



BERKHAMSTED CASTLE TRUST

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity (England & Wales) No. 1176286

Report and financial statements for the period ended 31 December 2020

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Reference and administrative information

Charity name	Berkhamsted Castle Trust
Charity type	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Foundation Model)
Charity number	1176286
Registered Address	Hilltop House Gravel Path Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 2PJ
Operational Address	Berkhamsted Castle White Hill Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 1JL
Trustees	Trustees who served in the year to 31 December 2020 ("the reporting period") were as follows:

Adrian Barham¹
Sarah Caradec
Patrick Emery
Lou Garrod
Susan Johnson²
Peter Matthews³
Dr James Moir
Professor Jonathan Morris
Richard Thompson
Ken Wallis⁴
Bill Willett

All trustees remained in post at the date of formal adoption of this report.

¹ Chair of Trustees & nominee of Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society

² Nominee of Berkhamsted Citizens Association

³ Nominee of Berkhamsted Town Council

⁴ Nominee of Berkhamsted & District Archaeology Society

Report of the Trustees for the period ended 31 December 2020

The Trustees present their report and financial statements covering the financial year to 31 December 2020.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. Berkhamsted Castle Trust reports the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the Trustees ensure that the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Purposes and aims

The object of Berkhamsted Castle Trust is the advancement of the education of the public by:

- (1) promoting or assisting in the promotion of improvements in the organisation and provision of information and other services and facilities for visitors by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (also known as Historic England) and The English Heritage Trust (registered charity no: 1140351) or their successors in respect of Berkhamsted Motte and Bailey Castle, Hertfordshire (a scheduled ancient monument, List entry Number: 1010756) ("the castle") and generally in the preservation and upkeep of the castle and by fostering the use and enjoyment of the castle by the public;
- (2) conducting, financing or otherwise commissioning historical research or archaeological investigation into the castle (and people or events of historical significance connected to it) and making public the results of such research or investigation (by means of publications, exhibitions, lectures, meetings, events, discussions, guided visits or otherwise);
- (3) taking into ownership or use in order to further the above object any land or building forming part of, or formerly part of, the castle (whether by purchase, lease, receipt as a gift or otherwise).

Historical development

Local engagement with Berkhamsted Castle has for many years been co-ordinated through a Castle Liaison Group chaired by a Councillor from Berkhamsted Town Council. This Group brought together representatives from Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society (registered charity no: 803417), Berkhamsted and District Archaeology Society, Berkhamsted Citizens Association, Berkhamsted Town Council and Dacorum Borough Council who would meet periodically with a representative from The English Heritage Trust (registered charity no: 1140351) and the Duchy of Cornwall's Land Steward for the area. In addition, for well over a decade, the Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society has run the visitors' room adjacent to the cottage at the Castle in which sixteen panels set out the history and development of the Castle and the town.

A strategic decision was taken in 2017 to establish a new registered charity focussed solely on the Castle, as a replacement for the Castle Liaison Group, and to work towards local management of the site (including the visitors' room) in partnership with The English Heritage Trust. Each of the stakeholders on the Castle Liaison Group was given a right to nominate one Trustee to the new charity to continue to represent their interests.

Achievements and performance

At the time of preparing the Annual Report on the Trust's activities in 2019 it was already apparent that the Coronavirus pandemic would have a significant impact on the Trust's activities in 2020. Although two Trustee strategy days were held in January and February 2020, a third planned day had to be cancelled. The Trust's primary focus for 2020 had to be to provide the core services for managing the Castle site committed to under the Local Management Agreement with English Heritage and to ensure that financial commitments did not out-strip income (or the appropriate portion of reserves, where necessary). We anticipated that any activities over and above this would be seen as a significant achievement in an extremely challenging environment.

Notwithstanding the significant limitations arising from the Coronavirus pandemic, and the initial lockdown from late March 2020 onwards, the Trust continued to make a significant contribution to many sectors of the public with an interest in the history of the Castle and its former residents.

Car crashes

The lockdown literally started with a bang, with a car being crashed through the estate fencing on the Brownlow Road side of the Castle on the evening of 22 March. The disorientated driver then swam around in the moats for around 45 minutes, in the rain and temperatures of only 3 degrees, before being rescued by the emergency services.

On the evening of 25/26 July we had another car through the estate fencing on Brownlow Road, opposite the end of Bridgewater Road. This time it was as a result of a Police pursuit of a car down Bridgewater Road, after a burglary in Northchurch.

Castle artwork donation

At the end of March, renowned Berkhamsted-based painter, Brian Bennett (who was also Head of Art at Berkhamsted School for many years) kindly donated to the Trust the copyright in a painting of the Castle which is owned by the Chairman of the Trust. This will allow the Trust to reproduce the image for its own purposes (e.g. in interpretation materials and on items for incidental sale, such as fridge magnets, posters / prints, etc. to help raise funds). He has also been extremely generous and donated a second picture showing the South East corner of the castle site (and which measures 36 inches tall x 26 inches wide) which he still had in store, together with the copyright in the painting, for the Trust to use.

Tree works & land maintenance

At the start of April the Trust arranged for tree surgeons to undertake the various works to the trees on the Trust's three acres of land that had been recommended by the Arboriculturalist, Patrick Stileman. Other land maintenance works (principally vegetation cutting) by M W Agri Limited were suspended during 2020 to save costs and also allow for further consideration of the Trust's environmental approach to the management of the area.

Criminal damage to the Scheduled Monument

There were a number of instances of criminal damage to the Castle's walls during the first part of the Coronavirus lockdown, and we met with our local PCSOs and the Hertfordshire Constabulary heritage crime officer on site to discuss this. We have temporarily placed some additional Police warning signage on the benches on site. Since then, there have had no further significant damage incidents, although there remain areas of concern where we have significant weather erosion / wear from people climbing the walls. The main patches of criminal damage have been repaired by English Heritage, with other areas added to the forward job list.

Antisocial behaviour

At the same time, we also had a number of instances of antisocial behaviour, with groups of school-age children gathering on site just before closing time and refusing to leave / climbing back over the fences once the site had been locked in the evening. This then escalated into harassment of our volunteers as they tried to clear the site each evening. Again, we worked with our local PCSOs / Police and the Town Warden to get them to speak to the children concerned, and since when there has been no repeat of the problem.

Gateline people counter

During 2020 the Trust provided a grant to the English Heritage Trust to fund a gateline people counter. At the end of May English Heritage's contractors fitted that into the Castle gatepost. In the period from the start of June until the end of December 2020 the counter recorded 41,000 visitors to the Castle, which equates to an annual footfall of around 75,000 people. Given this period encompassed two periods of national lockdown which prevented all but local visitors travelling to the

Castle (e.g. our usual visitors from further afield and from overseas), this is seen as a phenomenal success. It demonstrates the significant public benefit provided by the Castle site and the Trust during 2020, as a small number of our volunteers kept the site open and accessible for the public to use for their daily exercise.

Coronavirus compliance

In order to meet our legal obligations in relation to Coronavirus compliance, on 24 July we secured "We're Good to Go" accreditation from Visit Britain. The Castle site remained open, but a one-way route round the embankment walk was instituted. The visitors' room, however, remained closed throughout 2020 due to its small size and, therefore, inability to maintain social distancing. This significantly affected our ability to provide on-site interpretation to visitors, and also severely limited our ability to generate incidental income from sales of postcards / guide books, etc., and from donations.

Habitats survey

With financial support generously provided by Berkhamsted Town Council, the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust undertook on our behalf a site-wide habitats survey of the Castle scheduled monument area. The report makes various recommendations for future care and management of the site, and this has been shared with English Heritage's landscapes manager to inform the maintenance arrangements. Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust also suggested that the site was of such importance (due principally to its significant population of Great Crested Newts) that it should be recommended to Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and, at the very least, should be designated by the Borough Council as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). We are working with the Town Council to explore the implications of this.

VIRE escape room games

English Heritage arranged for a pilot of historically themed "escape room" type games to be run at the castle daily from 14 August until late September. A small number of participants took part each day in timed slots, and solved clues and puzzles. The site remained open to the public throughout. These events were Covid-19 risk assessed by English Heritage. In excess of 1500 people participated over the short run (far exceeding expectations), with more than half of those never having been to the Castle before. As a result, English Heritage planned to roll out the concept to other sites in 2021. A number of dignitaries were invited to see the arrangements / participate, including staff / senior members of English Heritage, local politicians and the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Robert Voss CBE.

TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Award

In August 2020 the Castle was awarded a TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Award, placing it in the top 10% of hospitality and tourism businesses around the globe. This was a significant recognition of the efforts made by the Trust since its establishment to both raise the profile of the Castle and improve the visitor experience.

Proposal for new visitors' centre at The Crystal Palace

In late August, the owners of The Crystal Palace pub submitted a planning application to convert the pub into three residential properties. Seizing on the opportunity, on 23 August the Trust submitted an Asset of Community Value nomination for The Crystal Palace, with the intention of preserving the building for use as a pub but combining that with use as a larger visitors' centre for the Castle / a base for a wider Heritage Hub for Berkhamsted. Unfortunately the ACV nomination was twice rejected by the Borough Council. After significant objections to the planning proposals, however, the owners withdrew the planning application, and propose to renovate and re-open the pub under new management. The Trust therefore continues to explore opportunities for a new visitors' centre in the vicinity of the Castle site.

Air ambulance use of Castle bailey

On 5 September the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance used the Castle bailey as a landing site to enable emergency paramedics to attend a nearby accident.

Heritage Open Days 2020

Despite the Coronavirus restrictions, the Trust still managed to run four of its traditional, free guided tours for the Heritage Open Days event (11-20 September), with one of our Trustees providing his usual high standard of engaging tours. For social distancing reasons, though, these tours were restricted to just six participants per session.

Temporary interpretation panels

Just in time for the Heritage Open Days, the Trust finally received permission from English Heritage to install a number of PVC banners between the wooden posts of the Castle cottage veranda. We reproduced the interpretation panels from the visitors' room on a series of 5ft x 4ft banners so that they could be displayed outdoors whilst the visitors' room remained closed due to the pandemic. The feedback received for this step was hugely positive, with requests for this to be repeated in future years.

Visit by local Member of Parliament

On 25 September we were visited by our local MP, Gagan Mohindra, so that we could explain to him the history and significance of the site and set out our vision for its development / our activities in the coming years.

Berkhamsted market charity stall

On 24 October the Trust took the charity stall at Berkhamsted Market to promote its activities to the local community and also to undertake incidental sales of Berkhamsted Castle 2021 calendars (featuring photographs of the Castle taken by local photographer, Martin Evening), fridge magnets and Christmas cards, etc.

Well condition survey

For the first time in a significant number of years English Heritage undertook a well condition survey of the two wells at the Castle (in the bailey and at the top of the Motte). Discussions are ongoing between the Trust and English Heritage about the need for repair / replacement of the fencing around the wells and the well ironwork coverings. We are also keen for the wells to be cleaned / emptied of any rubbish that has accumulated over the years.

Highways drainage issues

Following repeated flooding of the roads outside the Castle (which were historically part of the outer moat of the Castle), Hertfordshire Highways undertook a CCTV survey of the drains around the Castle. These appear to have been linked in to the Castle's moat structure (we believe in the 1970s) to allow surface run-off from nearby roads to drain into the moat, but have become clogged with silt over the intervening period. We are working with Hertfordshire Highways to design an engineering solution to try and reduce the regular flooding and restore the moats to their former condition.

Bench replacement

We had hoped to replace all the benches on site at some point during 2020 (one of which was taken out of service by English Heritage at the end of 2019 on safety grounds). The impact of the pandemic on English Heritage's and our financial situation has unfortunately meant this was placed on hold throughout 2020.

Social media

Throughout the year we continued to publish information about the Castle on our social media channels (particularly FaceBook and Twitter), and add new research / articles into the web site.

Administration

The Trust continues to benefit from the generous provision of IT support through the Google for Non-profits scheme, and the availability of free or discounted software through Charity Digital (registered charity no. 1133179). The Trustees are extremely grateful to both Google and Charity Digital for the continuing support offered to the Trust.

Plans for the future

The Trust has continued to make a significant contribution to many sectors of the public with an interest in the history of the Castle and its former residents. The dedication of our volunteers throughout the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown enabled significant numbers to enjoy the outdoor facilities of the Castle as part of their daily exercise. However, the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will continue to have a significant impact on the Trust's activities well into 2021. The Trust's primary focus

for 2021 continues to be to provide the core services committed to under the Local Management Agreement with English Heritage and to ensure that financial commitments do not out-strip income (or the appropriate portion of reserves, where necessary). But in what continues to be an extremely challenging environment, we hope to be able to get back to providing educational activities for schools and other organised groups, re-start our on-site visitor support role, and facilitate the use of the site for wider community use.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties. The public benefit of the Charity's activities is focussed on providing education to the general public about the history of the Castle and its former inhabitants and this is achieved principally by providing on-site access to a visitors' room and guided tours around the Castle (pandemic conditions permitting) through which education is provided to visitors from the local area, nationally and internationally.

Structure, governance and management

Berkhamsted Castle Trust adopted its constitution on 13 December 2017 using the Charity Commission's Charitable Incorporated Organisation Foundation Model documentation and was formally incorporated and registered by the Charity Commission on 14 December 2017. The Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society, Berkhamsted and District Archaeology Society, Berkhamsted Citizens Association, Berkhamsted Town Council and Dacorum Borough Council, as local stakeholders of the original Castle Liaison Group, were all given a right to nominate one trustee each to represent their interest in the Castle. The Trust may have a maximum of 15 trustees, inclusive of the 5 nominee trustees.

During the period of this report no further Trustees were appointed or resigned, meaning the current total remains eleven. There are no current plans to extend this number, although this is kept under review to ensure that the Trust's educational capability, financial management, and heritage activities are overseen by suitably capable individuals.

Financial review

The results for the review period were in line with the Trustees' expectations given the pandemic. The continued local nature of the Trust's activities meant that donations remained limited, but this was significantly impacted by the several months of lockdown. However, the Trust continued to have relatively few outgoings during the period, and managed to postpone reduced some regular maintenance work to reduce costs. As a result, there were limited outgoings during 2020.

Reserves policy and going concern

In this early phase of the Trust's operation, and given the increased financial risks posed by the Coronavirus pandemic, the Trustees have agreed to maintain the Trust's

assets in a liquid balance of funds in the bank. No illiquid or longer term investments have been made pending a more detailed planning of the Trust's future strategy and funding requirements.

All the funds of the Trust are unrestricted. The trustees have identified no significant short or medium term financial risks to the charity's continued operations save the general economic climate of the country in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, and therefore the accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

Risk

The major risks to which the Charity is exposed have been identified by the Trustees and are monitored and reviewed regularly. A risk register will in due course be prepared and maintained. The Trustees minimise investment risk through maintenance of liquid assets at a reputable High Street bank; finance risk by the preparation and monitoring of budgets; strategic risk by the maintenance of good practice; and operational risk and regulation compliance risk through the regular review of activities and (where appropriate) the use of professional advisers.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the period and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principals in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Independent examiner

As the Trust's gross income for the year was below £25,000, the Trustees have elected not to have the accounts reviewed by an Independent Examiner this year.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 19th October 2021 and signed by:



Adrian Barham
Chair of Trustees

Statement of financial activities

Statement of financial activities for the period to 31 December 2020

	Current year		Previous year	
Incidental Trading	GBP	GBP	GBP	GBP
Sales of goods	1,461.73		587.15	
Cost of sales ^(NOTE 4)	<u>- 839.69</u>		<u>- 587.15</u>	
		622.04		0
Incoming Resources				
<u>Service Agreement</u>				
Management Fee English Heritage	<u>3,500.00</u>		<u>2,625.00</u>	
		3,500.00		2,625.00
<u>Grants received</u>				
Berkhamsted Town Council	<u>982.00</u>		<u>0</u>	
		982.00		0
<u>Voluntary Income</u>				
Donations via Standing Order	150.00		150.00	
Payroll Donations	1,200.00		900.00	
Online donations	408.88		1,139.98	
Gifts in Kind	332.20		18,122.86	
Cash donations at the castle	<u>104.49</u>		<u>984.62</u>	
		2,195.57		21,297.46
Resources Expended				
<u>Costs of Generating Voluntary Income</u>				
Charges deducted from donations	<u>- 82.50</u>		<u>- 51.84</u>	
		- 82.50		- 51.84
<u>Grants made</u>				
English Heritage Trust (for people counters)	<u>- 1,373.00</u>		<u>0</u>	
		- 1,373.00		0
<u>Other resources expended</u>				
Depreciation of website Fixed Asset ^(NOTE 3)	- 625.00		- 625.00	
Fees and registrations	- 40.00		- 190.80	
Visitor centre costs	- 575.09		- 223.66	
Research undertaken	- 1,182.00		- 18,000.00	
Site maintenance costs	- 3,074.58		- 2,514.00	
		<u>- 5,496.67</u>		<u>- 21,553.46</u>
Surplus for year to end Dec 2020		347.44		2,317.16
Reserves brought forward		<u>52,234.27</u>		<u>49,917.11</u>
		<u>52,581.71</u>		<u>52,234.27</u>

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2020

	Current year		Previous year	
	GBP	GBP	GBP	GBP
<u>Fixed Assets</u> ^(NOTE 1)				
Land donated to Trust ^(NOTE 2)	25,000.00		25,000.00	
Website (after depreciation) ^(NOTE 3)	625.00		1,250.00	
		25,625.00		26,250.00
<u>Current Assets</u>				
Bank account	27,710.74		23,119.80	
Debtor English Heritage	875.00		2,625.00	
Gift Aid not yet claimed from HMRC	268.13		217.23	
Accrued income	56.40		5.44	
Prepaid insurance	68.13		16.80	
		28,978.40		25,984.27
<u>Creditors</u>				
Accruals ^(NOTE 5)	- 2,021.69		0	
		- 2,021.69		0
		<u>52,581.71</u>		<u>52,234.27</u>

The statement of financial activities and balance sheet were approved by the Trustees on 19th October 2021 and signed by:



Adrian Barham
Chair of Trustees

Notes to the financial statements

1. Only assets over the value of £1,000 have been capitalised.
2. 3 acres (1.2 hectares) of land. For Land Registry purposes the land was declared as being received as a gift for no consideration, but with a notional property value of £25k. This was based on an agricultural property price of around £8k per acre, but noting that the land forms part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument and is therefore subject to significant use restrictions.
3. The value of the Land Assets has not been depreciated. Other assets have been depreciated over a 4 year period.
4. Under an agreement with Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society (registered charity no. 803417), sales of items inherited by the Trust from the Society are to be accounted for to the Society until such time as stock is exhausted or until the interpretation of the Castle is updated by the Trust.
5. Accruals represent an allowance for invoices anticipated but which had not been received at year end (relating chiefly to production of calendars for incidental sale).