

Annual Review

2023 - 24



Co-Chairs' Report

Helen Minovi and Geoff Rees

After a wet and interminably soggy winter, the magnificent flowering magnolia trees have been a welcome sight, along with all the camellias and spring flowers that are on parade in most of the parks, gardens and hedgerows of Moseley.

This serves to remind those of us who are fortunate to live here that, despite the woes of the City Council and the current economic climate, we are blessed with a very desirable place to be within Birmingham.

It was a year ago, the day after the Annual General Meeting, that the Hive, in the centre of Moseley Village became a venue which now belongs to the community. Even when it was a 'meanwhile use' premises, it had become a vibrant space used by a diverse group of Moseley residents, friends and neighbours.

One of the highlights of the last year for the Moseley Society was the publication of Janet Berry's book, *Moseley 1850-1900*. The Hive proved to be the perfect location for the launch event which took place during Birmingham Heritage Week.



We hope that you will agree that the various reports in the Annual Review show that the Society, through its various activities, continues to play its part in the well-being and success of Moseley.

We cannot praise highly enough the volunteers who give of their time for the greater good of the community, that makes Moseley the place to be today. Long may it continue.



Secretary's Report

Fiona Adams

We now know that at the next general election, due before next year's report is written, we will be voting in Birmingham Hall Green and Moseley constituency. While we have not regained the Birmingham Moseley title that existed from 1918 until 1950, at least our name is back among the lists of constituencies. We have been told that the Moseley and Kings Heath Public Space Protection Order has been renewed, although not yet posted on the Council's website. We continue to benefit from membership of Civic Voice and Birmingham Heritage Forum. In March 2024 we were glad to host a meeting of civic societies from the west midlands region and to learn about recent changes to planning legislation and also how the Worcester Society has 1.7k followers on TikTok. For the first time we decided to take part in Civic Day on 17 June. We also took part in the 49th Moseley Festival and are looking forward to displaying photographs from the Collection at the 50th event this summer.

Negotiations with the Community Health Trust to renew the lease of the dovecote continue. Following a detailed condition survey undertaken by the Hospital some repairs have been completed, including major work on the electrical system. We have asked Chris Rice, a member of Birmingham Heritage Forum, to renew the exhibition in the dovecote. It's been up since 1985 when we first signed a lease and opened the buildings to the public.

Treasurer's Report

Phil Williams

The report and accounts to 31 December 2023 were approved and signed by the Trustees on 4 March 2024 and the Annual Return to the Charity Commission completed. The accounts are available on the Society's website and can be sent on request to any member by email or post.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Our main recurring income continues to be membership subscriptions and the accompanying Gift Aid. The Society's income has been boosted by the interest received from the legacies bequeathed to the Society in 2022. The legacies and some other funds were moved from Lloyds Bank to the Nationwide Building Society in

February 2023 to access higher interest rates. The increase in the amount of merchandise sales and cost of sales is due to the purchase and resale (at a small margin) of Janet Berry's book.

Expenditure is in line with that in previous years with the exception of the need to make necessary repairs to the electrical systems in the Dovecote.

BALANCE SHEET

Total funds have slightly increased from £88,699 to £89,577 which are mainly represented by our bank deposits. The notice period on our deposit accounts is short term (ranging from 0 to 95 days) to ensure that funds are readily available.

Marketing, News & Membership

Sally Wright, Fiona Adams, Kirsten de Vos, Helen Minovi, Geoff Rees, Ray Tier, Charles Wall, Geoff Williams

One of our concerns, as with other civic groups, is the recruitment of members, especially from younger generations. We were lucky enough to meet Georgina Sheldon at the launch of Janet Berry's book last year. She offered to help us refresh the layout of our publications. The feedback we have had has been mostly very positive. We have noted some concerns about legibility.

As promised in last year's Report, the new signage for the Dovecote has been commissioned. We are hoping that the Dovecote and our part in its maintenance is recognised by clear and visible signs near the front fence.

In the past year, the newsletters have been emailed to most members, except where there has been a request for a printed version. Paper copies are available at Moseley Exchange and on our stalls at local events, where we have also recruited several new members. In general, membership has remained steady.

Programme

Helen Minovi, John Underwood, Ray Tier

Our programme of talks is just one element in a variety of activities involving the Society in the course of the year. Since the autumn we have enjoyed talks about the Mitton family, their links to JRR Tolkien and their role in The Jewellery Quarter; BSA and WW2; and a highly entertaining illustrated talk about the Number 11 bus route.

In December we hosted an afternoon with a seasonal theme, with readings from Dickens, a quiz, stories and of course, lots of cake. Matching the availability of speaker and venue seems to be more and more challenging, but we are already working on the next programme which will

run till December. Our thanks to all our speakers for their fascinating contributions and to our audiences for their support.



Dovecote

Helen Minovi, Roy Cockel, Paul Lindley, Gill McGillivray and Geoff Williams

We have enjoyed a busy productive year at the Dovecote. Our loyal gardening team have worked tirelessly and were rewarded with being judged 'Outstanding' in the RHS 'It's Your neighbourhood' award. We are grateful for additional help from Chris Cockel with advice and scything and from a volunteer Scout Dylan Webb for his energetic hoeing.

The Dovecote opens on the last Saturday of the month from Spring to Autumn. In the Summer the Dovecote took part in Civic Day and Moseley in Bloom Open Gardens. The garden was used by Birmingham Community Healthcare Charity for a Heritage in Heath Family Day and by Moseley Hall Hospital for its Family Day.

In the Autumn scouts planted over a hundred bulbs around the garden, we had a visit from enthusiastic pupils from

Class 4 at SS John and Monica and received visitors as part of Heritage Open Days in September.

Meanwhile, the Moseley Hall Hospital estate team, under Capital Manager Neil Marks, have painted the railings, reconstructed the entrance to the hospital drive, cleared the overgrown area by the entrance and rebuilt the lean-to. Paul Lindley is kept busy mending and maintaining the buildings and equipment.

We are so grateful to all our volunteers, stewards, gardeners and including those already mentioned and regular helpers John Hudson, Geoff Rees and Geraldine Fisher. Thanks also go to Members of the Moseley Society Committee who welcome visitors on open days. The appreciation and encouragement from those who visit the garden makes all the hard work worthwhile!

Icehouse

Fiona Adams

Thanks are due to Kate Booth who organises the team and to all the members who volunteer to open the icehouse to the public. In addition to most of the same events mentioned in the dovecote report, the team also open the icehouse during the Folk Festival. Once the new signs and display boards are in place at the dovecote we plan to draw more attention to the icehouse with permanent signs.



Planning & Licensing

Fiona Adams, Bob Edmonds, Carolyn Hicks, Bridget Langstaff, Gill McGillivray and Carole McKeown.

There has been a reduction in the total number of applications in our area, 193 compared with 248 last year. We know this thanks to the detailed records kept for us by Gill McGillivray. We commented on 141 of the 193 – 50 were objections and the rest were comments that we hope were helpful. The great majority (122) were for extensions to residential houses with a further 8 for outbuildings in gardens. The trend for home offices and gyms at the bottom of the garden continues. Permitted Development Rights were used in 13 applications. 6 of the applications concerned

children's homes and 8 mentioned HMOs – including 2 where HMOs were being converted back into flats. Our frustration with the complexity of the Planning Enforcement system remains. The only change from Government has been the extension of the time period, from 4 to 10 years, over which breaches can, in theory, be reversed.

We were glad to support the large and detailed applications for Moseley Road Baths and for Highbury Hall. The Planning websites shows 53 documents for the first and 160 for the second

and while we cannot claim to have read them all we were glad when both were given permission. Work is already underway at Moseley Baths. The situation at Highbury is affected by the financial problems of the City Council. We all hope that work can begin before the rot in the upper storeys can spread further. Sadly, there is still no restoration in sight for the former Tram Shed offices at 582 Moseley Road. The most recent plans were refused permission, although the Listed Building application was approved.

Continued...

The first application to build a hotel behind the Village Inn was refused and a revised application has been submitted and is awaiting determination. The controversial plan to build on the site of former garages in Grayfield Avenue was refused and a revised application is waiting to be decided. Another controversial site, at the rear of

5-7 Park Hill, has reappeared on the list and is now one of the many sites around Moseley we have on our 'watch this space' list.

The main licensing issue this year concerned Pickwick Cricket Club, Windermere Road. They have chosen to appeal to the Magistrates Court after their entertainments licence was refused.

Committee in 2023-24

Helen Minovi & Geoff Rees,
Co-chairs

Phil Williams, Treasurer

Fiona Adams, Secretary

Roy Cockel (Co-opted)

Kirsten de Vos

Jean Gilkison (Co-opted)

Paul Lindley

Ray Tier

John Underwood

Charles Wall

Sally Wright

AGM Agenda

To be held on Wednesday 22 May 8.15pm at Moseley Exchange following the visit of the High Sheriff.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM held 9 May 2023
3. Presentation of the reports
4. Adoption of Report & Accounts to 31.12.2023
5. Election of Trustees
6. Any other business

THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY 51211

The Society can be contacted via the Secretary at 36 Grove Avenue, Moseley, B13 9RY. Subscriptions and letters may be handed in at Moseley Travel, 172 Alcester Road, near the public car park entrance in Moseley, while information about the Society is available next door at Domestica, or across the road at Moseley Exchange.

www.moseley-society.org.uk

Please contact us if you require a printed copy of the Annual Report.

Moseley History Group Report

Ray Tier, Janet Berry, Ian and Gill Binnie, Roy Cockel, Frank Gresham and Edwina Rees.

September 2023 was a sad milestone for the History Group when Janet Berry finally retired from the Group and left Moseley to live close to her family in Dorset. Janet had been the driving force behind the Group for many years. She led the successful bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2012-13, contributed an enormous volume of research whilst working to attain a PhD in local history at Birmingham University and developed and organised the Group's substantial collection of documents and artefacts. To mark her departure,

the Society held a book launch on 16 September for her new book *'Moseley 1850-1900: Space, place and people in a middle-class Birmingham suburb'* which gives an insight into the changing customs and mores of the Victorian Moseley middle classes. Janet's book is still available from the Society and at the Heath Bookshop in Kings Heath.

The Group continues to meet and to join in local events. To mark Civic Day on 17 June Ray Tier, Ian Binney and Jack Wilson led a number of fully subscribed, historical walks based on local landmarks round Moseley Village. It also contributed to the successful Heritage Open Days at the Dovecote in September, organised a number of historical talks as part of the Society's talks programme and continues to contribute articles for B13 Magazine. Further articles were published on the website relating to members' research including one on the history of the **Carnegie Boys' Club** (now Guthrie and Ghani). We have had some success in attracting new members some of whom are doing their own research.

