The Yateley Society Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts

Financial Year Ending
30th September 2026

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name:	The Yateley Society
Registered Charity No:	282397
Email address:	secretary@yateleysociety.org.uk
Website address:	www.yateleysociety.org.uk

Names of the society trustees:

Trustee Name	Office
Alison Hewitt	Chair
Jo Hill	Vice Chair/Communications
Liz Carpenter	Hon. Secretary
Elizabeth Hesketh	Hon. Treasurer / Membership Secretary
Roger Coombes	Local History
Colin Broadley	Archivist
Diane Gardner	Research
Mary Ferriss	Planning
Sandra Miller	Grant Funding

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1. Chairman's Report

Over the past year, our activities and achievements have remained firmly rooted in our core objectives: educating the public, promoting high standards in planning and architecture, and securing the protection and enhancement of our local environment.

I hope you have enjoyed the wide range of speakers and activities offered at our monthly members' meetings this year. We work hard to provide a varied programme with something for everyone.

A key highlight this year was the successful launch of Repair Café Yateley. Following a low-key start at Yateley Industries in February, it quickly outgrew the venue and now alternates between St Barnabas Church in Frogmore and St Swithun's Church in Yateley. The Repair Café takes place on the second Saturday of every month and will be held at St Barnabas Church in November.

Another highlight was joining Team Wilder, a Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust initiative. Its Community Ecologist has already led a guided walk and introductory pollinator survey training, with further activities planned for the spring. We have continued to work closely with the Hampshire and Hart countryside teams on all our practical conservation activities. The Toad Patrol team worked hard over the winter to support local frog and toad populations and are already preparing for the coming season.

Behind the scenes, considerable work goes into ensuring that we have a presence at community events, including the Yateley May Fayre and Heath Week with the Hampshire Countryside Rangers. Attending these events enables us to share our knowledge and inspire greater appreciation of the unique character of Yateley and the surrounding area.

Planning has demanded significant attention this year, and our team continues to work exceptionally hard on the Firgrove Farm planning application. This work is crucial to protecting Yateley's historical and public interests.

The Society's digital presence continues to grow, and now includes our Digital Library, which can be found at the bottom of The Yateley Society homepage. This is proving to be an amazing resource for sharing local history with a much wider audience. Our website and Facebook page have been regularly updated with news, event details, and information, keeping our members and the wider community informed of our activities.

Throughout the year, we have maintained a positive working relationship with Yateley Town Council. We recently supported its entry in the Hampshire Association of Local Councils Village of the Year competition, which it went on to win. We also continue to nurture our connections with Eversley Parish Council and are delighted to have welcomed a new trustee, Sandra Miller, who is also an EPC councillor.

The Society continues to be represented on the Yateley Common Management Committee and the Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee.

Looking ahead, attracting new members and trustees remains an important challenge if the Society is to stay vibrant and continue its vital work. Your involvement is essential, and I encourage you to consider how your time, skills or experience could contribute to the Society's activities and future direction.

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Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has donated to support our work this year. Responding to the Firgrove Farm planning application requires expertise beyond our remit, and your donations enable us to engage subject-matter experts when needed.

None of this work would be possible without the tireless dedication of our Trustees and active volunteers, or the time, expertise and support contributed by our members. Together, you help make Yateley a better place to live.

Alison Hewitt, Chair
chair@yateleysociety.org.uk

2. Structure, Governance and Management

2.1 Description of the Charity's Type of governing document.

The Society's governing document is our Constitution; the model constitution of the Civic Trust, first adopted at its inaugural meeting on 15th January 1981. The Constitution was amended at the AGM on the 31st January 1985, at an SGM held on 14th November 1996 to add the fourth Biodiversity object clause, and to make a large number of detail changes to modernise the constitution, mainly to conform with Charity Commissioner and Civic Trust standards. There were more changes made at the AGMs of 20th February 1997 and 15th February 2001.

Under the guidance of Hart Voluntary Action, the Constitution was further simplified and updated to include current information regarding the practises of the society and then accepted by the Members at the AGM of 3rd November 2022.

2.2 How the charity is constituted.

The charity is an **unincorporated association**. The Charity Commission's website details that an unincorporated association is appropriate where the charity:

- is to be relatively small in terms of assets.
- has a membership.
- is to be run by charity trustees who will be elected by members or appointed to hold office for fixed terms.
- wants to take account of the views of residents and organisations through membership or as users.
- wishes to carry out its work wholly or partly through the voluntary effort and contributions of its members.

The appropriate governing document is a constitution – which we have.

2.3 Trustee selection methods

We follow the standard process for Trustee appointments - once a Trustee has been elected by Society members at an AGM, or co-opted during the year, and appointed to the Executive Committee, they serve a term of at least three years.

Trustees may serve a maximum of three terms in the same role, unless they resign earlier because their circumstances change or they are no longer able to fulfil the responsibilities of the position.

All Trustees give their time on a voluntary basis and receive no payment or other benefits for their role.

2.4 Volunteer selection methods

We recognise that some members make a valuable and proactive contribution to the Society but do not wish to become Trustees. In these cases, we may formalise their involvement through signing The

Yateley Society Volunteer Agreement. This allows volunteers to carry out agreed work on behalf of the Society with the support and credibility of the organisation, including, where appropriate, use of a

Society email address. Each volunteer will have a clear area of responsibility and will report to a nominated Trustee, providing a defined line of accountability to the Executive Committee.

This enables members to contribute in a meaningful and structured way without taking on the legal responsibilities of a Trustee.

2.5 Data Protection

From 25 May 2018 all UK organisations, including charities need to comply with a new data protection law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We continue to monitor our processes to ensure compliance and make our Privacy Policy available to both new and existing members.

2.6 Additional Governance Matters

2.6.1 Induction of Trustees

We have developed a Trustee Handbook intended to provide important information to new trustees and as a point of reference for all other officers and trustees to ensure all can undertake their roles and responsibilities in a diligent manner. It is intended that this document is reviewed and amended as necessary on a regular basis, typically annually, after the AGM.

In line with our new "Volunteer Agreement" programme, there is a reduced version of the Trustee handbook for our new volunteers.

2.6.2 Management and Volunteers

The charity is administered entirely by volunteers. It does not have access to the financial resources that might allow it to operate in any other way, which affects what may be reasonably expected of the charity in terms of performance and timeliness. Thus, if a volunteer ceases to be willing to carry out the work, resigns from the Society, or leaves the district, it is important to find other volunteers to take on that role to ensure continuity of effort, and to take plans and projects through to their conclusion.

2.6.3 The Charity's Organisational Structure

The Society is managed by the Executive Committee, which meets on a Wednesday evening approximately 4 times a year (at 8-week intervals). All society business is discussed to a structured agenda prepared by the Honourable Secretary. Minutes are kept and approved as correct at the following meeting. The work undertaken by *The Yateley Society* is then focussed on approved "Projects", each with its own project lead, project team, regular meetings, minutes and agendas.

2.6.4 Projects – current:

- Nature Recovery Network Surveys (Team Wilder)
- Gayton House Photography project
- Refresh Tree pamphlet
- Street names project – the digital library

2.6.5 Projects – ongoing:

- Vicarage Road research
- Tapestry Lawns (Team Wilder)
- Digital Library
- Archives Project
- Oral History recordings
- Toad Patrol
- Royal Oak Valley
- Conservation Working Party

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- Events and Communication
- Schools & Youth Liaison Project
- Increase The Yateley Society Membership

3. Objectives and Activities

3.1 Summary of the objects of the Charity

i. To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, and architecture of the area of benefit.

ii. To secure the preservation, protection, development, and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

iii. To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.

iv. To secure the enhancement of the biological diversity of the ecosystems, the conservation of the natural and semi-natural habitats, and the protection of the characteristic flora and fauna within the area of benefit.

v. To protect, preserve and improve the environment for the public in the area of benefit by, for example:

a) facilitating the repair of broken or damaged items for reuse and the recycling or redistribution of surplus materials for use elsewhere; and

b) advancing education about all aspects of waste generation, management, recycling and reuse and other environmental topics including, but not limited to: biodiversity loss; climate change; sustainable living and the climate and ecological emergency.

3.2 Statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

In planning our activities for the year, we keep in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at our Executive Committee meetings. There is a standard agenda item under which we record the Society's main activities during the year for public benefit and how these relate to our charitable objects.

3.3 Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects.

Each year the Society's objectives and activities seek to further its charitable object clauses.

To achieve object clause **(i)** the society runs a talks programme which anyone may attend free of charge, publishes books and publications, and has a website, which in addition to providing information, also attracts a steady stream of email enquiries, mostly concerning local and family history, and planning matters.

To achieve object clause **(ii)** the society continues to research Yateley's heritage including the history of old buildings, whether listed or not, and maintaining a database of up-to-date research. The Society continues to monitor the activities of the Local Planning Authority.

The Society also maintains a watching brief over the registered common land in the parish as an historic feature, carries out historic research, and encourages archaeological research by local experts and maintains a forum for the dissemination of the findings. The Society also monitors the conservation status of Yateley Common, an important part of the Thames Valley Heaths Special Protection Area for Wild Birds, supporting two members as observers on the Yateley Commons Management Committee.

To achieve object clause **(iii)** the society monitors significant planning applications in Yateley, via the Hart Planning website and convenes public meetings to discuss any major planning challenges of concern to agree any necessary action plans.

To achieve object clause **(iv)** the society organises and supports financially a group of Conservation Volunteers. Involvement is not restricted to Society members; everyone is welcome. The volunteer

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hours are logged annually. Two members regularly attend the Yateley Commons Management Committee as observers.

To achieve object clause **(v)** the society has initiated the **Repair Café Yateley** project. This community initiative enables local residents to learn how to repair and reuse household items, reducing waste and promoting sustainable living by diverting items from landfill.

4. Achievements and Performance

4.1 Membership

At the end of our financial year on 30 September 2026, the Society had 196 paid-up members, including 8 lifetime members and 7 honorary members.

Membership numbers fluctuated slightly during the year, as they normally do, and on occasions reached 200, matching the high achieved last year.

Throughout the year, we were represented at a number of local fairs and community events, many of which appear to be growing in popularity. These events continue to be a valuable way of raising awareness of the Society, explaining the work we do and encouraging new members to join. We have also continued to engage with the wider community through our social media channels.

Over the years, membership has gradually increased and, encouragingly, we have not seen any significant decline. Last year, membership received a noticeable boost as a result of interest surrounding a local planning application, so it is particularly positive that we have been able to maintain membership at a similar level this year.

Liz Hesketh, Membership Secretary
membership@yateleysociety.org.uk

4.2 Communication

The Yateley Society plays a very active part in the Community, working towards our object clauses, and strives to communicate their involvement at every opportunity. Good communication is an important part of the Society's work. During 2025/26 we have continued to develop the ways in which we share information about the Society, promote our activities and projects, encourage people to get involved and make our local history and research accessible to a much wider audience.

4.2.1 Newsletter

The Newsletter editor is Jo Hill, assisted by Frances Clinch as proof-reader with contributions included from the Chair, heads of subgroups, members and affiliated organisations. They are produced throughout the year and used at events and posted on the website.

4.2.2 Website

Our website is a very useful way of setting out what the Society groups have, and are trying, to achieve. Our website remains the main hub for information about the Yateley Society. It provides information about the Society and its projects, news and updates, membership, volunteering opportunities and our programme of talks, walks, visits and other events.

During the year the website has increasingly been used not simply as an information source, but as a way of encouraging participation. Events are advertised and, where appropriate, booked online, making it easier for both members and non-members to take part. The website also provides a central point from which visitors can find out about the Society's current projects, including planning, conservation, local history, the Toad Patrol, Repair Café Yateley and the Digital Library and more recently Wilder Yateley.

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4.2.3 Digital Library:

One of the most significant developments in our communications and heritage work has been the continuing population of the Yateley Society Digital Library.
The Digital Library has been created to provide the community with direct access to the wealth of historical material, photographs, documents and other resources that the Society has collected over many years. The project involves transferring existing material into a searchable online resource and continuing to add new material as it becomes available.

The Digital Library can be accessed at library.yateleysociety.org.uk and is intended to become an increasingly valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Yateley, Frogmore and Darby Green – from local historians and researchers to residents and schools simply wanting to find out more about the area in which they live.

4.2.4 Social Media

Social Media enables us to promote the Society to a great number of Yateley residents and is a useful tool for addressing the Society's Object clause (i). As well as the general Yateley Society accounts, we have separate accounts for the Repair Café Yateley and Toad Patrol. Our social media presence complements rather than replaces the website, with posts often directing people back to the website for fuller information, event bookings and project details.

All Facebook posts are also shared to other local groups, (eg Yateley Community, whose memberships total around 28k) allowing us to reach a widening audience outside our own membership. These steps all help to raise awareness of the Society and its aims, and this is borne out by increasing numbers of followers: Yateley Society Facebook page – over 1,400 followers.

Using Meta Business Suite, posts are copied to our Instagram accounts where we currently have just 80 followers.

"Friends of Yateley Society" closed Facebook group – is a forum for discussion on local issues and initiatives. This group has attracted 583 members to date. We continue to advertise for much needed volunteers to help us with social media.

4.3 Meetings and Events

A packed schedule of talks and events for Society members and the general public is shown in the table below. As well as these organised events, the "Pop-up Local History" events at Café 46 continue to be held on the third Tuesday of each month; the monthly Conservation Working party in collaboration with the Yateley Common Rangers continues to be held on the last Sunday of each month and our Repair Café Yateley is held on the second Saturday of the month alternating between St Barnabas in Darby Green and St Swithuns in Yateley, having outgrown the original venue at Yateley Industries.

We have a presence at as many local events as possible, such as the Yateley May Fayre and Frogmore Fete, in order to show what the Society is working on, display merchandise and chat with locals to try to increase awareness and membership.

Month	Talk/Event
October 2025	Local beekeeper James Donaldson gave a captivating talk about the joys and challenges of beekeeping
November 2025	AGM and presentation and practical block printing by Claire Morgan
November 2025	Yateley Christmas market – with our books and 2026 Calendar launch
December 2025	Christmas Social event held at the Casa Hotel
December 2025	Mulled wine, jacket potatoes and mince pies for the Conversation Group Christmas scrub burning
February 2026	Opening of our Repair Café Yateley at its original home Yateley Industries.

March 2026	Pop Up Local History event at Monteagle Hall showcasing some Yateley Society archives and the Digital Library
April 2026	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Amphibian and Reptile Group guided pond surveys
April 2026	Two very popular guided walks around Firgrove Farm for the National Day for Nature
May 2026	Yateley May Fayre
May 2026	HIWWT Team Wilder investigative walk and walk around Monteagle Community Orchard
June 2026	Toad Patrol = Neighbours after Dark was a roundup of the results of this year's Toad Patrol and what's happening nationwide with our precious amphibians
June 2026	Frogmore and Darby Green Fete
July 2026	Summer Social event held at the Casa Hotel
July 2026	Heath Week – organised by Thames Basin Heaths where we had a display and encouraged children to make bird feeders and origami butterflies
July 2026	Supporting Blackbushe Heritage Trusts Open Day with their new plane and the 80th birthday of the Vulcan
September 2026	Saving Hampshire's Swifts - Catherine Gale of Hampshire Swifts spoke of the challenges facing our declining swift population and publicised the offer of supply and fit a swift box
September 2026	Speaking at the Hart Development Committee re Firgrove Farm

Jo Hill, PR/Communications
vicechair@yateleySociety.org.uk

4.4 Planning

REPORT COMING SOON

Mary Ferriss, Alison Hewitt & Alan Kinnaird
planning@yateleysociety.org.uk

4.5 Conservation & Biodiversity

4.5.1 Blackbushe, Deregistration of Common land & Exchange Land:

The proposed deregistration of 35.3 of Common Land with an equivalent area of Exchange Land at Cottage Farm was approved after the Public Inquiry. Impressive information boards have been erected at several entrances to the Exchange Land at Cottage Farm.

The accepted proposal by Blackbushe Airport Ltd (BAL) to manage the Exchange Land was to leave it for the first two or three years to allow the pastureland to 'regenerate' to heathland naturally, and for pedestrian / equestrian 'desire lines' to be revealed. In August '26, after a succession of several heatwaves & a local dry spell lasting 48 days, the parched grassland has mown pathways radiating out from a central point connecting the entrance points on the boundaries, rather than informal 'desire lines'. This may transpire to be a benefit for wildlife if it reduces random movements across undisturbed open land with ground-nesting birds, and offers potential small fire breaks in the event of a grass fire. It appears that there is already a widespread population of dock plants which if allowed to spread unchecked threaten to dominate the area. The seeds are said to survive for 50 years and the plant is very difficult to eradicate. Early intervention is suggested.

4.5.2 Yateley Common:

The Conservation Team Sunday Volunteers continue to support the Hampshire Countryside Northern Sites team and have addressed clearance of gorse & pine scrub from land overlooking Cricket Hill Lane adjacent to the low point dip in the road. This effort to restore the open aspect of the heathland continued for successive months to the end of 2025 and for the first 4 months of 2026.

Due to climate change active felling & clearance work is now required to stop at the end of February (previously March) to prevent disturbance during the nesting season. Dogs should be kept on leads during this period. Some work to remove rampant holly spreading was continued as it is deemed unlikely that birds nest in sparse holly and it is relatively easy to verify that no nests are present before any work starts.

Work to improve public & Fire Services access to bridlepaths was conducted successfully, and this included some remedial work on tracks to properties on the Common to help channel storm water.

Regrettably, Hampshire Countryside Rangers Charlie Corbishley & Ash Oliff have moved away to greener pastures, and their pleasant leadership skills & enthusiasm will be missed. New Ranger Elizabeth (Liz) Hourahine has joined the Team with experience gained with the Environment Agency, and another Ranger is currently sought. We wish them all well.

Whilst volunteer numbers are currently relatively buoyant, it is evident that the volunteering contribution is 'fugitive', subject to turn-over and is never a substitute for permanent, trained Rangers.

We would love to have more volunteers to help conserve this internationally rare habitat; no experience needed, tools, refreshments & friendly safety instruction is provided.

4.5.3 Castle Bottom –pony 'lookers':

Yateley Society members have continued to assist the Hampshire Countryside Northern Sites Rangers by patrolling Castle Bottom to locate and check the welfare of the ponies grazing the fenced area.

Serious concerns have been raised on the proposed housing developments close to this NNR (National Nature Reserve) which will reduce area connectivity for wildlife, increase population pressures (noise, artificial lighting, pet ingress & pedestrian access), which would have irreversible and detrimental effects on wildlife and biodiversity.

4.5.4 Royal Oak Valley SINC:

Work in conjunction with the Hart District Council (HDC) Rangers continued to manage the spread of Hemlock Water Dropwort (HWD) across the ROV Wildflower Meadow by denying seeding.

A small trial to test whether severing the HWD plant crown from the tubers below ground gave equivocal results and was partially successful, although cautious uprooting has been more effective to date. Repeat trials are planned to attempt to eradicate this toxic plant from the public-frequented Meadow & adjacent to footpaths

HDC Rangers acted promptly to cut up a fallen willow on the wildflower meadow. Volunteers plan to remove the brash into the surrounding areas to facilitate mowing operations in future years, bearing in mind the presence of the Hemlock & the hazards that accompany this toxic plant. Hemlock has been noted as spreading considerably along the ROV and denying seeding / eradication in future may become a priority target.

The small pond near the meadow which was dredged out last year, unsurprisingly dried out completely this summer as often occurs in recent years. The established 'Kingcup' marsh marigold growth appears to have been lost in the process of refurbishment.

4.5.5 Yellow Legged Asian Hornet:

At the end of July '26 a Yellow Legged Asian Hornet (AH) nest was located in Farnham near the station, one of 21 nests found this year. The incidence of AH nests is steadily increasing & so must the vigilance of the public to help protect ALL pollinators & ultimately help our UK food security. The British Bee Keeping Association appeals:

"Members of the public can significantly contribute by monitoring for foraging Asian Hornets and reporting sightings (using the free AH app.)"

Asian Hornet nests located (& destroyed) on the UK mainland were:

- 2023: 72 nests
- 2024: 24 nests
- 2025: 163 nests
- [2026: 21 nests / 82 sightings]

Please stay vigilant!

Yellow Legged Asian Hornet

Mike Mann, Di Gardner, Liz Hesketh and Alison Hewitt, Conservation Team

4.6 Local History Group

During the year, we produced our 2026 calendar which consisted of newspaper snippets over the years. Sales of the calendar appear mainly limited to those buying as collectibles.

We also added three new 'free information' leaflets to join our range:

- The Women's Institute in Yateley
- Lost pubs in Frogmore and Darby Green
- Yateley War Memorial and the local Royal British Legion branch

Local History Group activities have been limited due to poor health of some of the members of the group and also the distraction of local planning applications which required historical research to include in responses.

Several new entries have successfully been made to the Historical Environment Records (HER).

Progress continues to be made with populating The Yateley Society Digital Library – entries from which largely contributed to the calendar which is underway for next year (2027).

Roger Coombes, Local History
Localhistory@yateleySociety.org.uk

4.7 Archives

In the report I made for 2023 I gave various figures showing the extent of our archive I will compare those with the current figures:

- Total Folders 28,718 now 28,508
- Total Files 459,928 now 418,743
- The total size of these files is 537Gb

In 2023 I quoted my predecessor saying that there was "a lot of duplication and a lot of unindexed files". This is still true but due to my work on this aspect the total files have reduced by 41,185 despite many new files being added. It is difficult time-consuming work at times checking that files seemly the same really are. This is because over the years many files need loading into a computer and being save again in a new current format. One example is .WS4 (WordStar 4) needs to be saved as .DOCX. Regarding the, so called, unindexed files - when I deal with a particular subject, I do a search through the whole archive and if I find 'unindexed files' I usually change the file name to make it more easily findable and sometimes move the file to a new location. So many more of these files can now be found although they may not yet be in the 'correct' place.

Picture files are also a problem as there are files in many formats with the process of updating taking place many times. Both produce 'duplicates' – the same information but different formats. I have a fairly firm policy of keeping the original file as long as it can be read but usually doing some enhancement if better results are produced using current programs which work to reduce fading, contrast and brightness. The result of this is that I can remove any intermediate formats saving just an 'original' copy but one that can still be accessed and one using a modern format possibly enhanced even further. Over the years many picture files have been copied and saved at different resolutions these can mostly be deleted.

Overriding all this is the keeping of an Archive at the time of my becoming Archivist. This is kept on a physically protected hard drive off site. There is also another copy of this with our archivist of some time ago. We have 12 copies of my master half of these with trustees for their use the others I update as my master changes ready to exchange with individual trustees when we next meet. I hold a master on a PC; a transfer drive and a copy on a laptop at my premises in separate rooms. The duplicate drives for the trustees are kept in a fireproof safe.

Enough of stats etc.

I reported last year of a very large donation given to us by a lady on Cricket Hill of nearly 200 items all of these have gone through a recording, repair and protection process some still await scanning and storing. In the case of this donation some photography has been necessary.

We have run the Coffee and Chat sessions (now "***Pop up History***") at Café 46 all year with varying success. At some sessions we only have one or two attendees but at other times many more with some coming and going. There is only space for around 8-10 persons. Recently I have received several items in the Map category. One special map/plan of Blackbushe airfield post war was of great interest and solved a problem. Although we had other copies of the same map/plan this one had handwritten annotations and a table giving the site numbers at the time of WWII and the changed number of the same areas for postwar reuse for accommodation. I was pleased to find, from these annotations, that I live only a short way from the airfields' cinema!

At other times working on one subject leads to another. Part of the big donation already mentioned were two newsletters produced by the common rangers. I only had one other copy of this newsletter, so I was prompted to contact the authors gaining several other copies. This same effect is also present when dealing with enquires one such leading to our very interesting talk on the first of October. Our PB works (WiKi) web site also produces enquires and sometime conversations over many weeks produce more archives for our use. I am currently in contact with the great-great granddaughter of Annie Bull - Yateley's Postwoman we have a postcard of her horse and card feeding on Church end green. My contact is actually a descendent of Fred Bull who it seems (using DNA) is connected to the Milam family several of

who appeared many times in the criminal courts of the time. I have several Newspaper reports of their stealing rabbits and fowl – they were not very good at it! Through this connection I have received a photo of Dr Denny. My contact knew Annie till she was 10. Annie retired (1924) shortly before moving to Canada with her daughter Dorothy – the father remains unidentified.

The use of our collection of Newspaper cuttings is growing all the time starting in the year 1742 and going on to recent times. I now hold 2,489 of these which have been extracted from one of the online sources and pasted into a uniform format. Both Alan and I collect these and I have many in the areas of the archive I have not yet delt with. There are also many that have no identifying details – no dote and no publication name. I do my best with these, but the on-line extracting leads a lot to be desired with many being garbled in the process of extraction. There was one recent case where the whole extract was complete garbage except for the work 'Yateley' the sole reason for it being 'found'. Often newsworthy items are reported in other papers many miles away. Recent ones being from Hull. The Gloucester Journal in 1803 was confirmation of the change of our vicar from John Richards to Robert Caswall.

The number of categorised files has gone up greatly over the past year:

- By Surname 7,923 (2738 in 2023).
- By Building Name 39,326 (23,827) (there are now many cross references to link changes of name).
- By Place Name 9,371 (no figure for 2023 -the category did not exist then) This is where Yateley and 'street names' are. Street name folders contain files related to whole streets and houses with numbers rather than names.
- By Map date 16,851 (5140).

All files that are actually readable eg, Word Processed, PDF or text can be searched and I maintain a searching facility that will find a keyword or phrase while you are typing it producing results from within the documents as well as from the file name or folder name. This uses an enhanced version of the normal Microsoft search program which is defaulted to be switched off. I can tell you about turning this on which produces very fast results. This is how I can find instances of 'unindexed' files that I mentioned at the start of this report. In case you are wondering these files do have a file name but in the early days of computing it was limited to 8 characters. For example, the folder "CHR8BL" contains a subfolder "INTERNDE" another sub folder called "Yateley" and a file called "CCH05712". However, if I had been searching for "Wren Close" with the switched-on search tool I would have found it. This example, as it happens, is a folder where I have updated the files in 2022 from whatever format they were, probably .txt or .ws4, to .docx so they stay readable till I can sort them out.

I hope you have understood at least some of this and take away that progress is being made and that I am getting good at it.

Colin Broadley, Society Archivist
archivist@yateleySociety.org.uk

4.8 Toad Patrol

The multimedia campaign "Toad Patrols need you" ran again and it was a great success. The result was a completely new core team of around 15 people. A pre-season meeting was held for all in early Jan. We currently have a few new recruits itching to start the 2027 season.

We streamlined our record keeping and data gathering exercises by building an online platform that proved extremely successful where the whole team participated.

Our achievements for 2026 are:

- Additional static toad signs erected at Chandlers Pond by Hampshire Highways. All signs are now padlocked due to some vandalism.

- The new yellow "Slow! Toad Patrol" mobile safety signs given to all patrollers proved extremely successful. We are hoping to build on this for 2027 to make us all safer.
- Still more scary moments out on patrol!
- Donations – one from a team of children who helped raise £150 selling cakes outside their home, another £300 for the yellow mobile patroller signs and the other was for £1000 from the green token scheme at Waitrose (April – June).
- Inform third parties in regard our findings, the state of our ponds and what remediation work is needed to increase the amphibian populous.
- Our social media page "The Yateley Society Toad Patrol" became our go to multimedia tool.
- Ran an update talk on what the patrol team achieved this season.
- Pete West from HIWARG kindly surveyed both Chandlers and Yateley Green ponds with some of the team. Some fascinating finds.

Darby Green pond again won the most frog spawn award. We had a fewer clumps this year than last (around 120) as space was limited due to the overgrown reedmace and fauna. As of now, the pond has now been completely cleared of this very invasive weed. We are hoping there is now plenty of space for spawning.

Wistaria Lane (the moat) pond also did well.

But nothing prepared us for what we found at Yateley Green or what we didn't find! A big fat ZERO! No frog spawn let alone any toads or frogs which you could count on 2 hands. We were so deflated with such a catastrophic change from last year. That aside, Yateley Town Council were informed of our findings, and they have started to put a plan in place to remediate such losses. It does not help that there is another play area in the way of migrating toads and frogs.

However, our crowning glory has been Chandlers Pond. It's very special. Many, many newts were helped, some lovely toads plus a few frogs. 4/5 patrollers were needed, walking up and down very slowly on the roads both sides of the pond in order to spot the tiny amphibians. It was hard going on our backs and feet. As a direct result, this pond has now been recorded on Recordpool.org.uk but the findings still need to be added to FrogLife (not an easy task!)

Horseshoe Lake was deemed too dangerous for patrollers out on foot, so it has to be patrolled by car. This patch was patrolled sporadically. We do not know the whole picture.

Moulsham Lane pond is now looking just awful. We have not bothered to patrol this pond.

Skaters pond (up cricket hill) was also not patrolled this season. On my evening runs during migration, I never saw any frogs or toads at all crossing this busy road.

This season was completely barmy compared to last year. It was dry, chilly, not a lot of rain and completely unpredictable. Newts started to move when it was around 6 degrees, with toads and frogs coming later. They moved when it was cold. They were cold. There were no warnings, they just moved, bit by bit. Some nights, there was hardly any movement, and the new patrollers were a little dismayed at not finding anything. We saw no frogs/toads paired up - I think we had a pairing in a bucket but that's it. Not a lot of males at all. Quite a few females which resulted in some spawn not being fertilised at all which was very disappointing.

Yateley pond was altogether ...abysmal! I lay the blame on the invasive bull rush rhizomes that have taken over the frog spawn area. This awful plant reduced the water depth so much, there was no room to spawn safely - frogs need around 10" depth of and there just was none. They had to make do on the outskirts and then only a few clumps given the number of frogs that crossed the roads. Toads would stand a better chance within the reedbeds.

I said in the 2024 annual report that we would share information the 2025 findings with HIWARG. We decided not to and instead waited post-2026 migration in order to get a better understanding of numbers and crossings.

The spawn in Darby Green Pond was checked every night for clump increases. They spawned in another area which was lovely. The team also found an unbeknown to us, newt crossing that included Palmates. In fact, for a few nights there were more newts crossing than frogs!

All the patrollers this season were outstanding. We all helped each other out and the 2 Toad WhatsApp groups came in extremely handy. The "live" feed fed into local Facebook community groups for public awareness.

Due to the heatwaves and drought this year, Darby Green and Chandlers ponds dried out completely. Our concern is that tadpoles might have succumbed due to the water disappearing before they were able to grow into mini adults.

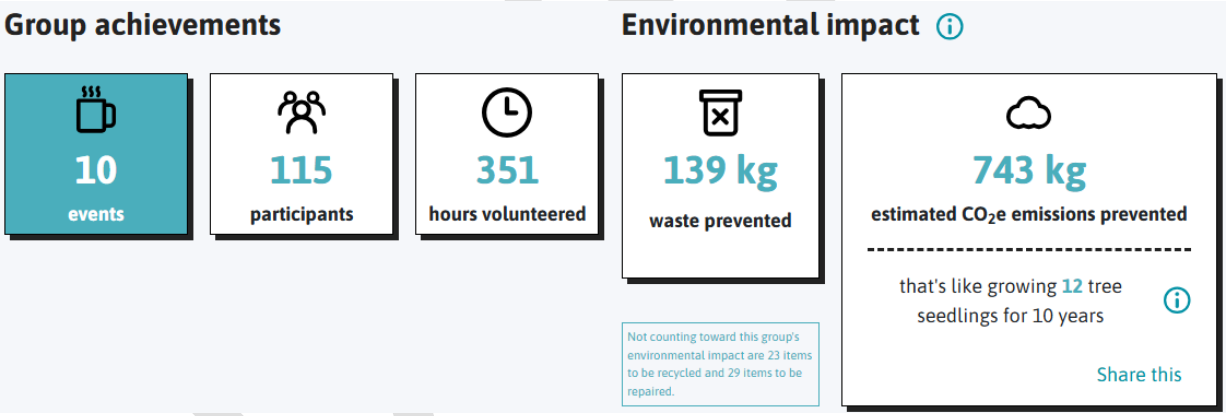
By the time you read this, the new team will have had an update meeting to again discuss the migration and to see what we can do better for 2027 if that's a possibility.

Finally, this season as well as other areas around the country saw very low numbers. The patrollers did an amazing job of reducing fatalities where they could. We didn't get 100% but we got a lot of what was crossing but most of all, we need water and that 2027 will not be a repeat of 2026.

Di Gardner
amphibians@yateleysociety.org.uk

4.9 Repair Café Yateley

REPORT COMING SOON



Mary Ferris,
repaircafe@yateleysociety.org.uk

4.10 Treasurer's Report

These accounts have been prepared by the Honorary Treasurer, Elizabeth Hesketh, in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission. As our annual income falls below £25,000 we are not legally required to have them independently examined. However, for transparency purposes the trustees feel they should be, so we are still looking for an independent examiner.

Last year the Society started a new project to establish a Repair Café, and we are pleased to say it is now up and running and gradually gaining momentum. We were awarded another grant of £750 from

the Yateley Town Council and received a total of £862.29 in donations given by those who attended the sessions.

Following the boost to our profile last year our membership has remained steady with receipts of £2429 in membership fees, a slight rise of £130. This year the Society has been more proactive in raising money through donations from the community and as a result we have restricted funds for our other projects of Planning, which received £3581.57, and The Toad Patrol receiving £569.06. Our total funds now stand at £11713, of which £4341 are restricted.

It is gratifying to see we are maintaining our raised profile and are still generating much good will within our community.

Elizabeth Hesketh, Honorary Treasurer
treasurer@yateleySociety.org.uk

DRAFT

THE YATELEY SOCIETY
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

	Sub Total	General Funds	Restricted Funds	**TOTAL 2026**	TOTAL 2025
	£	£	£	**£**	£
RECEIPTS					
Membership Subscriptions (less fees)					
Membership Subscritions	2094				
Subscriptions Paid in Advance	335				
Total		2429		**2429**	2269
Sale of Goods (less fees)					
Calendars	132				
Other	124				
Total		256		**256**	316
Member Events/Talks (less fees)					
Social Events/Talks (Entrance)	1031				
Fundraising (Raffles/Refreshments)	140				
Total		1171		**1171**	769
Projects					
Planning (Firgrove)	3582				
Repair Café	1612				
Toad patrol	569				
Frog Community Orchard	120				
Total			5883	**5883**	7103
Donations		361		**361**	2582
Grants		1000		**1000**	0
Lottery Receipts		237		**237**	213
Gift Aid 2024		459		**459**	257
Deposit Account Interest		30		**30**	46
Total Receipts		**5942**	**5883**	**11825**	**13554**
PAYMENTS					
Sale of Goods Costs					
Calendars	128				
Other	170				
Total		298		**298**	359
Member Events/Talks					

Social Events/Talks Room Hire	1015				
Fundraising costs (Refresh/supplies)	70				
Total		1084		**1084**	462
Equipment/Software					
Zoom	156				
Membermojo	95				
Projector	233				
Other	70				
Total		554		**554**	414
Projects					
Planning (Firgrove)	3576				
Repair Café	4634				
Toad Patrol	706				
Wildflower Verges	285				
Conservation Working Parties	115				
Frog Community Orchard	920				
Drone Footage	50				
Total		465	9821	**10286**	794
Affilated Fees/Subscritions		100		**100**	427
Insurance		245		**245**	234
Stationery/Postage		447		**447**	169
Website Updates/Email		650		**650**	640
Donations		255		**255**	255
Bank Charges		7		**7**	0
Total Payments		**4104**	**9821**	**13925**	**3754**
Nett Receipts		**1839**	**-3939**	**-2100**	**9800**
Cash Funds Last Year End		5533	8280	13813	4013
Cash Funds This Year End		**7372**	**4341**	**11713**	**13813**

THE YATELEY SOCIETY

ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

Cash Funds

	General	Restricted	**Total 2026**	Total 2025
	£	£	**£**	£
Current Account	24	4341	**4366**	9340
Deposit Account	2336		**2336**	2306
PayPal	4981		**4981**	2137
Cash Float	30		**30**	30
Total Cash Funds	7371	4341	**11713**	13813

Assets*

	£	
Equipment purchased current year	348	Projector and Conservation Tools
Equipment puchased previous years	2600	Gazebos, Display Equip, Tools, Electronic Equip
Toad Patrol Equipment current year	706	Toad signs ,Buckets, High Viz Jackets, Spatulars
Repair Café Equipment current year	3070	Repair Equip, Promotional Materials, Aprons
Stocks held for Sale	1650	Books, Booklets, Postcards, Greeting cards
Total Assets	8374	

Liabilities

Expenses incurred but not paid	17
Subscriptions paid in advance	335
Total Liabilities	**352**

*Equipment purchased this year is shown at cost. If purchased in previous years

its value is estimated based on crrent market value for its age and condition.

Remaining Resricted Funds to be carried forward to 26/27

	£
Frog Community Orchard	143.70
Planning	2,094.10
Repair Café	2,526.66
Wildflower Verges	501.00
Toad Patrol	162.90

Income Breakdown as required by Charity Commission

		Total 2026	Total 2025
Donations and Legacies	£	£	£
Donations	5494		
Lottery receipts	237		
Gift Aid	459		
Grants (Core/Unrestricted)	1000		

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Membership Subscriptions	2429	9619	7423
Charitable Activities			
Sale of goods	256		
Grants (Specific/Restricted)	750	1006	5316
Other Trading Activities			
Fundraising (Entrance Fees/Raffles)	1171	1171	769
Investment Income			
Interest on Savings Account	30	30	46
Total Income		11825	13554

5. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Alison Hewitt	Liz Carpenter
Position	Chair	Hon. Secretary
Date		

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