

## Report and Financial Statement

For the period 1 May 2022 —30 April 2023

### Registration details

Debenham Library Foundation  
A Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Registered Number 1154313  
School Corner,  
Debenham,  
Stowmarket,  
Suffolk IP14 6PL

### Trustees

Tony Hutt	Chair
Richard Blackwell	Treasurer
Maureen John	Nominee of Suffolk's Libraries IPS
Howard Simpson	
Pam Harling-Challis	

### Bankers

The Co-operative Bank,  
PO Box 240,  
Delf House,  
Southway,  
Skelmersdale,  
WWN8 6WT  
Main account: 089299 65674112 00

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### Introduction

#### Report of the trustees for the year ending April 30, 2023

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statement for the year ending April 30, 2023.

#### Chair's report

During the year ending April 30, 2023 the library continued its usual business, supported by the Friends of Debenham Library and other volunteers.

Debenham Open Gardens on Sunday 19th June 2022 included the Library Garden. About 100 people visited and an activity sheet for children was done with enthusiasm by the children. £50 was raised from the sale of plants at the Open Gardens for the library; there was an information sheet with details of how the library had developed and the planting.

A "Heavy Metal Day" on Saturday 30th July 2022 raised money for Debenham Primary School and the Friends by collecting scrap metal, redundant appliances, old bicycles etc; £2657. 25 was raised, of which 25% was donated to the school. About 11 tons of metal was collected and separated into kinds for recycling, with some items sold on eBay.

Suffolk Libraries' Ten Year Anniversary was celebrated with a 10 year birthday party with Sunday afternoon tea and balloons, cakes, pass the parcel and other party games on Sunday August 7<sup>th</sup> 2022.

Afternoon Teas were held on August 7th and September 4th 2022. These events were partly fundraising but primarily social and community-building by bringing library users and library Friends together. Sale of cakes and teas in September raised £73.83.

Various events at the library were organised by Get Suffolk Reading (part of the National Literacy Trust) including

- "Debenham Goes Wild" on Wednesday 17th August 2022; 140 attended.
- "The Terrific Tudors" on Wednesday 24th August 2022, about how to live like a Tudor, with a puppet show, arranged by a local re-enactment group; 70 attended.
- On August 16th 2022 there was a story time walk under the National Literacy Trust; 18 attended. Another one was held in the October half-term.
- A Craft event took place at the Library over February half term 2023, organised with Get Suffolk Reading, Alvin Art and Kelly's Crafts. It was very successful with 22 children attending.
- A Craft day involving Alvin Arts and Kelly's Crafts took place in the Easter holidays on April 6th 2023 with 30 people attending. This was preparatory to the Story Trail run in the summer of 2023.

On Sunday 11th September 2022 one of our library users participated in the London to Brighton cycle ride for Suffolk Libraries (55 miles) with sponsorship raising over £800 for Suffolk Libraries.

The Reading Challenge held in the summer from July 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 to September attracted a good number of children participating and completing the challenge. Volunteers helped children with the challenge.

Swift boxes were installed in the library garden, with a swift caller, but unfortunately no swifts took up residence that year.

In the winter the library took part in Suffolk Libraries' Warm Spaces initiative, offering free hot drinks on a self service basis (funded by Suffolk Libraries) from 12th November 2022. Not many customers took advantage of this but many appreciated visiting the library, which is one of the very few spaces in Debenham which is both warm in the winter and free to visit without obligation (and with books to read!).

Sale of Christmas Cards in 2022 raised £197.

For Suffolk Libraries Day in 2023 (4th & 5th March) a quiz was held in the School Hall, with a book stall, bric a brac, craft stalls, storytelling and refreshments. The quiz was well attended and raised £180 for Suffolk Libraries. The Sunday afternoon event raised £327.18 for Suffolk Libraries.

A Dungeons and Dragons started using the library for their meetings in 2023 once a month and a similar group for children started later.

A number of Community Group Meetings were attended by the Chair by Zoom or in person.

The Home Library Service was supported by volunteers to deliver and collect books for a small number of housebound customers.

Currently there were just over 2,000 customers registered at Debenham Library, whose catchment area includes a number of nearby villages.

Publicity of the Library's and Friends' activities continues in Parish Magazines and websites in Debenham and a number of nearby villages, as well as our Facebook page and occasional posts in local Facebook groups.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The DLF was initiated by a local library campaign group, and three of its members were asked to become the founding trustees. In order to ensure continued representation of other bodies, there are also nominated trustees. Three nominating bodies are named in the constitution: Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School, Suffolk's Libraries IPS and Debenham parish council.

The DLF is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and its rules are laid down in the constitution which was approved by the Charity Commission in October 2013. This permits the trustees to appoint additional trustees or ask other community organisations to nominate trustees. These powers have not been used.

The Debenham Library Working Group was dissolved after the successful completion of the move of the library to its new premises in September 2016.

The trustees delegate work to a 'Debenham Library Friends Group' who are a group of volunteers who bring enthusiasm and support to the library whenever a fundraising event is being organized. The group are a Member Group of Suffolk Libraries and have a vote in the election of Suffolk Libraries board members and voting on motions.

The trustees oversee the Friends Group and review decisions, to ensure they meet the objectives of the foundation.

## **Objectives**

These are stated in the constitution to be: (and remain unchanged from last year)

- (1) To advance the education of the general public in Debenham, Suffolk, and the surrounding area, in particular but not exclusively by the provision of a lending library.
- (2) To further or benefit the residents of Debenham, Suffolk, and the neighbourhood, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other options by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the quality of life for residents.

The trustees endeavour to ensure that there is a continuing free public library service in Debenham regardless of any further cuts in local authority spending. The new, larger premises have allowed greater use - especially by children - as well as room hire and fund-raising activities. This makes for greater sustainability should Suffolk Libraries reduce funding of the library.

Longer-term plans include the provision of all-age education programmes, events for various social groups and access to a wide range of services available to the public. No education classes were held during the period, but we continue to look for openings should the demand be present and suitable tutors available. We are limited by lack of parking spaces while the school is open (there is one disabled parking space only), so daytime classes cannot effectively be held during the week.

The library can also support economic development both with information and as a meeting place with full access to online and traditional sources.

The primary test for additional services will be community benefit but the trustees will also seek to establish income streams which help ensure a continuing library service.

## Performance and Achievements

Normal opening hours were maintained throughout the year. We encourage customers to make use of the online ebooks and audiobooks, films and music. Local publicity has been maintained during the period. Customer numbers have now returned to pre-pandemic levels.

## Future Plans

We have scheduled in the next period a Heavy Metal Day (collection of scrap metal for recycling and revenue), Sunday Afternoon Teas, the Summer Reading Challenge, and involvement in Get Suffolk Reading.

The 'Dungeons and Dragons sessions of last year were very popular and will be carried forward to the next periods. A couple of craft events are being planned where young and old can craft together.

Balance Sheet at April 30, 2023		
Fixed Assets	£0	
Current Assets	£5229	
Cash at bank		

Balance Sheet at April 30, 2023		
Creditors	£0	
Net current assets		£5229
Restricted Funds	£0	
Unrestricted funds	£5229	
Total Funds		£5229

## Finance

Income and expenditure 2023			
	Income	Expenditure	
Grant funding	£0		
Local events	£2817		
Film Events	£150		
Donations	£0		
Total	£2967		
Expenditure			
Repairs/maint		£496	
Sundries/Garden		£308	
Other		£886	
Net income	£1277		