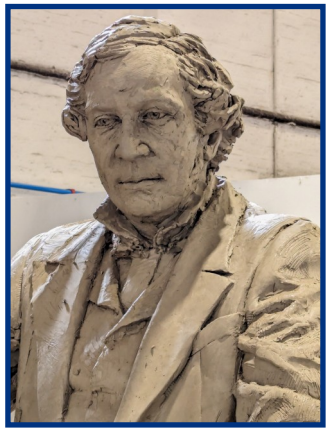
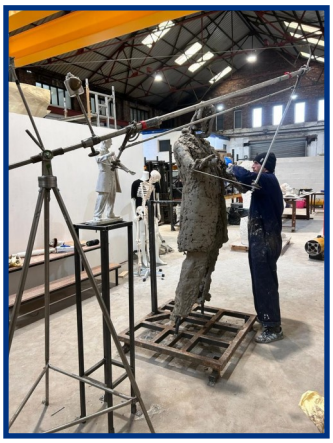


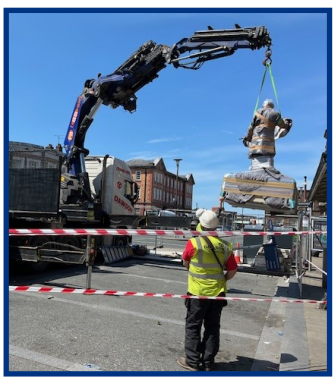
The THOMAS BRASSEY Society

The Thomas Brassey Society

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26









Registered Charity No 1195546

Chairman's Report



This report and financial statement covers a 12 month period from April 2025 to the end of March 2026. The format and content follow the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission for a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

We have maintained regular talks and lectures to interested parties throughout the year in accordance with an objective of the Society to advance the education of the public.

There have been some changes to the names of the charity Trustees who manage the charity during the last year. Peter Bolt, who has done an exceptional job as Secretary for a long period of time, resigned in June 2025 but remains as a Trustee. John Violet has stepped into the role of Secretary and has kept us all informed of the various events throughout the year. Keith Stoops as Treasurer has resigned in June 2025 after steering us through the large financial transactions of the statue construction. Jean Fortune has taken over the role of Treasurer for which we are very grateful.

The highlight of the last year was undoubtedly the unveiling of the statue by HRH The Duke of Gloucester and the event was organised by the Trustees, but in particular my thanks must go to Richard Coakley who undertook most of the organisation. There were other attractions associated with railways and civil engineering in the adjacent restored Carriage Shed. We were pleased to have attendance by the Lord Mayor of Chester as well as Sam Dixon MP and local Councillors. After the unveiling we adjourned for afternoon tea at the Queen Hotel where we had a few short speeches. A grand day was enjoyed by all!

In order to comply with the requirements of the Highway Authority the Trust had to insure the statue, the initial cost of which fell in the previous financial year. Monuments and statues are mostly owned by Local Authorities, and it was anticipated that the Brassey statue would follow suit. However, when the Council was approached with an offer to gift the statue from the Trust, they have declined. The Trust has therefore had to reinsure the statue at significant cost which is not sustainable in the long term. The Trustees will need to resolve this issue in the foreseeable future.

Finally, I need to thank Society member, Gillian Bolt, for not only producing this report in such a professional format for the Charity Commission but also providing graphic design expertise as and when required. I should also acknowledge the regular work of members who maintain our website and social media platforms. If you have any queries or wish for clarification on any aspect of this report, or the activities of the society, please contact us by E mail : tbsoc@hotmail.com

Stephen Langtree

Stephen Langtree MBE
Chairman

Trustees Annual Report for the period

Start date: 31 March 2025 End date: 5 April 2026

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name:	The Thomas Brassey Society
Registered Charity No:	1195546
Charity's principal address:	49 Ringway, Waverton, Chester CH3 7NN

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
John Stephen Scott Langtree MBE	Chairman	
Richard James Coackley CBE	Vice Chairman	
Peter Charles Bolt	Secretary	until 19 June 2025
Keith James Stoops	Treasurer	until 4 October 2025
David John Hooley	Membership Secretary	
Peter William Cocker	Minutes Secretary	
John Parton Whittingham	Committee member	
Jean Fortune	Researcher/Treasurer	from 4 October 2025
Ian Walker	Excursions Co-ordinator	
John Violet	Committee Member	Secretary from 20 June 2025

Description of the charity's Trusts

Type of governing document: CIO — Association (Registered 18 August 2021)

Section B Structure, governance and management

How the charity is constituted: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Trustee selection methods: After registration, by co-option and then subsequently at Annual General Meetings of the Society's members.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

To advance the education of the public in the historic significance of the life and works of Thomas Brassey in particular but not exclusively by providing and assisting in the provision of educational materials, activities and events open to the general public on the topic of Thomas Brassey and the field of railway engineering more generally.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit).

Giving talks and lectures to conferences, other societies and organisations on all aspects of the life and works of Thomas Brassey.

Raising awareness of Thomas Brassey by installing interpretation panels and information plaques at key locations.

Educating the public about Thomas Brassey at public exhibitions by face-to-face contact and by the distribution of literature.

Providing a 60 minute film for the public about Thomas Brassey by a Society member.

/continued over

/Section C continued

Preparing and distributing literature about Thomas Brassey and his achievements through various outlets and events.

Providing regular notifications to members and other interested parties.

Keeping an up to date Society web-site and Facebook account, accessible to the general public.

Membership of the Society has peaked at 127 during the reporting period. This includes three honorary members: our patron, Pete Waterman OBE, Doug Haynes and Jo Decker.

Note:
In undertaking the work of the Society the Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

Section D Achievements and Performance





Trustees receiving the Cheshire West & Chester Design Awards commendation.



Stephen Langtree presenting Peter Bolt with a glass tankard for his service as Secretary.

Unveiling of the Statue

The statue was delivered by Castle Fine Arts the week before the unveiling by HRH The Duke of Gloucester on 28 May, 2025. The ceremony was extremely well attended and there were other attractions in the adjacent Carriage Shed for the public to enjoy, including a model railway.

After the formalities of the unveiling, most people adjourned for afternoon tea at the Queen Hotel. A plaque was later affixed to the station wall to commemorate the event.

Awards for the Statue

The Society has been particularly pleased to receive two awards following the completion of the statue:

The first Award was a Commendation at the Cheshire West and Chester Design Awards in the Public Realm category.

The second award was the Chair's Special Award from Chester Civic Trust.

Annual General Meeting

The Society held a well-attended AGM at the Queen Hotel, Chester on 4 October 2025. Peter Bolt stood down from his role as Secretary and was thanked by the Chairman, Stephen Langtree and presented with a glass tankard. The formal part of the AGM was followed by an enthralling talk by Society member, Mike Lamport, on the Rail200 Project which covered the historic importance of 1825 and the way in which the railway industry and heritage sectors celebrated the event in 2025.

Society Membership

Society membership totalled 120 at the end of the year.





Richard Coackley & Peter Bolt with the model railway in St Barnabas' church



The Brassey information stand at the Railway History Day



The Brassey information stand in Chester Cathedral

Chester Station Tap

The original station buffet has been tastefully transformed into a public bar selling locally brewed beer and food.

The Landlord approached the Society about the possibility of having a picture of Thomas Brassey which we have been pleased to provide.

Railway History Day

Society member and Trustee, Ian Walker, organised this event on behalf of the Society and it was held at St Barnabas' Church hall in Bromborough on 14 March 2026. Talks were given by Society members during the day and the event was well attended by the general public who learned more about Brassey's achievements. The event was also supported by other railway heritage groups and Merseyrail.

Wirral History & Heritage Fair, March 2026

The Society attends this event on a regular basis to promote Brassey's achievements and the Society's projects. 2026's event proved extremely busy again and it was encouraging to hear how many people had viewed and admired the statue.

Making Tracks 5, Chester Cathedral, August 2025

The Society had our usual stand in the Cathedral for the duration of the event with a rota of volunteer members attending. Overall the footfall seemed less than in previous years but it was still very worthwhile for the Society to have the opportunity of discussing Brassey's achievements with the public.

A final word on the statue project:

Many thanks to everyone who made a donation to this exciting project and in particular we would like to mention those who have made major contributions — without which achieving our goal would have taken many more years.

The Tyrer Charitable Trust, The Couch Charitable Trust

Mr David Highet

The Duke of Richmond & Gordon, Lord Faringdon

The Aurelius Charitable Trust, The Brassey Charitable Trust

The Henderson Charitable Trust,

Heap & Partners, Mr David Millar

Ms Sarah Tennent, Mr Stephen Langtree, MBE

3 Counties Connected Community Rail Partnership

Avanti West Coast, Community Rail Funding

North & Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnerships

The Hoylake Historical Society (now closed)

Section E Financial review

	Note	Society Name / The Thomas Brassey Society			No (if any) / 1195646	
Receipts and payments accounts						
		For the period from	Period start date: 6 April 2025	To	Period end date: 5 April 2026	
Section A Receipts and payments						
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
		to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Membership Subscriptions		1,220	-	-	1,220	1,210
			-	-	-	
Donations			-	-	-	
Private	1	69	-	-	69	6,064
Other	2		-	-	-	9,915
Fundraising	3		-	-	-	74
Events	4	1,581	-	-	1,581	649
Cruet Visit Prepayments	5					600
HRMS Gift Aid	6	444		-	444	4,467
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*		3,314	-	-	3,314	22,979
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
		-	-	-	-	
		-	-	-	-	-
Sub total		-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts		3,314	-	-	3,314	22,979
A3 Payments						
Administration	7	1,459	-	-	1,459	1,977
Fundraising	8	150	-	-	150	50
Promotion costs	9	16	-	-	16	498
Events	10	2,812	-	-	2,812	968
Statue interim payments to 05/04/25	11				-	34,510
Cruet Deposit repayments	12		-	-	-	5,560
TB Statue project	13	19,592	-	-	19,592	-
Sub total		24,029	-	-	24,029	43,563
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)						
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	
Sub total		-	-	-	-	-
Total payments		24,029	-	-	24,029	43,563
Net of receipts/ (payments)		- 20,715	-	-	- 20,715	20,584
A5 Transfers between funds			-	-		
A6 Cash funds last year end		31,566	-	-		
Cash funds this year end		10,851	-	-	10,851	31,566

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash held in bank current account	10,851		-
			-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	10,851	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	CWAC contractor for statue foundation	6,000	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Jean Fortune	Jean Fortune	31/7/2026

Notes to the Accounts
1. “Donations - Private” includes all donations from private individuals.
2. “Donations - Other” includes all donations from other organisations, societies or trusts.
3. Fundraising includes sales of books.
4. Events includes receipts for the AGM and lectures
5. Cruet Visit Prepayments
6. HRMS gift aid
7. Administration includes the annual cost for statue insurance and printing costs.
8. Fundraising includes the annual payment to the Fundraising Regulator.
9. Promotion costs include book publishing.
10. Events include payments for the AGM and other functions.
11. Statue interim payments to 05/04/25
12. Cruet Deposit repayments
13. Statue Project including payments towards the unveiling of statue.

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees’ report

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	John Stephen Scott Langtree	John Violet
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chairman	Secretary
Date	5 April 2026	