



The Orwell Society

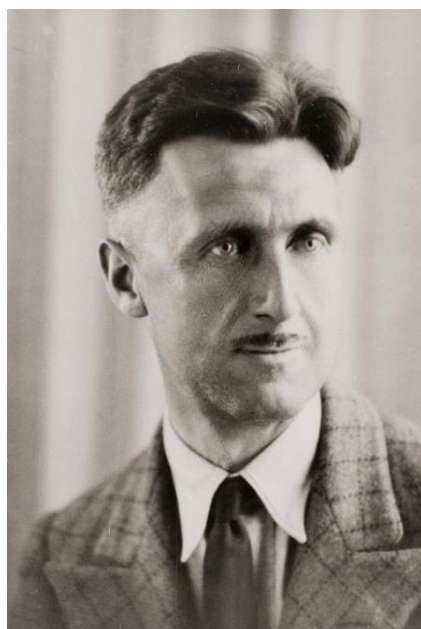
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year ended 31 December 2022

The Orwell Society is a registered charity in England and Wales (Number 1159072)



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Orwell, aged 32, photographed by F.E.Fierz



The Society

The Orwell Society is a membership organisation for George Orwell enthusiasts and scholars worldwide, with a charitable purpose to promote the public understanding and appreciation of Orwell's life and work.



Orwell at the BBC

The Society's Patron is Richard Blair, son of George Orwell.

The Society owns the Orwell statue outside the BBC headquarters in London.

We aim to be the world's leading society for Orwell lovers and to use that status to promote Orwell's life and work to the wider public.

During 2022 and at the date of this report, the Trustees and their roles in the Society were:

Chair and Events	Quentin Kopp
Secretary	Neil Smith
Treasurer	Zigurds Kronbergs
Patron	Richard Blair
Publicity Officer	Benedict Cooper
Research and Digital Officer	Les Hurst
Journal Editor	Masha Karp
Education	Ann Kronbergs

All Trustees are elected annually by members of the Society at the AGM with the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer elected to their specific posts.

Working with the Trustees during the year were Alex Dennis (Membership Secretary), Jason Crimp (Deputy Journal Editor), Chris Harrison (Online Talks Manager), Steve Foulger (Website Administrator) and Jaron Murphy (supporting the Journalism award).



Trustees' Report

In 2022 the Society was able to operate normally following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several member events were held including trips to Jura, Spain and South Shields (to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the death of Eileen, Orwell's first wife). Monthly Zoom-hosted "George Talks", started during the pandemic, are now a permanent fixture. 2022 subjects included "Orwell and Feminism" by Kristen Bluemel and "Orwell and the Second World War" by Peter Stansky. Most talks are available to the general public on the Society's website, which also has many Orwell-related articles. A joint online event was held with the US-based Bertrand Russell Society.

As well as being a home for Orwell lovers, the Society is a registered charity. Our charitable activities depend on member subscriptions as well as donations and any surpluses on member events (which are self-funding). Membership at the end of 2022 was 500, an increase of 72 over the year. We have reached 500 one year ahead of the target set in our 2020 strategy.

The Society's net assets were £176,784 at the end of 2022, including the value of the Orwell statue.

We awarded bursaries, prizes and awards of £4,900 in the year. Our Young Journalist awards, in partnership with the National Union of Journalists, were won by Megan Byrom and Quincy Elise de Vries. Our Student Dystopian Fiction Prize was won by Ruoyu Bu. The winner of the Teacher-in-School Bursary was Jonathan Pye, of the Small Isles School on Jura.



The new exhibition space at the Museum of Wigan Life

In March a permanent Orwell display at the Museum of Wigan Life was opened by our Patron and Orwell's son Richard Blair, local MP Lisa Nandy and Wigan mayor Yvonne Klieve. The display was partly funded by the Society and we wrote the story boards covering Orwell's time in Wigan.



The exhibition complements the book collection donated to the Society by Peter Davison, which we have lent to the Museum. We hope that we can expand the Orwell presence in the town further.

One of the most significant roles of the Society is as the owner of the Orwell statue at the BBC in London.



The Orwell statue at the BBC in London

We have raised £3,770 (with commitments and gift aid expected to add a further £5,000) for a potential statue in Huesca, in the Aragon region of Spain. Huesca is notable for the saying: “Tomorrow we’ll have coffee in Huesca”, a running joke among militiamen of the Spanish Civil War and mentioned by Orwell in *Homage to Catalonia*.

Our website continues to add new material, including reviews, reports from events, articles relating to Orwell from members and others. In 2022 we published two new articles by Orwell’s biographer Jeffrey Meyers. Our social media – Facebook and Twitter – are updated daily with the many references to Orwell made in relation to events today.

For 2023 we plan an extended programme of events and will continue to focus on increasing our charitable activity.



Financial Review

The Society remains in good financial health. Society funds were £176,784 at the end of 2022, including £150,000 which represents the value of the Orwell statue.

The Trustees have a prudent reserves policy, which is reviewed annually. This currently requires Society funds to be maintained within a range of £8,000 to £12,000 (excluding fixed assets) in order to allow for charitable activities to continue if faced with an unexpected fall in income. Society funds are currently above this range following a cautious build-up over the early years of the Society's life. For 2023, the Trustees have budgeted for an excess of expenditure over income of £7,750 with the aim of bringing reserves in line with the policy range by the end of 2025. This will enable an increase in the Society's charitable activities and is consistent with Charities Commission guidance, which requires that funds raised are not held in reserve unnecessarily when they could be spent on charitable activities.

Income in the year was £20,502, an increase of 69% over the previous year. The increase was partly caused by the increase in subscriptions due to membership growth and the exceptional surplus from trips referred to on page 12, but also includes the earmarked donations towards the Huesca statue (see page 5), so a truer comparison with the previous year's income would result in an increase of 38%. Together with the reduced expenditure on the journal (one rather than the usual two was produced in the year), this led to an excess of income over expenditure for the year of £5,586.



Structure and Governance

The Society is a charity registered in England and Wales (Number 1159072) and is governed by a constitution which has been approved by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and can only be changed by agreement of the members and further approval by the Commission.

The Society has in place a Governance Framework which includes:

- A trustee code of conduct which all Trustees have signed.
- Statements on equality and diversity, health and safety, and safeguarding.

The Society also has in place policies in respect of the following:

- Reserves.
- Financial controls.
- Liquidity risk and investment.
- Risk management.
- Data protection.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Complaints.
- IT security.

The Governance Framework is published on the Society website www.orwellsociety.com.

The address of the Society's principal and registered office is Marie Cottage, Bickenhill Lane, Catherine-de-Barnes, Solihull, B92 0DE, UK.

Charitable Purpose

The Society's charitable purpose for the public benefit, as set out in its constitution, is to promote the public understanding and appreciation of George Orwell's life and work.



The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when deciding on their main activities which are:

- Informing members of Orwell-related events and publications regarding Orwell's life and work via regular newsletters and through social media.
- Promoting discussion of such.
- Arranging self-financing member events.
- Publishing original material on the Society's website, through social media and in a regular journal.
- Arranging academic symposia and other public educational events including through schools and higher educational establishments.
- Awarding scholarships, bursaries and other awards.
- Sponsoring prizes and original research into Orwell's life and work.
- Supporting Orwell-related educational and other activities worldwide.
- Acting as custodian of the Orwell statue outside the BBC in London and other heritage assets.
- Any other means that the Trustees may deem appropriate.

Risks

The Trustees assess the key risks to the Society to be:

- An unexpected requirement to move or to repair the Orwell statue at the BBC in London.
- Legal action arising from personal injury or losses in relation to events organised by the Society.
- A sudden and unexpected decrease in member subscriptions.
- Loss of monies due to fraud or error.

The Trustees review these risks regularly and consider they have appropriate mitigating actions in place including insurance cover and the governance arrangements discussed on page 7.



Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Income from:			
Member subscriptions	2	10,074	8,311
Donations	2	6,185	2,443
Surplus from events	2	2,510	0
Trading activities	2	847	694
Other	2	886	706
Total income		20,502	12,154
Expenditure on charitable activities:			
Bursaries, prizes and awards	3	4,900	3,221
Journal	3	4,804	5,867
Other	3	2,444	965
Total expenditure on charitable activities		12,148	10,053
Expenditure on other activities:			
Cost of sales	3	220	476
Other	3	2,548	2,107
Total expenditure on other activities		2,768	2,583
Total expenditure		14,916	12,636
Net income / (expenditure)		5,586	(482)
Net movement in funds		5,586	(482)
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds brought forward		171,198	171,680
Total funds carried forward		176,784	171,198

The notes on pages 11 to 15 form part of these financial statements.

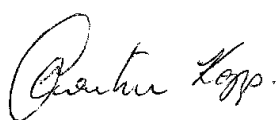


Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets:			
Heritage assets	4	152,500	152,500
Current assets:			
Stocks	5	921	392
Debtors	6	797	0
Cash at bank and in hand		33,567	36,928
Liabilities:			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7, 9	(4778)	(11,999)
Net current assets		30,507	24,929
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	8, 9	(6,223)	(6,622)
Total net assets		176,784	171,198
The funds of the Society:			
Funds brought forward		171,198	171,680
Surplus of income over expenditure for year		5,586	(482)
Total Society funds		176,784	171,198

Society funds include £3,770 of restricted donations specifically earmarked as contributions towards the erection of a statue of Orwell in Huesca, Spain. The remaining £173,014 is unrestricted.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees, authorised for issue on 1 April 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Quentin Kopp
Chair



Zigurds Kronbergs
Treasurer



Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting policies

Since the Society's annual income is below £250,000, the Society may produce accounts on a receipts and payments basis. However, the Society has chosen to produce accounts on an accruals basis in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Since the Society's income is below £25,000, the Society is not required to have its financial statements independently examined or audited.

Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared on a going-concern basis under the historical cost convention. The going-concern basis is considered appropriate due to the strength of the Society's balance sheet, which would allow the Society to continue to operate if there was either a significant and prolonged reduction in income or an unexpected increase in costs, or both.

Income

Income is recognised in the financial statements when the Society is legally entitled to the income, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured with reasonable accuracy. It is deferred when it relates to future accounting periods.

Life membership

Life membership subscriptions are deferred and released to income in equal annual instalments over the remaining life of the life member, as estimated at the time of their becoming a life member.

Gift aid

Gift-aid receipts are recognised when a gift-aid claim is approved by His Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC).



Donated goods

Material donated items are recognised in the financial statements at a value estimated by the Trustees.

Heritage assets

Material heritage assets are valued at cost or value estimated by the Trustees if donated.

Stocks

Material stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Other items held for resale include past Society journals, badges and other items not considered sufficiently material to account for as stock. Sales of these items are included in income in the period sold.

2. Income

	2022 £	2021 £
Member subscriptions	10,074	8,311
Donations	6,185	2,443
Surplus from events	2,510	0
Trading activities	847	694
Other		
Gift aid claimed	750	659
Bank interest	56	47
Sundry income	80	0
Sub-total	886	706
Total income	20,502	12,154

Member subscriptions relate to a total membership of 500 at 31 December 2022 (428 at 31 December 2021). Of these 31 (32) were life members.

Surplus from events represents the surplus from member events which the Society organises. The receipts and payments in respect of these events are deemed to be on behalf of members and it is not deemed appropriate to separate the receipts and payments. A larger surplus than usual reflects the fact, contrary to our normal practice, that there was a visit to Jura as well as to Spain. From 2023, we are reverting to holding these events in alternate years.

Trading activities represents the sale of past Society journals, Barnhill slates (held as stock-in-trade – see Note 6), badges and other items. Other than the slates, these



are assumed to have nil value and income from further sales will be included in Trading activities in future years.

3. Expenditure

	2022 £	2021 £
Expenditure on charitable activities		
Bursaries, prizes and awards		
Young journalists award	4,000	2,402
Teacher-in-school bursaries	250	319
Dystopian fiction prize	650	500
Sub-total	4,900	3,221
Journal	4,804	5,867
Other		
Website development	382	746
Museum of Wigan Life and other	2,062	219
Sub-total	2,444	965
Total expenditure on charitable activities	12,148	10,053
Expenditure on other activities		
Cost of sales	220	476
Other		
AGM costs	850	0
Postage and stationery	483	514
Insurance	260	174
Trustee-meeting room hire	249	0
Bank charges	241	185
Video conferencing and related expenditure	144	399
Membership leaflets	140	0
Advertising	125	0
Printing & secretarial expenses	41	0
Alliance of Literary Societies subscription	15	15
Professional fees	0	820
Sub-total	2,548	2,107
Total expenditure on other activities	2,768	2,583
Total expenditure	14,916	12,636



No remuneration was paid to Trustees in the current or prior year. One trustee was paid the cost of his trips to Jura and Spain since he had attended previously and was organising the trips. This cost was recovered as part of the cost of the trip for attendees.

The Society had no employees in the current or prior year.

4. Heritage assets

Heritage assets of £152,500 comprise:

- The Orwell statue at the BBC (£150,000). This is valued according to the estimated value provided to the Society by the sculptor at the point of transfer to the Society; and
- A collection of books donated to the Society in 2017 by Orwell's Complete Works editor, the late Peter Davison (£2,500). The value has been estimated by the Trustees. The collection is on indefinite loan to the Museum of Wigan Life.

5. Debtors

Debtors comprise £750 of tax to be refunded by HMRC in respect of gift-aided subscriptions and donations, £40 of 2022 subscriptions paid in 2023, and £7 of other items.

6. Stocks

Stocks represent presentational slates featuring Barnhill, Orwell's former home on Jura, Scotland, valued at cost. A further 25 slates were purchased in the year.

7. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

		2022 £	2021 £
Net deposits on events		(4,094)	(6,898)
Subscriptions paid in advance		(0)	(90)
Deferred income due within one year	Note 8	(377)	(401)
Accruals		(307)	(4,610)
Total		(4,778)	(11,999)

8. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

This represents deferred income on life-membership subscriptions (see Note 9).



9. Deferred income

Deferred income is deferred life-membership subscription income.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Deferred income at 1 January	(7,023)	(7,024)
Amount deferred during the year	0	(400)
Amount released during the year	423	401
Deferred income at 31 December	(6,600)	(7,023)
Of which due within one year	(377)	(401)
Of which due after more than one year	(6,223)	(6,622)