



Willow Hill, 4 All Saints Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 1TT
sptrust30@gmail.com
www.stroudpreservationtrust.org.uk

Annual Report

April 1st 2020 – March 31st 2021

Stroud Preservation Trust

is a building preservation trust set up to preserve buildings of particular historical, architectural and constructional interest, in and around Stroud, for the benefit of the local community and the Nation.

Founded in 1982

Our activities in another unusual year

The focus for Stroud Preservation Trust (SPT) this year has been on the future of the Chapels of Rest in Bisley Road Cemetery, which are Grade 2 Listed.



These are lovely buildings, beautifully built and visible from many places around the town, the valleys and commons. The cemetery itself is owned by Stroud Town Council (STC) and the Chapels are still owned by Stroud District Council (SDC) – including the tarmac area surrounding the Chapels.

Just before lockdown SPT had planned a community consultation event at the Trinity Rooms about the future of the Chapels of Rest. This was held on March 15th 2020 and was well publicised. Everyone who came sat at a good distance from each other and gave a lot of positive and useful feedback both at the meeting, on paper and with an online survey.



All the feedback helped SPT put together a proposal to the Stroud District Council Asset Manager Officer. We hoped that the Strategy and Resources (S&R) committee members could consider the idea of SPT having access to the building for a reasonable period of time whilst we prepared a comprehensive feasibility study. As it turned out the impact of Covid was very serious and that S&R meeting had to look at other things.

When SDC granted permission to allow limited public access to the buildings' interiors, we intended to open the Chapels on the National Heritage Open Day in September, but that timetable became impossible. However we did open the Chapels to the public on October 25th 2020 when more than 200 people visited (in groups of six, with masks and sanitiser) over a four hour period. It was a terrific response and gave us a lot of interesting ideas.



Even better was the fact that Jill Fallows, the key SDC Asset Manager Officer, had written an excellent report for Strategy and Resources (S&R) committee members and on October 8th they voted to give us permission to go ahead with a feasibility study for the future of the Chapels.

SDC's committee set conditions for a potential asset transfer of £1. These conditions were that:

- SPT would return to the Committee with a fully developed feasibility study
- there would be extensive community consultation
- it would comply with SDC's legal requirements that the buildings have community value.

There was no deadline set for this return, luckily because lockdown has made planning very difficult over the past year for everyone.

By early December 2020 we had set up a Working Group to progress the feasibility work – comprising trustees Chris Gill, Hugh Barton, Camilla Hale and Andy Davy. We worked on a design brief, added more photos to the website, pulled together all the Survey results, researched uses of other similar chapels throughout the country and pulled together various ideas. We then established a list of suitable architectural practices to ask them to tender.

We were ready by January 2021 to request tenders and we received applications from

three architectural practices – Childs and Sulzman, Purcell and Donald Insall Associates (DIA). We chose the last one as we liked their tender very much and it was a good price. By the end of this Financial Year we were able to appoint DIA as the project's architects. After a year of planning, thinking and discussions we could really get on with the feasibility study and business planning in its fullness pending Covid changes of course!



In order to fund the feasibility study's cost of £11,181, we committed funds from our reserves and were very grateful for the contributions of £1,000 from the Bristol Environment Building Group and £500 from Stroud Town Council.

PS There is a good description of the history of the Chapels of Rest on the Stroud Local History website:

www.stroudlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/research/cemetery

Other smaller projects during the year



SPT was approached by St Laurence Church, at the heart of Stroud's town centre, to see whether our expertise could assist the Parochial Parish Council (PCC) with the changes needed in the church. We felt that as a team more work needed to be done before we could be involved. However Camilla has continued our links with the church and is now part of their Building Development Group looking at essential repairs, long term changes for the building and advising on fund raising.

The Trust still owns the freehold on several properties, at No 1 Bridge Street (Cainscross), The Medieval Hall (Stroud High Street) and several properties at Arundel Mill



(comprising Suraya, Garden House, Safflower Cottage, Safflower House). These each contribute £50 per annum rental income but we've been encouraging people to buy their freeholds in the past few years.

In this Financial Year the Trust's donation to Stroud Town Council for feasibility study work on the Stroud Subscription Rooms was finalised at £9,710.

Cheapside Warehouse

Cheapside Warehouse, sited beside the canal in the town centre, had recently burnt down during the year, but Hugh Barton and Camilla Hale have continued to support the applications for planning put in by Newland Homes. The new development finally got planning permission in 2021 and will be called Bath Place.



Our Trustees

At the 38th AGM in September of 2020, our founder trustee, Anne Mackintosh, stood down after 38 wonderful years. How do you thank someone for so much devoted service, hands-on activity and excellent project management? No parties were possible during Covid, so we hope we can catch up later. Anne has had a very productive few months sorting files, taking papers to the archives and handing over the accounts.

Chris Gill was formally appointed as our new Treasurer at the 2020 AGM.

Throughout the Financial Year the Trustees have continued to have their meetings online on seven occasions, as well as organising two public meetings and held a very low key 'zoom' AGM on September 20th 2020.

The Chapels Working Group met six times between the end of December and the end of March.

The Trustees in 2020 and 2021 were:

Hugh Barton	
Andrew Davy	
Chris Gill	Treasurer
Camilla Hale	Chair
Steve Hurrell	Secretary
Jon Lowe	
Anne Mackintosh	Treasurer (rtd. September 2020)
Rachel Russell	

SPT's financial management is maintained by the Treasurer. Financial updates are provided for each meeting showing expenditure and income. Deposit accounts are organised to try to raise some interest on our funds.

The Trust's income

Our income is generated from membership fees, donations, ground rents and bank interest.

Solicitors

Leeper Prosser Solicitors,
40 High Street, Stonehouse, GL10 2NA

Bankers

CAFCASH
Shawbrook Bank

Auditors

Andy Richards of
Shiner Mitchell Fisher & Co. Ltd

The Trust's income

Our income is generated from membership fees, donations, ground rents and bank interest.

Financial information

General Fund	£55,543
Income:	£2,254
Expenditure:	£1,818

The Trust's accounts are available on request and on the web site.

SPT contacts:

Camilla Hale	Chair sptrust30@gmail.com
Steve Hurrell	Company Secretary stevehurrell@mac.com

www.stroudpreservationtrust.org.uk

Our contact email: sptrust30@gmail.com

Telephone: 01453 751370

Registered Charity: No: 284255

Registered Company: No: 1608981

Registered Office: 4 All Saints Road
Stroud
GL5 1TT

