

TOWN ESTATE CHARITY SIBFORD GOWER AND BURDROP (charity no 253440)

ANNUAL REPORT TO SIBFORD GOWER PARISH COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The charity was founded four hundred years ago for the benefit of the villages of Sibford Gower and Burdrop, by two sisters, who left their farm at Sibford Heath for the benefit of the charity in perpetuity under the new Elizabethan charity law. It has survived civil war, the Enclosures Act, and two World Wars that decimated the population of these villages. It has no religious affiliations.

Trustees: The year was a time of change for the Trustees. Peter Morgan our secretary resigned on leaving the village, and we were fortunate to find a replacement in Jan Thompson formerly of the Gower and now living in the Ferris. Fred Inns whose family had served as Trustees for over a century resigned and he and his family were warmly thanked for their service over two world wars. Jean Scouse our former secretary and second longest serving Trustee also resigned on completing another term, and was thanked for her many years of work. David Spackman resigned on leaving the Sibford practice.

In their places the Trustees co-opted Jan Thompson (secretary) and Emma Haskew; and the Parish Council appointed Joan Broady and Roger Mallows; Brian Heather (treasurer) and Tracey Morbey were reappointed for a second term in 2025.

Our current lineup for 2025 is therefore John Berry, Joan Broady, Paul Clayson, Emma Haskew, Brian Heather, Roger Mallows, Tracey Morbey, Oswyn Murray, Jan Thompson. We are approaching the optimum situation where except for special reasons all Trustees serve for two terms only, eight years in the case of Parish Council nominees and ten years for co-opted members.

Our land agent is Matthew Ayres of Fisher German

Activities: We have rewritten the full account of the history and functions of the Charity which is now published on the Sibfords website as a separate piece of information, and initiated a full review of the capital value of our holdings in land and property which are listed there. At the Parish Council's request we ended the agreement with them whereby they paid for 50% of the upkeep of the Millennium Field (purchased by the Trust on behalf of the village), and took over full management of it. We are currently engaged in preparing a survey and management plan for the future.

We undertook major expenses with the refurbishment of the School House, repairs to the water ram and pump for the water supply to Sibford Heath Farm, and prepared for the major expense of installing a mains water supply to the Farm. We also initiated a full valuation survey of our land and property.

Despite this the distributable income of the Trust after expenses increased significantly compared with the previous year because of the successful reletting of the School House and the Wheathills stables.

We met five times during the year, as well as engaging in continuous email discussion. We distributed in accordance with the Charity's three purposes in the following categories:

Relief in Need	£4,838
General village benefit	£2,432
Support of Sibford Endowed Primary School	£13,042

We are still much concerned with the difficulty of distributing under Relief in Need, because of the lack of applications for help; but we are hoping that increased publicity on the website and in the Sibford Scene will encourage more people to come forward on behalf of themselves and others. The categories in which we have helped in the recent period include:

RECENT GRANTS

NOTE: The area of activity of the charity is restricted to Sibford Gower and Burdrop for direct help to individuals, but is in fact more widely felt through help to organisations in Sibford Gower whose members include residents of nearby villages.

Sibford Gower Endowed School: Redecoration, renewal of school library, school trips, provision of outdoor classroom, maintenance of trees in school grounds, celebration of 400th anniversary of the foundation of the school (2025).

Grants in need: chiropody, alarms for the elderly, warm hub, Friendship Club, individual grants, refugee help.

General village purposes: purchase of Wheathills and Millennium Field, Tots and Babes, Village Hall repairs and furnishing, Sibford Players, Meeting House and Church renovations, the village clock, Sibford Scene, cricket club and football equipment, support of local celebrations and initiatives for the community.

Oswyn Murray (chair)