

Company registered in England and Wales, limited by guarantee, number 08430250

Registered charity, number 1151935

FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

**Trustees' Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

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FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

Reference and administrative details of the charity and its trustees,

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Trustees and Directors

Sarah Elizabeth Langley Breakey (appointed 11/10/14, retired and immediately re-appointed for a fourth three-year term, 30/09/23)

Anne Burton (appointed 03/07/21, re-appointed for a first three-year term, 02/10/21)

Christopher John Lawrey Clarke (appointed 05/03/13, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 02/10/21)

Jeremy Christopher Hardy (appointed 24/09/16, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 02/10/21)

Gerard Francis Keating (appointed 28/07/18, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 30/09/23)

Johann Paul Luft (retired at the annual meeting, 30/09/23)

Felicity Ann Mendelson (appointed 07/07/13, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 02/10/21)

Sarah Anne Barbour Mercer (appointed 07/07/13, retired and immediately re-appointed for a fourth three-year term 15/10/22; Chair from 28/07/18 to 30/09/23)

Susan Rea (appointed 03/09/16, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 02/10/21)

Catherine Ellen Bernadette Walker (appointed 07/07/13, retired and immediately re-appointed for a fourth three-year term, 15/10/22; elected Vice Chair on 03/08/19)

Richard John Watson (appointed 28/07/18, retired and immediately re-appointed for a second three-year term, 15/10/22)

Nicola (Finn) Willingham (appointed 07/07/13, retired and immediately re-appointed for a fourth three-year term, 15/10/22)

Wendy Young (appointed 28/07/18, retired and immediately re-appointed for a third three-year term, 30/09/23)

Company registered number

08430250

Charity registered number

1151935

Registered office

Jesmond Library, St George's Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2DL

Telephone number

0191 281 2385

Emails

events@jesmondlibrary.org , enquiries@jesmondlibrary.org , and finance@jesmondlibrary.org .

Website and Facebook site

www.jesmondlibrary.org and www.facebook.com/JesmondLibrary

Company secretary

Christopher J L Clarke

Independent examiner of the Financial Statements

Geoffrey R Carter

Bankers

Barclays Bank plc, Leicester LE87 2BB

United Trust Bank, One Ropemaker Street, London EC2Y 9AW

FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Friends of Jesmond Library (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

After the disruption of the pandemic, the years 2022/23 and 2023/24 have to a large extent seen a return to pre-pandemic "normality". Although 2023/24 was affected by the cost-of-living crisis and increases in many of the company's trading expenses, including energy, income also held up well, and we ended the year with another surplus of income over expenditure.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Structure, Governance and Management

a. Constitution

The Friends of Jesmond Library is a charitable company, limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 5 March 2013, with registered company number 08430250. It is also a registered charity, with charity number 1151935. The company's articles of association were amended by Special Resolution on 8 May 2013.

The objects of the company as stated in the amended articles are:

1. To advance the education of the public by the promotion of the use of a public lending library service for the benefit of the residents of Newcastle upon Tyne City (the area of benefit);
2. To promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving conditions of life for the said inhabitants;

3. To promote such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.

b. Method of appointment or election of members and trustees

The articles of association define the company structure, which includes both members and directors. The directors are also known as trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act.

In day-to-day operations the charitable company also uses the term “member” in a financial context (eg “Founder Member”) and in the context of borrowing books (people registered to borrow books are also commonly known as members of the library) but neither of these usages of the word “member” carries any relevance to the structure of the company. At present the only “members” of the company, in the sense used in the articles of association, are the trustee/directors.

Under article 32 of the company’s rules all the directors were required to retire from office at the conclusion of the first Annual General Meeting, which was held on 11 October 2014. Since that date one third of the directors must resign from office each year, by rotation (unless there are sufficient casual resignations). Directors who resign are eligible for re-appointment.

The Charity Commission has recommended that trustees should not normally stand for more than three, three-year terms, unless a specific reason is stated in this Annual Report. Several trustees are now into their fourth three-year terms, but it is considered by the other trustees that the company benefits greatly from the accumulated experience of these long-serving individuals. The trustees do fully consider the benefits of bringing in new ideas and individuals from time to time, through advisers and other volunteers, as well as through Board membership.

There are currently no bodies that are automatically entitled to nominate directors to the Board, and the Board has no plans for changing this. Potential new director/trustees will be identified from time to time amongst the volunteers and supporters of the charitable company, bearing in mind the range of skills and experience available amongst the existing trustees and the qualities which the potential new trustee(s) can bring to the Board.

At the Annual Meeting of the company in September 2023 Sarah Mercer stood down as Chair of the trustees, but she remains as a trustee. The trustees then embarked on a recruitment process to identify a new Chair. At the end of this financial year Board meetings were still being chaired either by the Vice Chair (Catherine Walker) or by Finn Willingham, a previous Chair, but during the early part of 2024/25 Peter Breakey was appointed as the new Chair of the trustees.

c. Policies and practices adopted for the induction and training of trustees

The charitable company has so far focussed on recruiting and training volunteers to staff the library. Training centres on the wide range of skills needed for operational purposes.

All new trustees are subject to an induction process, including familiarity with Charity Commission guidance on the role and responsibilities of trustees. The company benefits from the wide range of pre-existing skills available amongst the trustees and other volunteers.

d. Organisational structure and decision making

The Board of Directors is responsible for making all strategic decisions and overseeing their implementation. Board meetings are open not only to trustees but also to members of a loosely defined wider group, known as the Advisory Group, established to involve a wider range of skills in the governance of the company. Advisory Group members are entitled to receive board papers but only need to attend meetings if they wish, or if their presence is specifically requested.

Current members of the Advisory Group are Julia Black (contracts for building maintenance and services), Graham Blake (IT), Peter Breakey (Founding Chair), Biddy Casselden (research on the value of libraries), John Cook (the building), Pamela Denham (Wellbeing for Life, Elders Council of Newcastle), Tina Gough (architectural advice), Joan Hoenich (library operations), Paul Luft (the building), Despoina Papadopoulou (architectural advice, and in particular the internal furniture and fittings of the library), Tanya Pretswell (local councillor), Kay Punshon (library operations), Barbara Trevitt (Volunteer Coordinator) and Wes (Andrew) Wareham (the building, and IT).

On formal matters before the board (of which there have been relatively few to date) only the trustees are eligible to vote. The board normally meets every six weeks, on a Saturday morning.

The board has also established a number of free-standing specialist groups, to involve a wider range of interests and skills in the operation and management of the library. All key matters discussed in the groups are brought to the board for formal decision making. Current groups include the Finance and Building Group, the Book Buying Group and the Marketing Group. Members of the groups include trustees, members of the advisory group, and other volunteers. The “Green” (ie. most experienced) volunteers also meet regularly with the Volunteer Coordinator.

A number of the trustees, advisory group members and other volunteers have taken on specific roles within the organisation, once again subject to the overall oversight of the board. These roles include:

Julia Black: Building maintenance contracts; and reviewing our risk management and fire safety policies and procedures;

Anne Burton: Fundraising, newsletters and the Thursday evening talks programme;

Sarah Breakey: The children's area, and displays. Sarah is supported in the organisation of children's activities by Joan Aarvold and others;

Chris Clarke: Treasurer and Company Secretary, organises the "Wellbeing for Life" programme with Pamela Denham, Felicity Mendelson and others;

John Cook, Despoina Papadopoulou and Andrew (Wes) Wareing: Building issues;

Rachel Gibson: The events calendar, and room bookings;

Jeremy Hardy: Publicity/marketing matters;

Pamela Denham: Wellbeing for Life, regular monthly meetings for older people, and liaison with the Elders Council of Newcastle;

Felicity Mendelson: Book buying and operational library management issues, minutes at Board Meetings, and supporting volunteer training, including liaison with Newcastle University and the City Council library service;

Paul Rea (Red Square Design): Posters and publicity;

Barbara Trevitt: The recruitment, training and management of the volunteers, especially in ensuring adequate cover whenever the building is open, supported by Sue Rea and Anne Sweetman, and liaison with Newcastle University regarding student volunteers;

Catherine Walker: Vice-Chair, and joint Acting Chair (with Finn Willingham) until a new Chair was formally appointed in June 2024;

Richard Watson: The General Data Protection Regulations;

Finn Willingham: shared the role of Acting Chair with Catherine Walker; and oversight of the website.

The "Greens" and other volunteers have also agreed to take on particular individual operational responsibilities, such as for the photocopier, coffee machine, cash register, posters and notice boards, membership records and training.

e. Risk Management and Reserves Policies

The trustees have previously assessed the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed, such as potential problems with the building, over-reliance on certain key individuals, and potential difficulties in maintaining the commitment of volunteers and financial supporters once the initial "honeymoon period" is over, and measures have been

put in place to minimise these risks. Over the last year a full review of our risk management, health and safety, and fire and emergency safety policies and procedures has been launched. Whilst work on these reviews is not yet complete, a number of procedures have already been tightened up, including improved guidance and training on fire safety.

To minimise the potential risks for volunteers, the trustees' policy is not to open the building to the public unless at least two volunteers are present. (This does not apply for private room bookings and events). The library volunteers must not accept responsibility for children aged under 10, who are using the library, who must remain in the care of a parent, teacher, or responsible adult, at all times. Over that age, children are allowed in the library on their own.

In managing the building, the Friends aim at best practice, and have continued or improved on many of the routines set up originally by the council.

During the period covered by this report the company had public liability insurance cover of £10 million. Our own insurance includes accidental damage to the large windows in the main room. Other aspects of building insurance are covered by the Council, under the terms of our lease.

Before the pandemic the company had introduced explicit terms and conditions for room hire, which clarified the responsibilities of people hiring rooms. This minimises the risk of any incident occurring, especially when the building is not otherwise open to the public.

Over the last year the company's Reserves Policy has been reviewed and the revised policy statement approved by the Board.

Up until three years ago the first priority of the company's policy for its financial reserves was that there should always be enough funding in reserve to continue to pay our running costs for at least six months, if for some reason our income suddenly fell or we were forced to close the building. At the end of 2019/20, with the closure of the building on Government advice, the existence of this reserve became vital to the company's future. It was therefore decided that for the time being we should maintain an Operating Reserve covering twelve months normal, general running costs. This policy is still in place.

Reserves kept for further major building improvements and longer term planned maintenance form the company's Building Fund. This fund is also used to hold reserved funds which cannot be spent on any other purpose, such as, within the last year, the Writer in Residence.

The company also maintains a Wellbeing Reserve Fund, which holds grants, donations and income related to the Wellbeing for Life programme, run jointly by the Friends of Jesmond Library and the Elders Council of Newcastle, and the Friday Fund, which holds grants and donations raised for the library's work with asylum seekers and refugees, and for the Warm

Zone initiative and its successor, Wellbeing Hubs, all of which were focussed on Friday mornings.

Review of Activities

In setting objectives and planning activities the trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, and to the objects of the charitable company (pages 5/6).

Public Lending Library Services

a. Library operations

Usage of Jesmond Library is now higher than before the pandemic. Opening hours comprise 25.5 hours a week (9:30am - 4:30pm on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 9:30am - 6:00pm on Thursdays, and 9: 30am – 12:30pm on Fridays).

24,118 visitors to the library were recorded in 2023/24, compared with 17,192 in the previous year. This exceeds the figures of 22,000 or more recorded in previous years, before the pandemic. The busiest month last year was March 2024, when 2,477 visits were recorded. Thursdays tend to be the busiest days in Jesmond Library.

On 31 March 2024, 2,058 people or organisations were registered to borrow books from Jesmond Library, compared with 1,820 in March 2023. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, 11,208 book issues were recorded. This compares with 9,685 in 2022/23.

In 2023/24 we bought 539 new books, at a cost of over £4,500, compared with 210 new books bought in the previous year. We also accepted 423 donated books, although we had been offered far more than this. The main categories of book which we accept as donations are children's books and books with a particular local connection, such as by a local author or about local history. Other second-hand books we re-direct to our local Oxfam book shop.

The most borrowed author in the year was once again Julia Donaldson, with Roger Hargreaves second. Mari Hannah ranked third and Roald Dahl fourth. The most-borrowed individual book was "Max the Brave" by Ed Vere, closely followed by "The Pier Falls" by Mark Haddon, "Small Things Like These" by Claire Keegan and "Topsy and Tim Start School" by Jean Adamson.

In total, at the end of 2023/24 we had 10,309 books and other items on the shelves. 55 items were for reference, 4,764 were classified as Fiction and 5,545 as Non-Fiction (or "other").

We also continued with a small stock of jigsaws, first established during lockdown.

b. Volunteers

The charitable company directly employs no paid staff, and is wholly dependent on the unstinting efforts of volunteers for the operation of the library service and all other activities which take place in the building.

Our volunteer coordinator has estimated that our front of house volunteers worked a total of approximately 4,500 hours during the year April 2023 – March 2024. If we cost these hours at the national living wage (£10.42 per hour) this would be equivalent to a total “value” of £46,890. This does not include the hours “worked” by the many other volunteers who organise activities and events, or play other roles behind the scenes. Besides the tremendous value of these efforts to the local community, we believe that many volunteers themselves derive a measure of personal satisfaction and sense of achievement, while some use their work experience to gain paid employment elsewhere.

On 31 March 2024 we had 78 Front of House volunteers, including experienced supervisor/trainers (known as “Greens”). 14 volunteers are involved in running groups, another 10 play various behind the scenes roles and there are 7 trustees who are not already included above in other roles. This gives 109 active volunteers in total. Our front of house volunteers do not have to commit to working specific times or days, or numbers of hours per week, but use an online system (SignUp) to choose their own shifts (although the volunteer coordinator often has to send out last minute email appeals to fill the final vacant shifts).

Once again, the trustees are extremely grateful to all those who keep our services running and provide the friendly welcome which so many library customers appreciate.

Education and Social Welfare

c. Events and room hire

Since re-opening under the management of the Friends of Jesmond Library the library has developed as a busy community hub, with far more events taking place than when the building was managed by the Council.

Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 there were 415 room bookings by outside organisations in the library, compared to 332 in the previous year. 94 of the 2023/24 room bookings were in the Main Room, 162 in the Catherine Cookson Room and 159 in the Sid Chaplin Room.

In addition, there were 610 events run by library volunteers in 2023/24, compared with 425 in 2022/23. 184 of the 2023/24 events took place in the Main Room, 241 in the Catherine Cookson Room, 188 in the Sid Chaplin Room and 5 at the United Reformed Church. Total attendance at these events was 7,426, a massive increase over the previous year, when the total was 4,473.

Highlights of the year's events programme included the library's contributions to the annual Jesmond Community Festival in May, and some excellent events associated with celebrations of ten years since the Friends re-opened the library in 2013. The library also employed a Writer in Residence, Amanda Quinn, for a six-month programme of creative writing workshops and school visits, ending in the publication of an anthology "Welcome to the Library" in April 2024.

The number of room bookings has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, but our library volunteers have more than made up for this by the remarkable number of regular events which they now organise.

At the present time some of the most popular regular events taking place in the library are the language conversation groups run by library volunteers (including an English class); other events include a book group, play reading, poetry sharing, current affairs, a Craft 'n' Chat group, the "Wellbeing for Life" series for older people, storytime and crafts for children, the very varied Thursday evening talks, and IT advice sessions. Groups making regular room bookings include Mindfulness, Meditation, Philosophy, Keep Jesmond Clean, a Chess Club, private language classes, Jesmond Community Forum and Councillors' ward surgeries.

Towards the end of 2023 the weekly "Friends Friday" morning sessions for asylum seekers and refugees wound down, as the local hostel closed. However, Friends Fridays had already developed to become Warm Hubs, open to all, with free hot drinks and the full range of library services; and were later re-designated as Wellbeing Hubs, under another council initiative.

d. The People's Network computers

The council left its "People's Network" public use computers in the library when they handed over the building. These are still maintained by the council and are very well used by members of the public. Library volunteers frequently give informal assistance to People's Network users. Over the full year 2,876 logins were recorded on our 6 People's Network computers, compared with 1,890 logins in 2022/23. The busiest time of the day is between 11 am and mid-day.

e. The building

Jesmond Library is a much-loved and architecturally distinguished modern building, unusual in being a Grade 2 Listed Building designed and built in the 1960's. Some of the architecturally valuable features of the building, notably the huge windows and glass doors, provide particular challenges in terms of building maintenance. Since we took over management of the building we have sought, where possible, to return to the spirit of the original design of the building, while accommodating the present, flexible use of the building as a community hub as well as a public library.

A major challenge for many householders and businesses is the steady increase in energy costs, along with rising concern about climate change. Since our takeover of the building we have carried out a number of projects intended to reduce energy use, ranging from improved roof and cavity wall insulation, and an advanced system for managing the heating system, to a £150,000, phased programme of replacing the glazing in the main room with a better insulated, double glazed, equivalent. While firm conclusions are hard to distinguish from other factors, it appears that these projects are already saving us significant energy costs.

Over the last year we have moved on to draw up a further programme of energy saving improvements, starting by commissioning a full Project Priority Audit, including a Retrofit Review, a Thermographic Survey and a draft Action Plan. Led by our volunteer architect Despoina Papadopoulou and benefitting from a government-funded Independent Energy Assessment, we are now drawing up proposals for a first phase of energy saving improvements which we would hope to be able to commence in 2024/25.

f. Publicity and communications

We publish regular events programmes and posters, whose visual impact is greatly helped by our designer, Paul Rea. Information on events is circulated electronically through Jesmond Community Forum and Jesmond Residents Association.

Our Facebook page, Tweets and Blogs are well-received by those of our users who make use of social media. We also publish an occasional newsletter “The Blurb” and send out regular emailed bulletins for our volunteers.

g. Links with other community-managed libraries

The Friends of Jesmond Library was actively involved in the establishment of the national Community Managed Libraries Peer Group Network, of which Chris Clarke is a Board Member. A regional conference of the network was held in Jesmond Library in Autumn 2023.

Financial Review

a. Going Concern

When it first re-opened, the charitable company enjoyed an immediate financial input from residents of Jesmond, from charitable bodies (notably, but not only, the Catherine Cookson Trust), and from the North and South Jesmond Ward Committees of the Council. This enabled the company to build up sufficient reserves during its first few months to be confident of remaining a going concern for at least the next few years, and probably much more. Our early optimism has proved to be well founded, despite the impact of the coronavirus crisis, and these accounts are therefore prepared on the basis that we are still a “going concern” and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

b. Reserves Policy

The trustees consider the reserves of the company to be more than adequate to meet its immediate working capital needs. Total funds as at 31 March 2024 were £119,968.46, an increase of £7,040.35 over the previous year.

The basis of the company's Reserves Policy has been in place since 2014/15, when an Operating Reserve Fund and a Building Improvement Fund were established. These two designated funds stand alongside the pre-existing Wellbeing Fund, which supports a programme of activities for older people, jointly run with the Elders Council of Newcastle.

During the previous year an additional designated fund called the Friday Fund was established, to keep grants, donations and expenses related to the Friday morning and other activities to support work with asylum seekers and the Warm Zone, separate from other funds. The Warm Zone initiative has since become the Wellbeing Hub, but we have retained the name of Friday Fund for this designated fund.

On 16 March 2024 the trustees adopted a formal Reserves Policy, of which the above is a summary.

The funding reserved for the Wellbeing programme increased from £3,079 on 31 March 2023 to £7,989 on 31 March 2024, largely resulting from funding obtained to continue the Sing and Socialise programme, which the library has inherited from the now-defunct Jesmond Dementia Action Alliance.

The Friday Fund was originally established with grants and donations obtained for the library's work with refugees and asylum seekers. However, the use of a local hotel as a Home Office hostel for asylum seekers finished towards the end of 2023/24, and the original funding ran out. A small council grant towards the continuation of Friday morning opening as a "Wellbeing Hub" has allowed the Friday Fund to fall from £1,763 on 31 March 2023 to £146 on 31 March 2024. The small remaining sum is being used to fund refreshments at the Wellbeing Hub on Friday mornings, but it is anticipated that the fund will close when the balance reduces to zero. At that point Friday morning opening will be funded as part of the library's mainstream operations.

Up until the end of 2019/20 the policy of the trustees was that unrestricted reserves should not fall below a level equivalent to six months' routine, general expenditure (about £13,000 at the end of 2019/20). However, with the greatly increased uncertainty resulting from the coronavirus crisis, the trustees considered it prudent to increase the Operating Reserve from six to a full twelve months general running costs, and we intend to retain £26,000 for this purpose for the foreseeable future.

On 31 March 2024 the Building Improvement Fund stood at £66,863, compared with £63,116 on 31 March 2023. The purposes of the Building Fund are to finance capital items,

such as the purchase of new furniture, which are paid for over several years, to pay for major building refurbishment items, which will not recur every year, and to hold grants which have to be spent on specific projects. At the end of the financial year it is topped up with any surpluses from the General Fund.

During 2023/24 part of the Building Fund was drawn on to contribute to a first phase of improvements in the information area (new shelving), and to fund studies which will provide essential information for us to plan future improvements to the building's energy efficiency and its heating system. Further grants were received for improvements planned in 2024 for the children's area.

c. Principal Funding

The first financial priority of the trustees is to raise enough in reasonably reliable monthly income to cover basic running costs (such as utility bills, insurance, stationery, and building and equipment maintenance). This was achieved during 2023/24, when the library's general account recorded a surplus of £4,250 before the surplus was transferred to the Building Reserve Fund.

The largest contributors to our general income are events and room hire, and donations from regular subscribers by Standing Order, with smaller sums raised from the sale of coffee and tea, miscellaneous donations, bank interest, photocopying and printing, and other fundraising.

Plans for the Future

The trustees have two main aims for the future. First is to maintain and improve the range of services available to the local public, both by continuing to purchase new books and by further developing the ambitious events programme. If possible, it would be good to further increase opening hours.

Second is to continue to invest in the fabric of the building, furniture and fittings, and at the same time sensitively bring the library up to date. Over the next year we aim to start work on another phase of improvements to the energy efficiency of the building, improve our IT and PA facilities for talks and events, and invest further in the children's and information areas.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Friends of Jesmond Library for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and best practice advice. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company

and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Provision of information to the independent examiner

Each of the persons who are trustees at the time when this trustees' report is approved have confirmed that:

- so far as each trustee is aware, there is no relevant financial information of which the charitable company's independent examiner is unaware; and
- each trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a trustee in order to be aware of any information needed by the charitable company's independent examiner in connection with preparing this report and to establish that the charitable company's independent examiner is aware of that information.

In preparing this report, the trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the trustees on 7 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Peter Breakey, Chair

7 September 2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Friends of Jesmond Library

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Friends of Jesmond Library for the year ended 31 March 2024, as set out on pages 18 to 29.

Responsibilities and basis of my report

The charity's trustees, who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(signed)

Geoffrey R Carter

59 Queens Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2PL

7 September 2024

FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

Statement of Financial Activities

Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 March 2024, compared with the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Total Funds 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2022/23 £
Income			
Incoming resources from generated funds:			
Voluntary receipts	2	16,838.23	24,536.08
Grants received	2	22,534.04	34,760.00
Receipts from fundraising activities	3	3,714.70	1,983.64
Investment income	4	1,904.46	632.76
Receipts from charitable activities	5	20,600.08	15,439.68
Total Incoming Resources		65,591.51	77,352.16
Expenditure			
Fundraising costs	6	2,180.39	1,478.47
Charitable activities	7	49,755.97	57,246.86
Governance costs	8	13.00	13.00
Depreciation	9	6,601.80	7,914.34
Total Resources Expended		58,551.16	66,652.67
Net Income (Deficit) for the year	10	7,040.35	10,699.49

The notes on pages 20 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

FRIENDS OF JESMOND LIBRARY

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2024, compared with 31 March 2023

	Note	31/03/2024	31/03/2023 £
Fixed assets	9		
Equipment		4,490.44	7,115.78
IT equipment		43.49	216.44
Library management system		0.00	0.00
Furniture		595.02	570.96
Book stock		7,801.49	6,185.04
Total fixed assets		12,930.44	14,088.22
Current assets			
Recoverable Gift Aid	12	210.36	54.63
Cash at bank	13	106,797.30	98,755.18
Petty cash		30.36	30.08
Total current assets		107,038.02	98,839.89
Total assets		119,968.46	112,928.11
Represented by		31 March 2024	31 March 2023
Balance brought forward		112,928.11	102,228.62
Net income for the year		7,040.35	10,699.49
Total funds	14	119,968.46	112,928.11

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to charities in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 7 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by Peter Breakey (Chair).

Peter Breakey, Chair

The notes on pages 20 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)."

The trustees have considered the charitable company's current and future prospects and are satisfied that the company can continue to pay its liabilities as they fall due, for a period of well over twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements, and is therefore a "going concern".

1.2 Turnover

Turnover comprises revenue recognised by the charitable company in respect of goods and services supplied during the year. The charitable company is not registered for Value Added Tax.

1.3 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability of the director/trustees of the company in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10.

1.4 Fund accounting

Designated funds are funds set aside by the company for specific purposes. At the present time the four funds designated by the company are the Wellbeing Fund, the Friday Fund, the Operating Reserve Fund and the Building Improvement Fund. The purposes of these funds were summarised on pages 14/15 of this report. All remaining income and expenditure is contained in the General Fund, which is therefore where the vast majority of day-to-day income and expenditure is allocated.

1.5 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Income and Expenditure Account.

Voluntary income is primarily received as donations and grants. All monetary donations are included in full in the statement of financial activities when received, provided that there

are no donor-imposed restrictions as to the timing of the related expenditure, in which case recognition would be deferred until the pre-condition has been met.

Gifts in kind for use by the charity are valued at the estimated cost which would have been incurred by the charity, if they had been purchased. This method has been applied to second hand books donated by well-wishers to the library, whenever the books concerned have been added to our book stock. (Space on the shelves in Jesmond Library is limited, and some donated books, for which we do not have room, have been in turn donated to Oxfam or other local groups.) Books left in the library by the city council have not been given a value.

Investment income at present comprises only bank interest. The income is recognised when received.

1.6 Resources expended

Expenditure is allocated to the activity to which it relates.

Governance costs are those costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company, principally an annual payment to Companies House.

2. Voluntary receipts and grants received

Two main categories of donation were received from library users during the year. Regular Subscribers provided monthly or annual donations, of £20 a year or £2 a month, or more, normally by Standing Order, totalling £11,258 over the year (compared with £10,587 the year before). There were also a number of Miscellaneous Donations, totalling £3,999 (compared with £11,341 the year before). Amongst the Miscellaneous Donations in 2023/24 were donations towards the refurbishment of the children's area, and also donations made at events, including those linked to the library's tenth Birthday celebrations and to Jesmond Community Festival.

The Friends of Jesmond Library is registered with the Fundraising Regulator, and supports the principles that it promotes. Gift Aid is being claimed on all eligible donations. The table on the next page includes all recoverable Gift Aid that we are eligible to claim, even when a claim had not yet been submitted. HMRC pay a very small amount of interest when paying Gift Aid claims, to cover the period between the eligible donation being made and the Gift Aid being paid. The company uses the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme in order to increase the value to us of small miscellaneous donations.

The company has arrangements for supporters to donate money through JustGiving. This generated £806 for the Friends during 2023/4 (compared with £1,947 in 2022/23), but also cost £216 in payments to contribute to JustGiving costs in that period. We also have an

arrangement with Easyfundraising, which during 2023/24 generated £138 from commissions on internet shopping (compared with £55 in 2022/23).

£22,534 was received in grants during 2023/24, compared with £34,760 the year before. Two of this year's grants, from the Lady Neville Charity and the Sir James Knott Trust, helped fund the Book Festival which formed part of our tenth birthday celebrations, while the largest of this year's grants, from Arts Council England, funded the Writer in Residence, Amanda Quinn, whose six-month appointment also celebrated our anniversary. Three grants, from Home Instead Charities, the Charles Hayward Foundation and the Jesmond Dementia Action Alliance (JDAA), helped us to continue the Sing and Socialise programme established previously by JDAA, while two grants, from Tesco Stronger Starts and Newcastle City Council's North Jesmond Ward Committee, were awarded for the improvements to the children's area, which will be carried out later in 2024. (A further grant for the children's area, from the South Jesmond Ward Committee, was received in April 2024.) Newcastle City Council also gave us a grant to help continue Friday morning opening, as a Wellbeing Hub, while two further grants, from the Virgin Money Foundation and the Percy Hedley Charitable Trust, will go towards other building improvements. We are very grateful to all these organisations. The value of books donated by well-wishers and added to the library stock during 2023/24 was approximately £634.

Voluntary receipts and grants included in the Income and Expenditure account	General Fund 2023/24 £	Wellbeing Fund 2023/24 £	Friday Fund 2023/24 £	Building Fund 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2022/23 £
Regular Subscriber donations (including related Gift Aid)	11,258.39				11,258.39	10,587.64
Miscellaneous donations	2,134.71	1,609.88		255.00	3,999.59	11,341.12
Interest on Gift Aid	0.75				0.75	3.01
JustGiving	353.89			452.68	806.57	1,947.66
Easyfundraising	138.43				138.43	55.15
Grants received		8,411.04	250.00	13,873.00	22,534.04	34,760.00
Value of Donated Books	634.50				634.50	601.50
Total Voluntary Receipts and Grants Received	14,520.67	10,020.92	250.00	14,580.68	39,372.27	59,296.08

3. Receipts from fundraising activities

The main fundraising activities which raise money for the library are sales, including the sale of books which are surplus to requirements and of bought-in stock, branded shopping bags and other miscellaneous items, and the sale of coffee, tea and hot chocolate from the coffee machine. Small charges are also normally made for the display of small advertisements. The new coffee machine which we acquired during 2022/23 has proved to be much more popular than its predecessor, especially in its new location in the improved information and reading area.

	Total Funds 2023/24	Total Funds 2022/23
	£	£
Shop Income, including books etc	1,140.70	1,229.64
Coffee and tea	2,537.00	741.50
Display of Small Advertisements	37.00	12.50
Total receipts from fundraising activities	3,714.70	1,983.64

4. Investment income

Interest rates increased in 2023/24. £1,904.46 was received in investment income during that year, compared with £632.76 the year before. In 2023/24 £497.77 was received from a 40-day notice account with the United Trust Bank (UTB), £713.88 from a 100-day notice account with UTB, £148.37 from two 2-year bonds with UTB, and £544.44 from an Active Saver account with Barclays.

5. Receipts from charitable activities

Receipts generated from the library's activities include room hire fees, income generated from events organised by library volunteers, income from the printer/photocopier, and smaller categories such as the creative writing competition. The efforts of our events organisers are particularly commendable, along with the many local groups and businesses who hire our rooms for meetings, classes and training events.

	Total Funds 2023/24	Total Funds 2022/23
	£	£
Room Hire income	8,202.00	5,871.07
Event income	10,655.65	8,100.36
Printing and photocopying	1,410.85	1,139.25
Teddy Bear Trail	290.00	252.00
Lost books, DVD's etc	0.00	20.00
Writing competition	33.00	57.00
Miscellaneous income (inc misc sales)	8.58	0.00
Total receipts from charitable activities	20,600.08	15,439.68

6. Fundraising costs

This includes fees payable to JustGiving, an annual fee to the Fundraising Regulator, the cost of purchasing items for re-sale, and supplies for the coffee machine.

	Total Funds 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2022/23 £
Fundraising costs (including annual fee to the Fundraising Regulator)	176.00	325.00
Payments to JustGiving	216.00	216.00
Goods for re-sale (including books, calendars and cards)	1,332.99	655.39
Supplies for the coffee machine	455.40	281.58
Total fundraising costs	2,180.39	1,478.47

7. Charitable activities

This category includes all the revenue expenditure associated with running the library and its building. It does not include expenditure on capital items, such as books, furniture or equipment, which are treated as assets that can be expected to last several years.

These appear in the Balance Sheet as capital items, and are depreciated over the anticipated life of the asset concerned (see note 9). Purpose-designed Items fixed to the building, such as new shelving, are not treated as capital, as it is assumed that they would be left in the building if we vacated it.

A number of costs went up significantly during the year, as a result of the rising cost of living, especially energy costs.

	General Fund 2023/24 £	Wellbeing Fund 2023/24 £	Friday Fund 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2023/24 £	Total Funds 2022/23 £
Gifts and grants given					75.00
Volunteer expenses	70.63			70.63	2.00
Room hire		295.00	1,180.00	1,475.00	830.00
Travel costs for Wellbeing events		408.60		408.60	308.40
Refreshments at events	291.45	1,774.69	200.83	2,266.97	1,521.27
Event expenses	19.63	24.00	29.99	73.62	1,140.52
10 th anniversary events	1,496.00			1,496.00	
Writer in residence	6,483.42			6,483.42	
Sing and Socialise		2,106.00		2,106.00	
Refunds	11.40			11.40	2.00
Electricity	2,918.79			2,918.79	2,392.67
Gas	2,625.05			2,625.05	2,070.55
Water	353.00			353.00	115.00
Refuse disposal	458.95			458.95	405.86
Insurances	1,106.88			1,106.88	1,214.09
Windows Phase 4					29,226.22
Information area	4,755.24			4,755.24	830.27
Heating studies	3,060.00			3,060.00	2,011.00
Children's area	159.98			159.98	
Other building refurbishment	2,904.59			2,904.59	300.00
General repairs and maintenance	3,028.84			3,028.84	3,186.78
Regular cleaning	3,048.50			3,048.50	2,809.00
Window cleaning	340.00			340.00	135.00
Carpet cleaning	515.00			515.00	
Security and alarms	1,074.00			1,074.00	1,812.33
Repair/service coffee machine	150.00			150.00	174.00
Telephone and Email	580.11			580.11	442.77
TV licence	159.00			159.00	159.00
PRS and PPS licence	142.28			142.28	129.35
Postage	20.70			20.70	41.79
Other administrative items	296.34			296.34	280.05
Competition prizes	20.00			20.00	9.00
Stationery	401.78	5.00		406.78	151.64
Newspapers	2,394.58			2,394.58	1,898.32
Subscriptions, including Which?	184.00			184.00	83.40
Printing and photocopying	248.76			248.76	254.20
Website	325.00			325.00	163.00
Publicity and posters	858.00	497.00	440.00	1,795.00	914.40
IT running costs	775.96			775.96	871.27
Library Management System	1,152.00			1,152.00	1,152.00
Bank charges	269.00			269.00	113.71
Fees paid	75.00			75.00	
Licences	21.00			21.00	21.00
Total charitable activity costs	42,794.86	5,119.29	1,850.82	49,755.97	57,246.86

8. Governance costs

In both 2022/23 and 2023/24 governance costs amounted to £13.00, for the Annual Return to Companies House.

9. Depreciation of tangible fixed assets

The costs of purchasing furniture, IT and other equipment, and books, are treated as capital expenditure and appear in the Balance Sheet. They are depreciated over 4-5 years, in order to write off the total costs of their acquisition over their expected useful lives. (IT and other equipment, and the Library Management System, are depreciated over 4 years; furniture and books over 5 years.)

	Office Equipment £	IT Equipment £	Library Management System £	Furniture £	Book Stock £	Total £
Cost of purchase						
Assets acquired before 1 April 2023	23,250.75	4,170.74	4,422.60	16,933.91	34,218.47	82,996.12
Additions during 2023/24	0.00	00.00	0.00	267.97	5,176.05	5,444.02
Total assets at 31 March 2024	23,250.75	4,170.74	4,422.60	17,201.88	39,394.52	88,440.49
Accumulated depreciation						
Depreciation brought forward from 31 March 2023	16,134.96	3,954.30	4,422.60	16,362.95	28,033.42	68,908.23
Depreciation during 2023/24	2,625.34	172.95	0.00	243.91	3,559.60	6,601.80
Total depreciation at 31 March 2024	18,760.30	4,127.25	4,422.60	16,606.86	31,593.02	75,510.03
Net book value at 31 March 2024	4,490.45	43.49	0.00	595.02	7,801.50	12,930.46

The valuations of book stock given in the above table are based on a more detailed calculation which distinguishes between new, second hand and donated books, as follows:

	2023/24		2022/23		Comments
	Number Of books	Value £	Number of books	Value £	
Donations	423	634.50	402	640.58	Most estimated at £1.50 each, unless value known
2 nd hand books	0	0.00	14	36.58	
New books	539	4,541.55	210	2,264.57	
Total	962	5,176.05	626	2,941.73	

10. Income and Expenditure by Fund

The following table shows how the Total Funds 2023/24 column in the Income and Expenditure Account on page 18 can be sub-divided between funds.

Income and Expenditure	General Fund	Designated Funds				Total Funds 2023/24
		Wellbeing for Life Fund	Friday Fund	Operating Reserve Fund	Building Improvement Fund	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income						
Voluntary receipts	14,520.67	10,020.92	250.00		14,580.68	39,372.27
Receipts from fundraising activities	3,714.70					3,714.70
Investment income	1,904.46					1,904.46
Receipts from charitable activities	20,600.08					20,600.08
Total Incoming Resources	40,739.91	10,020.92	250.00	0.00	14,580.68	65,591.51
Expenditure						
Fundraising costs	2,180.39					2,180.39
Charitable activities	42,794.86	5,110.29	1,850.82			49,755.97
Governance costs	13.00					13.00
Depreciation	6,601.80					6,601.80
Total Resources Expended	51,590.05	5,110.29	1,850.82	0.00	0.00	58,551.16
Net Income (Loss) for the year, before transfers	(10,850.14)	4,910.63	(1,600.82)	0.00	14,580.68	7,040.35

11. Transfers

Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 the Building Improvement Fund was drawn on to fund the Writer in Residence project and the Anniversary Book Festival (from restricted grants obtained for those purposes), to fund a study of the thermal efficiency of the building, instal new shelving and display units in the information area, and fit new community notice boards. To cover these items a total of £15,083.66 was transferred from the Building Fund to the General Fund.

A small sum from the Friday Fund was used to purchase books to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. At the end of the financial year the net surplus on the General Fund (£4,250.16) was transferred to the Building Fund, to be allocated in due course to improvements to the library building.

	General Fund £	Wellbeing Fund £	Friday Fund £	Operating Reserve £	Building Fund £	Total Funds 2023/24 £
Net Income (Loss) for the year, before transfers	(10,850.14)	4,910.63	(1,600.82)	0.00	14,580.68	7,040.34
Transfers from the Building Fund to the General Fund	15,083.66				(15,083.66)	0.00
Transfer from the Friday Fund to the General Fund	16.64		(16.64)			0.00
Transfer from the General Fund to the Building Fund	(4,250.16)				4,250.16	0.00
Net Income (Loss) for the year, after transfers	0.00	4,910.63	(1,617.46)	0.00	3,747.18	7,040.35

12. Recoverable Gift Aid

Recoverable Gift Aid is Gift Aid to which we are entitled, but which has not yet been reclaimed from HMRC.

13. Cash at bank

Cash held in bank accounts can be subdivided as follows:

	Net asset value at 31 March 2024 £	Net asset value at 31 March 2023 £
Bank accounts		
Barclays current account	1,745.38	530.30
Barclays active saver account	50,023.23	44,556.21
United Trust Bank 100-day notice account	21,411.81	20,697.93
United Trust Bank 2-year bonds	5,161.50	10,146.00
United Trust Bank 40-day notice account	23,322.51	22,824.74
United Trust Bank 1-year bond	5,132.87	0.00
Total in bank accounts	106,797.30	98,755.18

14. Reconciliation of Funds

The funds carried forward at the end of the 2022/23 financial year are held as follows. Funds held at the end of 2021/22 are given for comparison:

	31/03/24 £	31/03/23 £
General Fund	18,969.13	18,969.13
Wellbeing Fund	7,989.78	3,079.15
Friday Fund	146.20	1,763.66
Operating Reserve Fund	26,000.00	26,000.00
Building Improvement Fund	66,863.35	63,116.17
Total funds carried forward	119,968.46	112,928.11