabeth Hesketh, as required by the Charity Commission. As the Receipts and Payments fall below £10,000 and there is no legal obligation to do so, the accounts have not been audited. However, the Society feels that, for full transparency, they should be independently examined. We are still looking for a suitable person to do this and once they have been appointed, these and future accounts will be verified. If anyone can help with this, please let us know.

Receipts from subscriptions this year stands at £1,338, with total receipts rising slightly from last year to £5,714. This year we ran a very successful fundraising event in conjunction with Yateley Industries who offered their grounds as a venue for a Summer Social Barbeque. This raised £1,760, half of which will be donated to Yateley Industries, as reflected in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities. The Society would like to thank Yateley Town Council for their grant of £500 which has been used towards the development of our Digital Library.

Our highest expenditure this year was £1,213 for a larger gazebo. This will give us much needed additional space to show people round our displays at local fairs and events.

We have a total of £8,618 cash funds, of which £3,248 is restricted. Of the restricted funds there are £2,330 for a pond project and £918 for wildflower verges.

Gift Aid from the last two years are now included in this report totalling receipts of £126 and £157 respectively. We are now up-to-date, and this year's submission will be included in the next year's report.

**Elizabeth Hesketh, Honorary Treasurer**  
*treasurer@yateleySociety.org*

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30  
 SEPTEMBER 2023**

|   | Sub<br>Total | General<br>Funds | Restricted<br>Funds | <b>TOTAL<br/>2023</b> | TOTAL<br>2022 |
|---|--------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
|   | £            | £                | £                   | £                     | £             |
| <b>RECEIPTS</b>                             |              |                  |                     |                       |               |
| <b>Membership Subscriptions (less fees)</b> |              |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Membership Subscriptions                    | 1,148        |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Subscriptions Paid in Advance               | 175          |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Subscriptions Paid Twice                    | 15           |                  |                     |                       |               |
| <b>Total</b>                                |              | 1,338            |                     | <b>1,338</b>          | 1,823         |
| <b>Sale of Goods (less fees)</b>            |              |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Calendars                                   | 150          |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Wildflower Kits/Seeds                       | 198          |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Other                                       | 78           |                  |                     |                       |               |
| <b>Total</b>                                |              | 425              |                     | <b>425</b>            | 482           |
| <b>Member Events/Talks (less fees)</b>      |              |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Summer Social Entrance                      | 1,422        |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Summer Social Fundraising                   | 668          |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Other Entrance                              | 212          |                  |                     |                       |               |
| Other Fundraising (Raffle/Refreshments)     | 70           |                  |                     |                       |               |
| <b>Total</b>                                |              | 2,372            |                     | <b>2,372</b>          | 676           |
| <b>Donations</b>                            |              | 573              |                     | <b>573</b>            | 1,173         |
| <b>Grants</b>                               |              |                  | 500                 | <b>500</b>            | 1,000         |
| <b>Lottery Receipts</b>                     |              | 215              |                     | <b>215</b>            | 178           |
| <b>Gift Aid 2021</b>                        |              | 126              |                     | <b>126</b>            |               |
| <b>Gift Aid 2022</b>                        |              | 157              |                     | <b>157</b>            |               |
| <b>Deposit Account Interest</b>             |              | 7                |                     | <b>7</b>              | 3             |
| <b>Cash Donations</b>                       |              | 0                |                     | <b>0</b>              | 11            |

|                                      |              |              |            |              |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Receipts</b>                |              | <b>5,214</b> | <b>500</b> | <b>5,714</b> | <b>5,346</b> |
| <b>PAYMENTS</b>                      |              |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Sale of Goods Costs</b>           |              |              |            |              |              |
| Calendars                            | 117          |              |            |              |              |
| Wildlife Garden Kits/Seeds           | 0            |              |            |              |              |
| Other                                | 25           |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>142</b>   |              |            | <b>142</b>   | 276          |
| <b>Member Events/Talks</b>           |              |              |            |              |              |
| Summer Social Fundraising Costs      | 330          |              |            |              |              |
| Other Fundraising costs              | 45           |              |            |              |              |
| Social Events Venue Hire             | 35           |              |            |              |              |
| Talks/AGM Room Hire                  | 210          |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>620</b>   |              |            | <b>620</b>   | 1,013        |
| <b>Equipment/Software</b>            |              |              |            |              |              |
| Gazebo                               | 1,213        |              |            |              |              |
| Zoom                                 | 144          |              |            |              |              |
| Other                                | 109          |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>1,465</b> |              |            | <b>1,465</b> | 509          |
| <b>Donations</b>                     |              |              |            |              |              |
| Speakers                             | 318          |              |            |              |              |
| Others                               | 0            |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>318</b>   |              |            | <b>318</b>   | 501          |
| <b>Projects</b>                      |              |              |            |              |              |
| Toad in Road                         | 57           |              |            |              |              |
| Conservation                         | 156          |              |            |              |              |
| Digital Library                      | 500          |              |            |              |              |
| Other                                | 105          |              |            |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>318</b>   | <b>500</b>   |            | <b>818</b>   | 2,881        |
| <b>Affiliated Fees/Subscriptions</b> | <b>310</b>   |              |            | <b>310</b>   | 298          |
| <b>Insurance</b>                     | <b>188</b>   |              |            | <b>188</b>   | 228          |
| <b>Stationary/Postage</b>            | <b>168</b>   |              |            | <b>168</b>   | 253          |
| <b>Newsletter</b>                    | <b>0</b>     |              |            | <b>0</b>     | 86           |
| <b>Website Update/Maintenance</b>    | <b>495</b>   |              |            | <b>495</b>   | 801          |
|                                      |              |              |            | <b>0</b>     |              |
| <b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>                | <b>4,024</b> | <b>500</b>   |            | <b>4,524</b> | <b>6,846</b> |
| <b>Nett Receipts</b>                 | <b>1,190</b> | <b>0</b>     |            | <b>1,190</b> | <b>1,500</b> |
| Cash Funds Last Year End             | 4,181        | 3,248        |            | <b>7,428</b> | 8,928        |
| Cash Funds This Year End             | 5,371        | 3,248        |            | 8,618        | 7,428        |

**THE YATELEY SOCIETY**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

|                                     | General Funds | Restricted Funds | TOTAL<br>2023 | TOTAL<br>2022 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                     | £             | £                | £             | £             |
| <b>Cash Funds</b>                   |               |                  |               |               |
| Current Account                     | 1416          | 3248             | <b>4664</b>   | 3344          |
| Deposit Account                     | 3395          |                  | <b>3395</b>   | 3388          |
| PayPal                              | 529           |                  | <b>529</b>    | 665           |
| Cash Float                          | 30            |                  | <b>30</b>     | 30            |
| <b>Total Cash Funds</b>             | <b>5370</b>   | <b>3248</b>      | <b>8618</b>   | <b>7427</b>   |
| <b>Assets for own use</b>           |               |                  |               |               |
| Display Stands                      |               |                  |               | 149           |
| Gazebo                              | 1213          |                  | <b>1213</b>   |               |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                 | <b>1213</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>1213</b>   | <b>149</b>    |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                  |               |                  |               |               |
| Yateley Ind Sum Social Donation     | -844          |                  | <b>-844</b>   |               |
| Expenses incurred but not paid      | -82           |                  | <b>-82</b>    | -70           |
| Subscriptions paid in advance       | -175          |                  | <b>-175</b>   | -280          |
| Suscriptions paid twice             | -15           |                  | <b>-15</b>    | -45           |
| Grant not yet spent                 |               | -918             | <b>-918</b>   | -918          |
| Moulsham Pond Reserve               |               | -2330            | <b>-2330</b>  | -2330         |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>            | <b>-1116</b>  | <b>-3248</b>     | <b>-4364</b>  | <b>-3643</b>  |
| <b>Net Assets &amp; Liabilities</b> | <b>5467</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>5467</b>   | <b>3933</b>   |

## **Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

|              |                      |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Signature(s) | <b>Alison Hewitt</b> | <b>Liz Carpenter</b> |
| Full name(s) | Alison Hewitt        | Liz Carpenter        |
| Position     | Chair                | Honorary Secretary   |

|      |                               |                               |
|------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Date | 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 | 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 |
|------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|