Friends of Bath Jewish Burial Ground CIO

Registered Charity number: 1198905
Registered address:
c/o Board of Deputies of British Jews, ORT House, 147 Arlington Road, London NW1 7ET
Trustees: M. Boardman, J. Briggs, C. Hilsenrath Craig, A. Cullis, D. Taylor

TRUSTEES REPORT 2025/26

Trustees serving during the year:

Moya	Boardman
Jane	Briggs
Christina	Hilsenrath Craig
Ann	Cullis
David	Taylor

Chair: Christina Hilsenrath Craig
Company Secretary: Ann Cullis
Treasurer: Moya Boardman

TRUSTEES REPORT

The report covers the 12 months 1 April 2025-31 March 2026

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives

The objectives of the charity are:

To promote, for the public benefit, the preservation, care and improvement of Bath Jewish Burial Ground as a place of historic and ecological interest;

To advance the education of the public through the preservation and maintenance of the Bath Jewish Burial Ground

PUBLIC BENEFIT: ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

The charity continued to provide activity for public benefit under its Charitable objects. In preparing this report, the Trustees have complied with their duty to have regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

Conservation

Our conservation approach is to restore and repair where necessary so that the unique heritage of the Burial Ground is preserved for future generations. In January 2020 the Friends agreed a four year conservation and repair programme. This is now almost complete and has transformed the Burial Ground.

In 2025-26 our focus was on the preservation of the headstones, some now more than 200 years old. A detailed inspection identified eight headstones which had begun to delaminate at their fronts and tops, allowing water to penetrate the stone, a process that frost can greatly accelerate. In November 2025 the following headstones were repaired:
37 Harry Cohen - Seal inscription edges
52 Hyman Somers - Seal inscription edges
53 Herenz Leon - Seal inscription edges*
69 Samuel Aaron - Seal inscription edges
74 Francis Herman - Seal inscription sides and top
75 Abraham Rees - Seal inscription edges and top
76 Daniel Rees - Seal inscription edges
79 Morris Abrahams - Seal top edge

* We are grateful to the Timpson Foundation for their grant towards the cost of the work, which included repairs to the headstone for their ancestor Herentz Leon.

<u>Catherine and Joseph Sigmond</u>
The chest tomb graves of Joseph and Catherine Sigmond are prominent at the entrance to the Burial Ground. Their flat tops, which had suffered water and frost damage, were repaired and the loose parts of the inscriptions re-attached.

<u>Emanuel Solomon Headstone</u>
Two years ago a buried headstone that had broken from its stump was discovered near to the cottage. The remaining inscription identified it as the headstone for Emanuel Solomon from Canterbury who died here in 1835. The headstone has been supported in a metal cradle without physical fixing and is now in its original position.

Grave numbers

We have installed a permanent grey slate-effect stone numerical marker to each grave where the inscription can be read, or where we somehow know the name of the person buried there. This allows visitors to find out who is buried there and, if they have a smartphone with them, to read the person's life story.

Antisemitic Graffiti

On the night of Thursday 9 October 2025 the outside wall of the Burial Ground was defaced with an anti-Israel graffiti message in red spray paint. The police were alerted and the specialist team from the Council removed the graffiti. We received many messages of support which were greatly appreciated.

Research

Jews in Bath - a community and their Burial Ground 1700-1945

In October 2025 Christina Hilsenrath's book *Jews in Bath* won two awards. The first was the David Hayman prize awarded by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain, describing it as 'best genealogical contribution on one of the provincial Jewish Communities of the UK between 1750 and 1945'. The other - also awarded by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain - was the Rabbi Dr Bernard Susser Award for an outstanding publication by a member of the Society.

Permanent exhibition

In February 2026 we received funding from the Westhill Endowment to create a permanent exhibition in the cottage telling the history of the Burial Ground and the Jewish community in Bath. The exhibition was in place for our April 2026 Open Day.

Metal Detectorist

Over the winter we made contact with Andy Bell, an experienced metal detectorist. Jewish law strictly forbids the disturbance of graves so we agreed that only peripheral areas where no burials are present would be searched, and any digging would be no more than 10cm in depth. The most intriguing discovery was a small gilt button made in Boston between 1815 and 1825 by William & Benjamin Treble. Decorated with a delicate rose and rose-leaf design, it would once have fastened a lady's cloak. The second notable find was a 1923 silver half-crown from the reign of George V. In its day it represented a substantial sum.

Visitors, Talks and Events:

Open days

During the year we held three public open days which are free for visitors. Despite the dreadful weather 150 people came to our Open Day in September 2025 which coincided with the national Heritage Open Days festival and the local Combe Down Art Trail. We again invited two artists to show their work in the cottage - Robert Lee and Lucy Poloniecka. Open Days were also held in April and June 2025.

Guided visits

27 people came to our two evening guided walks centred on 'Remarkable Women' at the end of May 2025. The guided visits at the end of October were also popular with 15 people visiting.

Private visits

There continued to be requests for private visits including visitors from the USA, Australia, London, Manchester and other parts of the UK. Dawn Waterman, Head of Heritage at the Board of Deputies of British Jews, also visited.

Talks

Christina Hilsenrath gave talks to the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain for their AGM, Abraham Events, and the Association of Jewish Refugees.

Our trustees also spoke at the Jewish Small Community Network conference in Birmingham in September 2025, and at a meeting of the Bath History Research Group.

Fringe Art Bath Festival:

On 28 May 2025 at Persephone Books bookshop in George St, three of our trustees, Ann Cullis, Moya Boardman and Christina Hilsenrath gave a talk about five of the remarkable Jewish women who lived in Bath and are buried here: Catherine Sigmond, Phoebe Wolfe, Maria Michael, Julia Jacobs and Eva Jablonski, whose death in 1917 was reported in lurid detail in the *Bath Chronicle* under the title 'Dead on Lawn - Mysterious death of foreign Lady' which formed the title of the talk. The talk raised over £100 for the Burial Ground and we are very grateful to Persephone Books for hosting the event.

Also for the Fringe Art Bath Festival, on 4 June at the Museum of Bath at Work, Desanka Rowell gave the third in a series of talks about Jewish artists in the Nazi era. 'Sitting on a Volcano' explored the work of three artists, Ernst Barlach, a sculptor, and two painters Emil Nolde and Paul Klee, all of whom for reasons of propaganda were condemned by the Nazis to exhibit in the 1937 'Degenerate Art' (*Entartete Kunst*) exhibition in Munich. This event raised £300 for the Burial Ground, for which we are extremely grateful both to Desanka and to the 40 people who attended. We are very grateful to the Museum of Bath at Work for hosting the event.

Visitor numbers:	2025/26
Open Days	340
Guided Walks	42
Private visits	25
Fund raising event	40
National Talks (estimate)	120
Talks to local societies	70
Total	**297**

Local Events

In April 2025 we participated in Bath's World Heritage Day event. It was a busy and lively day and we enjoyed conversations with over 100 people who visited our information display.

In November we had an information stall at the annual Bath History conference.

Also in November, the short documentary film *Orphaned Burial Grounds* was shown again as part of the UK Jewish Film Festival at the Little Theatre cinema. Over 90 people attended.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Our financial performance is strong. We continue to receive generous donations.

GOVERNANCE

There are no paid staff.

Trustees contribute very significant time and expertise, especially on financial administration, fundraising, website maintenance, database development, event management, and research.

Volunteers also help us greet visitors on open days, and local Hebrew readers continue to have help us translate the inscriptions on the headstones.

Christina Hilsenrath Craig

Christina Hilsenrath Craig
Chair

25 October 2026

Statement of Financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Year End 31 March 2026	Year End 31 March 2025 Total Funds £
INCOME FROM				
Donations & subscriptions	5,057	1,000	6,057	4,014
HMRC Gift Aid Refund	530	0	530	2,812
Grants	0	0	0	2,000
Cash	1,093	0	1,093	
Book sales	1,720	0	1,720	4,151
Total Income	**8,400**	**1,000**	**9,400**	**12,977**
EXPENDITURE ON				
Electricity	438	0	438	350
Water2Business	133	0	133	87
Running costs	281	0	281	635
Landscaping & conservation	13,736	0	13,736	13,205
Book costs	211	0	211	4,428
Paypal, Go Cardless, Sumup & bank fees	87	0	87	136
Accountant fees		0		120
Total	**14,886**	**0**	**14,886**	**18,961**
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)			-5,486	-5,984

RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS (incl. Petty Cash)	0	522
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	**5,760**	**11,246**

The Charity states that:

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and all other applicable law and with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, applicable to smaller entities, and for being satisfied that the financial statements give a true and fair view.

The Trustees consider that the audit requirement of Section 144(1) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply, and that there is no requirement in the Governing Document for the conducting of an audit.

Income to the charity in 2025/26 was below £25,000 and therefore independent examination was not required.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Trustees 2025/26

Moya Boardman
Jane Briggs
Christina Hilsenrath Craig (Chair)
Ann Cullis
David Taylor

Trustees' remuneration and benefits

There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2026 nor for the year ended 31 March 2025.

There were no Trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2026 nor for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Balance sheet continued >

Staff costs

There were no employees.

Approved by the Trustees and signed by:



Christina Hilsenrath Craig, Chair

On:

Date 25.10.2026