

Battersea Society Annual Report

Objectives and activities

The Battersea Society's mission is to celebrate Battersea's past, support its present and promote its future. In pursuit of that mission and in line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, we run events; produce publications and newsletters; and engage in a range of activities relating to planning, heritage, open spaces, and engagement with the local community as set out in the reports from key Officers later in this report.

Achievements and performance

Significant developments in 2022 have been the return, after the restrictions of the pandemic, to meetings and events held in person. We had the most successful summer party in living memory, with record numbers of members and guests enjoying a beautiful summer evening in the gardens at St Mary's. Meeting together has enabled many of us to renew old friendships and to forge new ones.

Our five committees have been highly active over the past year, not least in establishing our relationships with the new Wandsworth Council elected in May. We have thus engaged with the Council and inspectors in relation to the draft Local Plan; and with Enable in relation to its responsibilities for Battersea's open spaces. A highlight for the Heritage Committee was the publication of Jeanne Rathbone's book *Inspiring Women of Battersea*.

The Trustees and Chairs of our committees held a highly successful workshop in November to review the Society's strategy and priorities for the future, work is continuing to amend both our governing and administrative arrangements, and to enhance our communications and outreach.

Financial review

Our income rose significantly in 2022, as the result of a legacy of £5,000 left to the Society in the will of Joan Brittain, a long-serving member of the Society. In line with her son's advice, the Trustees decided to work with the Sir Walter St John's Educational Charity and the local Learn to Love to Read charity to provide sessions for pre-school children and their parents, developing language and pre-reading skills, and support and confidence-building for parents. We look forward to learning about how this project is progressing.

If we subtract the bequest, income fell slightly in 2022, mainly because of the number of members who have decided to take out life membership. We shall review subscription levels during the coming year. Expenditure also fell in comparison with 2021, mainly because of the significant costs associated with the development of our new website in the previous year.

Overall, we have carried a small surplus into 2023, and the reserves available to fund our activities have increased to over £15,000. Since the funds are unrestricted, no funds analysis has been included in the accounts. The Annual Accounts and the Independent Examiner's report are given at the end of this Report.

Governance, management and administration

The Battersea Society is a Registered Charity No. 1103560. The Society's Constitution was approved at the AGM in 2018. Trustees are elected each year at the AGM, after nomination by at least two members, and for an initial term of three years. They constitute the Executive Committee, which has overall responsibility for the work of the Society, and that Committee elects the Officers.

Both Jenny Sheridan, our Chair for the last four years, and Sue Demont, our Secretary for the same period, stood down after leading us through the difficult years of the pandemic and lockdowns. They have both provided sterling service and leadership during their time in office, and we all owe them a great debt of gratitude. Fortunately, Jenny remains as a trustee, while Sue is still Chair of the Heritage Committee. Three new trustees, Jenny Boehm, Mark Hodgkinson and Barbara Simmonds were elected at the AGM in March; and at the first meeting of Trustees following the AGM, Michael Jubb was elected to serve as both Chair and Secretary for 2022, with the assistance of Carol Rahn as Co-Chair.

The full list of trustees following the 2022 AGM is as follows:

Michael Jubb, Chair and Secretary
Carol Rahn, Co-Chair
Ian Beardall, Treasurer
Jenny Boehm, Membership Secretary
Clare Graham
Mark Hodgkinson
Sue Marshall
John Oughton
Jenny Sheridan
Barbara Simmonds

The Executive has constituted five Committees to lead its works on Community (Chair Mark Gitsham), Events (Chair Sara Milne), Heritage (Chair Sue Demont), Open Spaces (Chair Clare Graham) and Planning (Chair Liz Walton). Each committee has at least one Trustee among its members, and they report on their activities to each meeting of the Executive. Many of the committees have welcomed new members, and we are grateful to them for agreeing to work for the Society in that way; for the committees are fundamental to the work of the Society as a whole.

We are also grateful to two people who have done incalculable service to the Society over many years. Mike Roden has stood aside from his roles in managing our website and our membership system, as well as many other IT-related services. We look forward to his continuing contributions to *Battersea Matters*, and his regular *Battersea Insider* emails, which is currently circulated to some 650 subscribers each month. Ian Beardall has been our Treasurer since 2014, handling all our financial transactions as well as preparing the accounts. He is retiring at this year's AGM, and we shall miss him greatly.

Membership: Membership Secretary, Jenny Boehm

As at the end of 2022, there was a total of 403 memberships – up by 12 from a year earlier. Of this total, 57 joined during 2022.

There are three types of membership: life membership, of which there are currently 84; voluntary and business membership, of which there are four; and standard membership, which represents the majority. Most members who pay annually now do so through the website, though some 70 still pay by some other means.

The trustees invited me to take over as Membership Secretary, which I did with effect from the beginning of November. At that stage, the membership records were in transition from the database managed by Mike Roden – a process which, I hope, has been fairly seamless from members' standpoint. I am grateful to Mike for giving me so much of his time and to Carol Rahn for help in making the transition.

I am very happy to be contacted on any membership issue – membership@batterseasociety.org.uk

Battersea Matters: Editor, Jenny Sheridan

As always, Battersea Matters has aimed to cover our area's past and (so far as possible) its future as well as its present day.

Looking to history, we have covered topics as disparate as public baths and involvement in the Spanish Civil War. More recent history has included, sadly, the obituaries of three people who made significant contributions both to Battersea and the Society: Maureen Larkin, Joan Brittain and Robert Molteno. We remembered the late Queen's visits to the borough, after celebrating her jubilee in a previous issue.

For the present day we have celebrated the variety of local creativity, from dance through theatre and poetry to choirs. We have covered the damage done by both food waste and the current inflation crisis, and also what our civic and community organisations are doing to alleviate them.

The future, of course, is unknown, but we have peered into the changes at Arding & Hobbs and at the Power Station. And the new Wandsworth Council leader laid out his stall in our summer issue, so we can hold him and his colleagues to account in the future.

I am immensely grateful to Suzanne Perkins our brilliant designer, and to Monica Tross, with whom and in whose home I stuff BM into envelopes. A big vote of thanks too to our trusty deliverers, who saved the Society over £1,200 this year.

Website: Carol Rahn

Our new website www.batterseasociety.org.uk was launched in June 2021, and it continues to provide the visually appealing and up-to-date look expected these days. The site receives 800-900 visits every month and while the vast majority are from the UK, as would be expected, it has been viewed from 69 different countries on 6 continents over the past year.

The Events committee posts coming events, with the option of online registration via Eventbrite.

Links to recordings of past online events are also available. Open Spaces, Heritage, Planning and Community committees publish their own blogs, with the Heritage committee posting something new at least monthly. Blogs take advantage of the ability to generate a Tweet automatically at posting.

The online shop has seen a steady flow of orders for our own publications, as well as a select stock of publications by Battersea Society authors. The website brings new members, and most renewals are now handled automatically. The greater functionality we now have has brought less flexibility in certain ways, and we are working to resolve these.

Community Committee: Chair, Mark Gitsham

2022 saw the first full year of the new Community Committee, and involved a certain amount of finding our feet! Our focus was on reaching out to the community in Battersea and representing the Society through running stalls and attending meetings. Stalls included the COP26-themed event at Battersea Arts Centre, the Bee Festival at Battersea High Street and Christmas Fayre at St Mary's Church. We have worked on improving our offering on our various stalls, making them more attractive and will possibly be rolling out new merchandise this year. A successful new initiative was the introduction of a Members Desk at Society events, allowing members to ask any questions and also allowing us to sell more books.

The committee attended meetings with organisations covering the arts, support for the cost-of-living crisis and IT skills workshops and many more, to represent the Society and discover where we could be most useful.

Many thanks to the committee members for their commitment and hard work over the last year. We gained two new committee members in 2022; thank you Adjani and Caroline for joining. New members always welcome! Our chair, Mark Gitsham, has also taken over the running of the social media accounts for the Society.

After a year of doing many things, we held a workshop to take stock of what worked and what didn't; this will ensure we focus on things that are most relevant and useful. As part of this the committee is being "rebranded" as the Community and Communications Committee, to fulfil a need identified by the Trustees. More information will be revealed about this over the next few months, once the communications strategy is in place.

Events Committee: Chair, Sara Milne

Our programme of events for 2022 was diverse and multi themed – providing something for everyone ... with a mix of talks, walks, social gatherings and visits.

Although we managed to finally have a complete year of 'real life' talks and events, we made a promise to members to keep our online offering for those who feel more comfortable taking part from home. We hosted three online talks over the year - Whistler and the Thames, Battersea's Lost Baths and Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement – recordings of which are available on the Society website.

Tours and walks were as popular as ever with sell out trips to Dorich House, Fulham Palace and Spencer House plus a Guided Exotic Plant walk round Battersea Park.

We started the year with a couple of amazing talks – From Battersea to the Antarctic and The Space Between Black and White – along with our annual Film Night at the RCA with a screening of the classic John Wayne movie *Brannigan*.

The Society's contribution to the Wandsworth Heritage Festival in the spring included the real live version of Sue Demont's insightful talk *Swimming with the Tide: Battersea's Lost Baths* and the official launch of Jeanne Rathbone's book *Inspiring Women of Battersea ...* an excellent read.

Our Summer Party in July was a great success. With a record number of guests and lovely weather, it was the perfect end to our summer programme and heralded our Autumn events offering.

A focus on the environment resulted in a couple of talks that were both topical and engaging – Biodiversity in Battersea and an insight into the New Covent Garden Market. Author and historian, Penelope J Corfield also gave a highly entertaining and absorbing talk linked to her recent publication, *The Georgians*.

The year ended on a musical note with a seasonal celebration in St Mary's Church featuring the Battersea Power Station Community Choir – with a selection of readings and a Battersea-themed quiz.

A very big thank you to all the events team without whom none of this would be possible – especially to our Secretary Sally Orman. If you would like to help or contribute to any of our events do let us know at events@batterseasociety.org.uk

Heritage Committee: Chair, Sue Demont

2022 saw a welcome return to near-normal service in terms of heritage events and activities, allowing us to extend our walks and talks and to network more widely with fellow heritage groups and officers. The undoubted highlight of the year was the publication of Jeanne Rathbone's book *Inspiring Women of Battersea*, launched to great acclaim at Battersea Arts Centre as part of the Wandsworth Heritage Festival. Over 60% of the print run has already been sold so be sure to order your copy before we run out!

Inspiring Women is the Society's first fully funded history publication and we will be planning a further book or booklet in the coming year. Meanwhile members have been busy writing in other formats, including articles for the annual Wandsworth Society magazine and *Battersea Matters* and a series of blogs on the website, ranging from the extraordinary Lady Battersea to the Southwark & Vauxhall Waterworks. Another blogpost featured the trailblazing singer and cabaret artiste Evelyn Dove, whom we honoured in Black History Month.

This year members have given talks on aspects of Battersea's history to a wide range of different organisations. Special mention should be made of the enduring popularity of Carol Rahn's presentation *Growing Up in Wartime Battersea* which she has delivered to pupils at the Belleville Academies, St Mary's Primary and Sacred Heart Primary Schools. At the other end of the age spectrum members have given talks to the University of the Third Age, the Battersea Place Residents Association, and the KLS Elders Group. Members also spoke to the Tooting History Society, the Friends of Wandsworth Common and the Battersea WI.

Last year Wandsworth Council relaunched their Green Plaques scheme, for which nominations were invited from heritage groups across the borough. We were delighted that our top nomination, Women's Suffrage campaigners the Duval Family of Lavender Sweep, was chosen for the first new plaque, to be erected later in 2023. In the meantime we were pleased to welcome our MP Marsha De Cordova and Leader of the Council Simon Hogg to unveil our latest Battersea Society Blue Plaque honouring art collector Wilhelmina Stirling of Old Battersea House, who established the De Morgan Foundation. You can read more about these notable women in Jeanne's book.

We have continued our productive relationship with the Nine Elms Partnership, who publish our quarterly heritage displays on their website and on local noticeboards. Topics this year have included the Battersea Barge, the Albert Bridge and neighbouring river crossings, the history of Arch 42, and most recently the derivation of local street names.

After a short hiatus we have resumed our social media activities, with thanks to Mark Gitsham for his technical support. Our popular *On This Day* posts have aroused interest and comment, particularly on the founding of the Doddington Estate and the anniversary of the execution of the controversial William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw) at Wandsworth Prison.

Finally, we supported our excellent Planning Committee over its application to have no. 7 Alexandra Avenue listed by Historic England, and we were delighted to learn that this has been successful.

As this will be my last annual report as Chair of the Heritage Committee, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to my fellow members Hilaire, Carol Rahn, Jeanne Rathbone, Sally Sellers and Viv Redhead. I look forward to working with them from the backbenches next year!

Open Spaces Committee: Chair, Clare Graham

A very positive development this year was the offer of six-monthly update meetings with Enable Leisure & Culture, who manage Wandsworth Council's open spaces and public trees. OSC has now had two of these; they are proving invaluable, both for resolving any concerns we may raise, and for giving us early news of strategies and developments affecting open spaces in Battersea. We were able to provide input for the improvements currently taking place in Shillington Park, and those planned for Harroway Gardens later this year (see planning application 2022/5281). Improvements to Heathbrook Park and Latchmere Recreation Ground are, we are told, next on Enable's wish list. Meanwhile we have also been contributing to management plans for individual spaces; these should help preserve their distinct characters, and guide future improvements. The first, for Christchurch Gardens and Queenstown Green, can now be found on Enable's website.

We are also developing a scheme of our own to encourage people to get out and explore Battersea's open spaces by improving walking and cycling links between them. This grew out of our 2020 publication, *Discovering Battersea's Open Spaces: a walking guide* (copies still available from the Society website). There are quite a few existing quiet routes that would be suitable, with just a little work on the ground and some new signage; add in some extra planting and landscaping, and they could also become corridors linking currently fragmented green space, and so improving biodiversity. With active travel and sustainability high amongst the new Council's priorities, we have already had some fruitful discussions and hope to make further progress over the coming year.

It's never all good news of course, and while open spaces and street trees coped better than might have been expected with 2022's extreme weather conditions, it is disheartening to see that the damaged grass surfaces, widened paths and impacted soil surfaces resulting from the 2020-1 lockdowns noted in last year's report still remain an issue in some places. On Clapham Common the inappropriate proposal to replace the old bowling green with a mini-golf course, again mentioned last year, mercifully seems to have been abandoned. But we have recently had to respond to two separate Public Enquiries into programmes of events proposed for the Common by Lambeth Council (who maintain it in its entirety, including the section geographically within Wandsworth and Battersea). The events for this summer are less alarming, being mostly small-scale and well-established, but we've objected strongly to the Festival Republic application for summer 2024, which would involve barricading off a large area behind a 3-metre high solid metal wall for three weeks, with risks of longer-term disruption and serious damage to the Common's fragile ecology.

OSC meets on a Monday afternoon every other month; our current members are Clare Graham (Chair), Chris Brodie, Barbara De Ferry Foster, David Rathbone, Barbara Simmonds and Camilla Ween. Sue Marshall stands down as a committee member as well as a trustee at this AGM, and Lois Davis recently had to resign to meet other commitments. Both will be much missed. Should you be interested in helping out by joining the committee, or just keeping an eye on your local park, do please get in touch.

Planning Committee: Chair, Liz Walton

The Planning Committee has had another busy year, notable for a greater focus on policy development. Soon after the start of the past year we engaged with the new administration at Wandsworth Council with useful meetings with the new Chair of the Planning Applications Committee, Councillor Tony Belton; and the new Leader, Councillor Simon Hogg. We rounded off the year with full engagement with the Examination in Public of the Local Plan. Two consultations with TfL also took up working time for members of the committee. The most major was proposals for widespread changes to bus routes and the more local (but nonetheless important) for changes to traffic in Battersea Bridge Road and across the bridge on the Embankment. We continue to keep our members up-to-date with these and other planning issues through Battersea Matters, occasional Planning Updates, the planning pages of the Society's website and in response to emails.

Throughout the year we engaged with developers and with the Council to make our views known on larger developments and smaller applications. As last year the number of these is down from earlier years but with the usual crop of changes to large developments – noted as 'non-material' but often in our view making a material adverse change to consented plans.

We were pleased to see the Power Station open and with the scaffolding down after all these many years and we continue to engage with the team there as further changes are planned. One for which we have long lobbied is for a direct route to the Underground station from the south under Battersea Park Road.

We liaise with our colleagues in adjoining civic areas, the Friends of Battersea Park and participate in other Community Fora such as the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies. We continue to play an active part in the work of the Conservation and Heritage Committee and look forward to the resumption of the Wandsworth Community Planning Forum.

Independent Examiner's report to the Executive Committee of the Battersea Society

Year ended 31 December 2022

I report to the Executive Committee on my examination of the financial statements of the Battersea Society ("the charity") for the year ended 31 December 2022.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the financial statements did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the financial statements did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

C Birchall IPFA



Independent Examiner

Statement of Financial Activities

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds		Unrestricted funds	
		2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Subscriptions		5,871		7,075	
Donations and legacies	1	5,273		358	
Sales of publications	2	1,125		1,941	
Interest received		5		1	
Tax to be reclaimed		1,195		788	
Income from events	3	<u>4,309</u>		<u>2,249</u>	
Total income			17,777		12,412
Expenditure					
AGM costs		190		30	
Cost of sales publications	2	1,027		1,189	
Cost of events	3	3,445		1,144	
Donations	1	5,325		85	
Photography competition		-		468	
Printing BM		2,194		1,487	
Other printing		317		671	
Postage, stationery		210		1,278	
Depreciation		26		132	
Insurance		260		260	
Bank and other finance charges		223		209	
Meetings costs		657		-	
Subscriptions		83		48	
IT Costs		643		772	
Website		675		2,471	
Blue plaques		411		404	
Christmas cards		370		212	
Other		38		11	
Exceptional item	4	814		-	
Total expenditure			(16,908)		(10,871)
Net income for the year			869		1,541
Total funds brought forward			14,521		12,980
Total funds carried forward			15,390		14,521

Battersea Society
Registered Charity Commission No 1103560

Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 December 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Office equipment at cost		1,878		1,878	
Accumulated depreciation		<u>(1,878)</u>		<u>(1,849)</u>	
Total fixed assets			-		29
Current Assets					
Stock	5	1,712		591	
Debtors	6	2,000		1,118	
Cash at bank and hand		<u>12,822</u>		<u>13,429</u>	
Total current assets			16,534		15,138
Current Liabilities					
Creditors falling due within one year	7		<u>(1,144)</u>		<u>(646)</u>
Total net assets			<u>£15,390</u>		<u>£14,521</u>
Total unrestricted funds			<u>15,390</u>		<u>14,521</u>
Total funds			<u>£15,390</u>		<u>£14,521</u>

Approved by the Trustees of the Society on 9 February 2023

Michael Jubb

Michael Jubb Chair

Ian Beardall

Ian Beardall Treasurer

Battersea Society
Registered Charity Commission No 1103560

Notes to the Financial Statements

Accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities issued on 16 July 2014, and Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Society constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Going Concern

There are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that cast doubt on the ability of the Society to continue as a going concern.

Income

Subscription income and donations are recognised when cash is received, except that annual subscriptions received in advance are recognised as income in the year to which they relate. Income tax can be recovered on subscriptions and donations from members who have completed a gift aid declaration and is accounted for when subscriptions and donations are made.

Subscription income received in the year relating to the subsequent year is carried forward as deferred income.

Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are items of office equipment and are depreciated on a straight line basis over three years to residual value.

Stock

Stocks of consumables are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Debtors are measured at their recoverable amounts.

Cash at bank and in hand

All cash at bank is held on current account or short term deposit payable on demand.

1 Donations

Included in donations is a bequest from the estate of Mrs Joan Brittain of £5,000
This was applied in full as a donation to the Sir Walter St John Trust, a local charity for the furtherance of education of children in Battersea.

2 Sales of publications

	2022 £	2021 £
Proceeds from sales	1,125	1,941
Cost of sales	(1,027)	(1,189)
	<u>97</u>	<u>752</u>

3 Events

	2022 £	2021 £
Entrance fees and donations	4,309	2,249
Cost of events	(3,445)	(1,144)
	<u>863</u>	<u>1,105</u>

4 Exceptional item

The Battersea Society was the victim of an IT scam where an amount was paid out following a fraudulent email.

On discovery, this was reported to the bank and 50% of the amount was refunded.

Processes have been put in place to prevent recurrence.

5 Stock	2022	2021
	£	£
Publications	1,585	561
Other	127	30
	<u>1,712</u>	<u>591</u>

6 Debtors	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	1,105	820
Other debtors	895	298
	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,118</u>

7 Creditors	2022	2021
	£	£
Deferred income	683	417
Other creditors	461	229
	<u>1,144</u>	<u>646</u>

8 Trustees remuneration and benefits

None of the trustees were paid remuneration or received other benefits.
One trustee claimed expenses in total £12 (2021 - £nil) for travel costs incurred in the performance of duties

9 Related parties

There were no transactions with related parties in the period (2021 - £nil)