



Clapham Society Annual Report 2025–26

Purpose and Future Direction

During the year, we reviewed the Society's purpose, activities and future direction, drawing on feedback from members and supporters. The review reaffirmed our original mission: protecting and enhancing Clapham's character, built environment and heritage to improve residents' quality of life.

It also highlighted the need to raise our profile, clarify our role and broaden our membership. Although generally well regarded, the Society's contribution remains insufficiently understood by many residents.

We have therefore reaffirmed our role as an independent civic organisation: a constructive voice for residents and a critical friend to local authorities and decisionmakers, focusing on good planning, thoughtful design and improvements to public spaces. We have also refreshed our branding to reflect this purpose.

Our Priorities

We will focus our resources on four priorities:

- **Planning and development:** Promoting good planning, protecting Clapham's character and responding constructively to significant proposals.
- **Local environment:** Delivering practical improvements to streets, public spaces and shopping areas.
- **Heritage and local pride:** Sharing Clapham's history through talks, walks, articles and projects, including the proposed redesign of Clapham North railway bridge.

- **Communication and visibility:** Improving our newsletter, website and communications to reach a wider audience.

We will continue collaborating with local organisations while maintaining our independent voice, concentrating on fewer priorities and delivering them effectively.

Attracting a wider, more diverse membership, particularly younger residents and families, is essential to the Society's future relevance and effectiveness.

Newsletter

Following our review, we redesigned the Newsletter to reflect the Society's purpose better. and appeal to a wider audience. Introducing the new publication caused some delays and delivery problems, which we have worked to resolve.

While some feedback has been positive, we recognise that there are members who miss the previous Newsletter, which was much valued over many years. We recognise their disappointment, while believing the changes are important for the Society's future.

Website

Our Website is also a useful channel for us to let everyone know what is going on. Last year it received a total of 35,000 views: The vast majority from the UK but 6000 from China and 2000 from the U.S and from Singapore.

Roughly 20,000 people accessed our website from a computer and 15,000 did so on their phone. News stories about the Clapham Common Bandstand Concerts, the proposed Football-Fest and our Rail Bridge competition were among the most read pages but we also have 43 local history articles on our website and every one of them was read last year. If you combined all of those article views then together they would be the most popular feature on our website.

Local History

As well as contributing articles for the website and for the Society newsletter, our local history group runs an active research programme. This year they conducted

10 guided walks and organised a talk during the Lambeth Heritage Festival. They are currently revising the series of seven self-guided walks available as downloads and continue to answer incoming queries to the Society about historical matters. New members are always welcome.

Clean Up Clapham

This summer, pupils from Macaulay, Bonneville and Eaton House primary schools took part in our anti-litter poster competition. An awards ceremony was held at the Bandstand on 11 July, celebrating the outstanding entries.

We encouraged local shops and cafés to display the posters and sought their views on tackling litter. We hope to build on this collaboration with schools and businesses to address one of Clapham's most persistent problems.

History Lectern Project

The proposed project to install six lecterns explaining Clapham Common's history initially received the support of the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC).

However, in August, the Friends of Clapham Common withdrew their support for the original proposal. Without the backing of CCMAC as a whole, and with alternative suggestions differing substantially from the project for which donations had been raised, we concluded it was no longer viable.

We explained the decision to donors and returned their contributions.

Environmental Projects

Our practical environmental work continued. In October, volunteers planted **600 daffodils** outside Clapham Common Station, following **1,500 bulbs** planted in 2024. Another **500 daffodils** were planted near the Polygon with volunteers from local business Hush.

We have adopted the green space outside Clapham Common Station, known as the **Grassy Knoll**. Volunteers regularly collect litter and maintain five newly planted hawthorn bushes and the shady garden. Watering proved challenging during the summer heat and hosepipe ban.

There is scope for further gardens around the station, working with Clapham BID and Lambeth Council.

Clapham Common

Through CCMAC, we have welcomed improvements to the Common, including landscaping and fencing around the waste site and a new café near the changing rooms.

The Society's Michael Barry again organised the successful summer Bandstand concerts. Although Lambeth Council reduced its financial contribution and is unlikely to provide funding next year, generous public donations covered the shortfall. We are confident that public support can sustain the concerts in 2027.

Planning and Development

Our planning group reviews applications across Clapham, supporting appropriate development and objecting where necessary. This year, we assessed **more than 300 applications in Lambeth and a similar number in Wandsworth**.

We opposed proposals in Stonhouse Street and New Park Road on grounds of overdevelopment; in both cases, the planning authorities agreed with our concerns.

We welcomed Leo's House Members' Club for parents and children on the former Voltaire Road Arts Centre site. Construction and refurbishment are underway.

We continue to scrutinise residential applications, particularly alterations affecting the streetscape, including inappropriate UPVC windows.

We are monitoring the future of the Lambeth College site on Southside and proposals for residential development at Lambeth Hospital on Landor Road. The

latter could increase activity around Clapham North and contribute to improvements in the area.

Local Plan and Heritage

Lambeth Council has begun preparing a new Local Plan, expected to take around 30 months. The Society will participate throughout. Draft character studies have been published for all 17 borough areas, including Clapham.

We have strengthened our partnership with Clapham Business Improvement District (BID). Together, we sponsored an open competition to redesign the railway bridge over Clapham High Street at Clapham North. The winning team, led by Makower Architects, has been commissioned to develop its proposals as a basis for securing the substantial external funding needed.

At **Holy Trinity Church**, work to extend the transepts and alter the interior has been completed as the church celebrates its 250th anniversary.

Sadly, the roof of the **1793 Orangery**, the last surviving element of the Thornton family's landscaped estate, collapsed earlier this year. The listed building, within the Notre Dame Housing Estate, has since been repaired. However, we remain concerned about how the repairs were undertaken and will continue working to protect this important historic building.

Clapham Society Financial Report 2025–26

THE CLAPHAM SOCIETY

(Charity No. 279595)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2026

	2025-26	2024-25
Income		
Subscriptions	10,461	10,804
Donations	1,612	2,304
Legacies	2,000	0
Other	448	702
Gift Aid	690	194
Interest Receivable	175	179
	<u>15,385</u>	<u>14,183</u>
Expenditure		
Newsletter Costs	2,000	3,253
Meeting Room Hire	2,636	1,854
Website	1,075	1,384
Sundry Expenses	2,386	2,623
Finance & Depreciation	1,297	1,146
	<u>9,393</u>	<u>10,259</u>
Surplus For The Year	<u>5,992</u>	<u>3,924</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

	2025-26	2024-25
Balance Sheet		
Fixed Assets	2,047	3,253
Current Assets		
Stock of Publications	708	1,068
HMRC Debtor (Gift Aid)2	1,402	712
Other Debtors & Prepayments	1,738	2,289
Cash at Bank	<u>13,802</u>	<u>8,495</u>
	<u>17,649</u>	<u>12,564</u>
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	913	628
Net Current Assets	<u>16,736</u>	<u>11,936</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>18,783</u>	<u>15,190</u>
Represented by:		
Unrestricted Funds - General Fund	14,808	11,214
Restricted Funds:		
- Local History Fund	453	453
- Legal Action & Special Purposes Fund	<u>3,523</u>	<u>3,523</u>
	<u>3,976</u>	<u>3,976</u>
Total Funds	<u>18,783</u>	<u>15,190</u>

Notes to the Accounts

1. General - these Accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011. (FRS 102)

2. HMRC Debtor - represents the estimated sum recoverable from HMRC with respect to Gift Aid

3. Risks - the major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees, have been reviewed and systems established to mitigate those risks

4. Other Statutory Information - details of the Society's Committee are shown elsewhere in this Report.

The financial statements were approved and authorised by the Committee on 12 October 2026