

Outside Bodies – Progress Report Form

Name:	Cllr Gill Cleeve
Name of Outside Bodies Organisation	Stratfords of the World - SoTW
Progress report since last Town Council meeting:	Since the last report, the key activity for Stratfords of the World has been the international reunion held in Stratford, Taranaki, New Zealand in January 2025. While there was initial interest from local Stratfordians, ultimately only four residents from Stratford-upon-Avon were able to attend. Other Stratfords also reported lower than usual turnout, likely due to a combination of economic factors, time of year, and perhaps waning interest in long-distance travel for reunions. Throughout the year, SoTW Treasurer has continued to strengthen connections between the Stratfords through regular Zoom meetings, and the shared Facebook page remains active with posts and messages. In collaboration with the Stratford Society, SoTW shared a link to a recorded talk on the founding of the Shakespeare Club (1824), which was well received by the international Stratfords. We see digital engagement as an area with real potential for growth. Unfortunately, SoTW did not have enough volunteers to take part in this year's Shakespeare Birthday Procession, so their flag was not represented on Bridge Street. Looking ahead, the next reunion will take place in Stratford, Prince Edward Island (Canada) from 22nd–28th September 2027. SoTW's goal is to increase awareness and participation ahead of this event. Although the timing may still present challenges for families with school-aged children, they hope the more accessible location will encourage greater involvement. Longer term, SoTW are preparing for our turn to host again in 2031. This will require renewed capacity and fresh energy within the committee. The Treasurer, Colin Greenwood, who has served since 2011, has announced his intention to step down, and current Chair - Tim Raistrick has also indicated that he will step down in 2027 after 40 years of involvement. Recruitment and succession planning are therefore a current priority.
Date provided to Town Clerk:	18/07/2025