

Friends of Highgate Library Charitable Foundation

Report of the Trustees for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

The trustees present their annual report and income and expenditure statement for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and confirm they comply with the Charities Act 2011. The AGM for the year 2023/24 was held on 18 June 2023.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Friends of Highgate Library Charitable Foundation

Charity Registration Number: 1161601

Trustees:

Sarah Harrison

Linda Lefevre (Chair)

Agnes Stewart

Sarah Carrier

Michele Cohen

Patrick Lefevre

Margot Kafno

Fabian Watkinson

Virginia Kerridge (Secretary)

Paul Harris (Treasurer)

Caroline Anstiss

Structure, governance, and management

Governing document

Friends of Highgate Library Charitable Foundation ("FOHLCF") is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission in May 2015 under charity number 1161601. It is governed by a constitution filed with the Commission.

Organisational structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits. The trustees meet together as a body four times a year and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to the running of Highgate Library and the running of the Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre ("HLCCC").

The charity works in partnership with the London Borough of Camden ("Camden") Library Services to run Highgate Library. Details of the partnership are set out in a Memorandum of Understanding dated 1 June 2015. To assist in the smooth running of Highgate Library the trustees have delegated responsibility to a management group who meet regularly with officers and staff from Camden in a Highgate Library Management Group ("HLMG"). The operation of letting the HLCCC has similarly been delegated to a small group "the Hall group." Each group reports to the full trustees at meetings.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

During the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 there were eleven trustees. Sarah Harrison, Linda Lefevre and Margot Kafno were each reappointed as trustees on 8 June 2023. Caroline Anstiss was appointed as a trustee on 4 March 2024 and Patrick Lefevre was reappointed on 4 March 2024. Sarah Carrier and Fabian Watkinson resigned as trustees after the end of the year in question on 18 June 2024. Toby Faber continued as President.

Objectives and activities

The objects of the charity are set out in the charity's constitution as follows:

- 1 To advance the education of the public in Highgate by providing, or assisting in the provision of, a public library and associated services, including but not limited to, information and study facilities, educational programmes, courses, classes, and lectures.
- 2 To provide or assist in the provision of facilities at the Highgate Library and the Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre for meetings, classes, lectures and recreation or other leisure time occupation for those individuals living and or working in the London Borough of Camden and the surrounding area in the interests of social welfare and with the objective of improving the conditions of life of the said individuals.
- 3 Such charitable purposes for the public benefit as are exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may from time to time determine.

All the activities of the charity are carried out by volunteers. All our trustees and volunteers give of their time freely. HLMG recruit and arrange for training of new volunteers to the Library. All volunteers working in Highgate Library are DBS checked. FOHLCF operates the hiring of the HLCCC (now known as Highgate Library Hall) entirely with volunteers. The Hall is a much-needed community space in the area.

Activities and achievements

The charity carries out core activities in pursuance of its charitable aims. The trustees consider that these activities, summarised in this report, provide benefit to the community surrounding Highgate Library which includes Highgate Newtown, Dartmouth Park, and Highgate.

Governance was reviewed and policies approved/reviewed included Conflict of Interest Policy, Due Diligence Policy, Financial Controls Policy, Reserves Policy.

HIGHGATE LIBRARY

Compliance with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding and development of Highgate Library are monitored by the quarterly meetings of a committee comprising Fiona Tarn Head of Libraries, Linda Lefevre, Sarah Harrison, and Thanos Morphitis. The Library is managed by the Highgate Library Management Group "HLMG." The FOHL members are Sarah Harrison (Chair), Paul Harris, Reg Herring, Michele Cohen and Cathy Richins. Camden Libraries' Department is represented by Abdul Kashim and Iqbal Hussain.

Report on Highgate Library for the year April 2023-March 2024

Report from Sarah Harrison, Chair of Highgate Library Management Group

The year 2023 to 2024 was dominated by the planning and initiation of a major refurbishment of the Library. FoHLCF, the ward councillors and some Council officers had been aware of the poor state of the building for some years and had been pushing for serious maintenance work. It was therefore a relief to hear early in the summer of 2023 that Camden Council was applying for Salix funding from central government with the intention of financing the rest of the costs itself.

The key elements identified for the work were:

- improving the thermal efficiency of the building by insulating the inside of the external walls wherever possible and appropriate, insulating the one part of the floor that is accessible, replacing all the five roofs with new insulated roofs, and replacing or upgrading all the windows, skylights and doors to retain heat and eliminate draughts
- replacing the old oil boiler heating system with one using air source heat pumps (ASHPs), replacing all the radiators and dividing the current single system into two with the Library and the Library Hall having separate systems
- installing over 60 PV panels on the flat roofs to generate electricity to run the building including the ASHPs.

The other driving principle of the work was restoration of the sadly neglected Grade II listed building. This included:

- dealing with subsidence in the library garden and the cracks it had created
- significant areas of repointing
- rewiring the entire building
- installing a new data system throughout the building
- repainting the entire building

It was hoped that the funding would be sufficient to repair the original parquet flooring and replace the original blinds.

Some trustees and other volunteers played an important role in discussing the initial designs, putting forward proposals that led to significant improvements in several aspects of the project. Trustees also identified a more cost-effective subcontractor to carry out the IT upgrade.

We learnt in the late summer that the Salix bid had been successful with the Council raising the rest of the £1.7m required for the project. The start of the seven-month project was originally projected for September 2023, then postponed until January 2024 with the Library staying open until Christmas 2023. Ergro, selected as lead contractors, began work in January 2024. The work progressed well and was completed after 11 months at the beginning of December 2024.

Trustees and FOHLCF volunteers played a key role in planning and packing up the Library and were also involved in developing plans to provide a temporary library provision for the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, Camden was unable to find suitable premises for this. It was agreed that a mobile library service would be provided several afternoons a week starting from April.

While the planning for the refurbishment was going on, the Library continued to operate as normal until Christmas 2023. The numbers of users increased, particularly preschool age children and their parents/carers. The activities for this age group were so popular we had on occasions to turn some people away. The new facilities for study and reading, some funded by Camden, some by FOHLCF, proved to be very popular leading to an increase in older school children and students using the library as a place to study.

FOHLCF raised money to install temporary secondary glazing to the windows in winter 2023/24. As a result of this, and with the new study tables and comfortable reading chairs, Highgate Library was selected by the Council as one of the ward's "Warm Places" for residents to use during the cold days of winter when the cost of living crisis was making it difficult for many to afford to heat their own homes.

FOHLCF introduced a "New Book" table which led to many people popping in to check what new books had arrived. The use of the Meeting Room (designed and funded by the FoHLCF) was increasing slowly although our awareness that the Library would be closed for the refurbishment from Christmas meant that we did not publicise it as we would normally have done. This will be a priority once the Library reopens.

The trained FOHLCF Library volunteers continued to staff and manage the library throughout the period until Christmas, with at least one volunteer in the Library throughout the opening hours. The number of volunteers doing weekly or monthly sessions or providing cover for holidays remained steady, with two volunteers leaving and two new volunteers joining. We had enquiries from several people wanting to become volunteers but decided to put these on hold until the library re-opens after the refurbishment.

In Autumn 2023 Camden Libraries proposed trialling a new management arrangement at Highgate Library. We now have a Community Library Manager, Iqbal Hussain, who is responsible for Highgate and another Library, effectively reducing it to a part-time role. To balance the resulting reduction of management input and to ensure adequate Library staff input, the front-line Library Officers were increased from one to two, except on Saturdays where only one staff member was present. It was agreed that this arrangement would be reviewed in April 2024. To date it has been working well administratively, but the Trustees have concerns that the time it allows to develop the Library as a neighbourhood hub is

insufficient. Expanding the role of libraries to become neighbourhood hubs is a key aim of Camden Council.

It was agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), drawn up in 2015, needed to be updated. The MOU is the legal agreement that sets out the terms on which Camden Libraries and FOHLCF work together to manage and staff Highgate Library. The process of amending of the MOU is in hand, and it is intended that the revised agreement will be signed in the near future.

April 2023 to March 2024 was a year in which FOHLCF made major contributions to Highgate Library. These included providing trained volunteers to staff the Library throughout the opening hours; introducing new initiatives and facilities; and, playing an important role in the plans for the major refurbishment of the building. FOHLCF contributed over 4,000 hours of volunteer work and over £3,000 worth of equipment and books during the year.

The arrangement for FOHLCF to jointly and equally manage and staff Highgate Library with Camden Libraries has been shown to bring major benefits to this public service.

HIGHGATE LIBRARY CIVIC AND CULTURAL CENTRE

Report from Linda Lefevre, Chair of FOHLCF and the Hall Group

There was no longer a formal arrangement for use of the Hall with Camden Council during this time.

The Hall, titled Civic and Cultural Centre, was used for Library activities, two sessions for families with under-fives, a chess club for adults and children and a monthly book group. Cultural activities, including a monthly author talk organised by the Friends, have continued. Exercise classes, community meetings, a film club, a nursery nativity, choir rehearsals and family events were booked and paid for alongside these. The last use of the Hall in December 2023 was for one of our cultural events, a Pop Up play about John Keats who lived in Highgate.

In December 2023 all equipment was packed up and removed to storage to allow for the major building improvement outlined in the report from the Library Management Group. The future plan is for the Hall to be used as part of Highgate Library and its services with continued community use through booked sessions managed by the Friends.

FINANCE REPORT

Report from Paul Harris, FOHLCF Treasurer

General Finances and Outlook for 2024-25

The charity had income of £8,275 and expenditure of £6,826 giving rise to a surplus of £1449.

There were no funding bids made during this year. But an application was made successfully to reallocate the CIL grant for a Computer Club to the enable us to continue to fund the Toy Library for a further 3 years.

Significant items of expenditure were made to support our volunteers who work in the Library and run the hiring of the Hall; to fund repairs and new equipment in the Library; to fund the Toy Library; and to fund new audio visual equipment for the Hall.

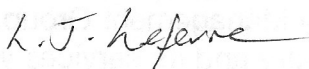
Camden have agreed to amalgamate the Hall with the Library, returning it to its original status. FOHLCF will no longer have contracted licensee status. This has been reflected in an updated Memorandum of Understanding. FOHLCF will continue to receive rental income from private hirers based on a new tariff of charges, but it is envisaged the greater use of the Hall will be made for Library run activities. whilst balancing the delivery of Library services when needed from the Hall.

The original CIL grant allowed the charity to engage Rosanna over the last three years to deliver the popular and successful Toy Library service. When the Library closed for refurbishment in December 2023 trustees resolved to pay a phased retainer to Rosanna of 2 x £500 payments as compensation for her loss of earnings, but contingent on her commitment to continue to run the Toy Library. With this retention payment the ring fenced CIL funding for this service was exhausted but the charity was able to reallocate other CIL funding to enable funding for a further 3 years.

Following closure of the Library in December 2023, income from the Hall and other sources ceased. Following the change of status of the Hall we expect to resume hiring to community and similar groups from the beginning of 2025. Conservatively, we might expect to receive an income of £500 per month. Although the charity will no longer have rental outlay, allowance is expected for future administration costs for invoicing and paying for someone to lock up the Hall after late evening hires.

Overall, the charity's finances remained robust in the year with funds at year end standing at £49.5k. It is anticipated that the charity will want to draw on its funds significantly next year to enhance the facilities in the Library and Hall including building new storage in the Hall.

This Annual Report of the Trustees for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 is approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Linda Lefevre (Chair)



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Friends of Highgate Library Charitable Foundation

NA

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01/04/2023

To

Period end date
31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Hall Lettings	6,796	-	-	6,796	7,660
Warm Spaces Grant	-	-	-	-	2,618
Donations	665	-	-	665	862
Surplus Book Sales	95	-	-	95	-
Bank Interest	720	-	-	720	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	8,275	-	-	8,275	11,140
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,275	-	-	8,275	11,140
A3 Payments					
Toy Library Service	2,732	-	-	2,732	2,606
Warm Spaces Furniture	-	-	-	-	2,594
Brookfield School Prizegiving	143	-	-	143	-
Management Software	574	-	-	574	404
Chess Club Tutor	-	-	-	-	750
Volunteer Recruitment, Training etc	572	-	-	572	298
Audio Visual Equipment	490	-	-	490	414
Insurance	296	-	-	296	394
Children's Xmas Event	103	-	-	103	99
Library Materials & Repairs	1,901	-	-	1,901	981
New books & Subscriptions	15	-	-	15	15
Sub total	6,827	-	-	6,827	8,555
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	6,827	-	-	6,827	8,555
Net of receipts/(payments)	1,449	-	-	1,449	2,585
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	47,832	-	-	47,832	45,246
Cash funds this year end	49,280	-	-	49,280	47,831

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at Bank	49,280	-	
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	49,280	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities				
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Paul Harris	18/06/2024	
		Virginia Kerridge	18/06/2024	