Castlegate Preservation Trust

Registered Charity Number 1170599

Annual report for year ending 31 December 2025

Registered Office: 30 Muskoka Avenue Sheffield S11 7RL

Trustees during the reporting year: Valerie Bayliss (chair), Neil Berry.

The Castlegate Preservation Trust is a charitable incorporated organisation and follows the Foundation model of governance. It was registered in December 2016, and has the following objects:

To preserve, for the benefit of the citizens of Sheffield and the nation, buildings or other structures of historic, architectural and constructional heritage that may exist in the Castlegate area of Sheffield and in furtherance of this object to foster and secure their restoration and re-use particularly, but not limited to, the Old Town Hall.

To advance education for the public benefit about the history, development, significance and future of the heritage buildings and sites of the Castlegate area.

To advance education, learning and training for the public benefit by developing the skills of persons involved in restoration and particularly those involved in historic building preservation projects in Castlegate.

Further such charitable purposes (charitable under English law) for the benefit of the community in Castlegate as the charity trustees see fit from time to time.

The Trust has not used any name other than the one under which it is registered.

Activities

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the 2006 Act to have due regard to guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.

In 2025 the Trust continued some educational activity through participation in the city of Sheffield's annual Heritage Fair.

The Trustees have maintained a working relationship with Sheffield City Council about its interests in Castlegate, as the Council's strategy for the regeneration of Castlegate continues.

Meetings continue to be held with leading elected members on options for the future of the Old Town Hall, one of the most important but most neglected buildings in Castlegate. The Trustees have urged the Council to use its influence to bring together local organisations with an interest or potential interest in Castlegate and potential national funders of restoration projects for the Old Town Hall. They will continue to press for this step which they regard as the most likely way of identifying a strategy for the re-use of the building.

The Trust continues to be represented on the Castlegate Partnership Steering Group established by Sheffield City Council. This stakeholder body, which includes representatives of the private, public,

higher education and voluntary sectors, is central to plans to reinvigorate the run-down Castlegate area of the city centre which are now under way. The Trust continues to advise on the significance of heritage buildings, listed or otherwise, in the area and is contributing to plans for future development that respect their heritage status.

The Trust is also represented on a sub-group of the Partnership concerned with advising on future arrangements for the management of Castlegate and with the scope for future grant funding for historic buildings in the area. The trustees have pointed out that the Trust would provide a sound basis for a management organisation.

The Trust has accepted an invitation to be represented, jointly with the Friends of the Old Town Hall, on the Castlegate Area Board, a mechanism established by the City Council as the prime mechanism for developing a shared vision for the Castlegate area and overseeing the delivery of the Levelling Up programme for the area.

Previous reports noted the sale of the Old Town Hall in 2022 to a property developer, following the collapse of the previous developer's business. The owner does not communicate with the Trust or anyone else and there has been no sign of any action on his part to invest in restoration of the building. The Trust has been made aware very recently that a sale to another commercial organisation may be under consideration.

The trustees continue to be concerned about the deterioration of the building and were active, in tandem with the Friends of the OTH and the Victorian Society, in alerting the City Council to severe damage to the OTH roof in the spring of 2026. This resulted in the issue of a statutory Repairs Notice. However no repair activity appears to have begun.

All the Trust's work is carried out on a voluntary basis by the Trustees.

Finances

The sale of the Old Town Hall in 2019 to a private sector developer effectively stopped the Trust's work on preparing to raise funds to buy the building. The Trust had no income, and therefore no expenditure, in the period covered by this report. It follows that there are no accounts and the Trust has not opened a bank account. The Trust has no assets and no reserves.

Future Activities

The Trust will continue as opportunity permits to take forward its more general work on the future of Castlegate as a whole, including through its representation on the City Council's Castlegate Area Board and the Castlegate Partnership and its educational work. The Trust continues to monitor the state of the Old Town Hall (from the outside) and to work with the Council's conservation officer on this. We continue to be concerned, indeed increasingly so, by the poor state of the building.

September 2026