



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1	10	2022		30	9	2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name Friends of Rock Road Library

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1166498

Charity's principal address Rock Road Library

69 Rock Road

Cambridge

Postcode CB1 7UG

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Peter Axe	Deputy Chair		
2	James Berry	Treasurer		
3	Nigel Blackmore	Membership Officer		
4	Stephanie Boyd	Education lead		
5	Peter Chamberlain	Collection boxes		
6	Iain Cross			
7	Alec Dyson	Chair		
8	Brenda Purkiss	Arts & Culture lead		
9	Jill Trend	Meeting Secretary		
10	Jane Wilson - Haworth	Writer-in-Residence	From 6 February 2023	
11				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Banker	Lloyds Bank	3 Sidney Street, Cambridge, CB2 3HQ
Independent examiner	Adrian Burns	79 Hills Avenue, Cambridge, CB1 7UZ

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Trustees are appointed by the Board of Trustees and this is confirmed at the next Annual General Meeting

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

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Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The object of the charity is the advancement of education for the public benefit in the area served by Rock Road Library, in particular but not exclusively by:

- supporting and promoting library services;
- facilitating educational, cultural and community courses, events and exhibitions in both the library and its garden;
- fostering links to educational, cultural and community organisations.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The benefits to the public are:

- The availability of a local library which is well cared for and partly staffed by volunteers, and which without financial and practical support from the Friends of Rock Road Library might have been closed by now.
- An attractive community garden in an area without much public open space, which is safe and secure and particularly valued by families and children.
- The provision of a community room and kitchen, which is an ideal space for courses, events and exhibitions.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grant making;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

2022-23 was the first time for 3 years when COVID restrictions were fully lifted, which enabled a fuller programme of events and activities.

1) Children's activities

The Friends attach huge importance to children's activities since this brings young readers and their parents into the library.

October saw the introduction of a Friday **After-School Scrabble Group** for all ages and levels of players.

Magical Halloween The garden twinkled on 31st October: there were entertaining witches and hordes of little scary monsters enjoyed games and treats. Great fun was had by all!

In November, local parents launched a monthly **After-School Reception Lego Club** for children aged up to 5.

Children were delighted with their new **garden tunnel**, purchased from a Section 106 funding allocation to the library.

Starting in January, we funded **Rhyme and Story Time**, which is suitable for babies, children, parents and carers. One Saturday morning each month, our experienced and skilful story tellers – Veronica Speirs and Marion Leeper – entertain the smallest of children and our next generation of readers.

Cambridgeshire Libraries' free, **Summer Reading Challenge** – "Ready, Set, Read!" - was open to pre-school and primary school aged children and was for all reading abilities. The Reading Agency teamed up with the Youth Sport Trust to encourage children to unleash the power of play, sport and physical activity through reading and a programme of fun activities. Rock Road Library hosted two events in August: '**Design Your Own Board Game**' and '**Make Your Own Athlete**'.

Finally, September witnessed the introduction of a regular **Spanish Club** for children aged 3-6.

2) Authors' talks

Mary Burgess, Cambridge Library's Local Studies Assistant, gave a very well-attended and fascinating talk based on her book '**Cherry Hinton Road**'. Residents also enjoyed sharing their own recollections of local life over the decades.

'A Male Writing Romantic Fiction' In November, local author **R J Gould** talked about his successes and obstacles, covering what he wrote about, where he got his ideas from, and the challenge of being a male writing about relationships.

Also in November, **Susan Grossey** entertained with fascinating anecdotes about her years of experience exposing criminal activity in the finance sector and how this inspired her writing of historical crime fiction.

A capacity audience thoroughly enjoyed **John Meed's** delightful February talk about '**A Haven for Farmland Birds**' - his recently-published 10-year study of local wildlife.

Professor Susan Sellers returned to Rock Road Library in May to give an illustrated talk about her new novel '**The Firebird: A Bloomsbury Love Story**', which explored the extraordinary love affair and marriage of the Russian dancer Lydia Lopokova and British economist John Maynard Keynes.

3) Creative events

Led by artist **Veronica Thornton**, the Wednesday morning **Textile Group** completed a delightful hanging to cheer the walls of the Cambridge Cancer Centre.

Cambridge Open Studios returned for two weekends in July with an exhibition by local artist **Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas**. On the second weekend, the sun shone for our **Summer Coffee Morning**, with folk enjoying cake, coffee and buying plants in the garden.

In September **Sarah Ingram**, a Rock Road Library Community Library Assistant who holds a Masters in Creative Writing, launched the **Rock Library Write Club**, a new, monthly, drop-in club for people who want to write but need the stimulus of writing buddies, a regular schedule, and a neutral space in which to do it.

4) Writer-In-Residence Jane Wilson-Howarth

Jane Wilson-Howarth took up the role of Writer-in-Residence soon after returning to Cambridge from Nepal, and in September gave a presentation about her work there. This presentation was rapidly followed by a talk in February from civil engineer Simon Howarth, her husband, about the challenges of recovering from disasters and building resilience to **climate change in Nepal**. And they jointly mounted a **Himalayan photo exhibition** in the Community Room.

In the build-up to Halloween, Jane created a **Flash Fiction Competition**, with a challenge to write a complete story in 250 words or less on the Halloween theme. The competition was extremely popular, attracting 179 entries, with four different age groups. On 1st November, Judges, Trustees, friends and family of the younger competition winners gathered to listen to readings of the best entries and to receive their prizes of book tokens, books and Jane's novels. Some of the tales also featured on Cambridge Community Radio 105.

In January, she gave a talk about '**Bugs Bites & Bowels**' to help avoid health problems on trips away from home. There were some unexpected tips about toilets and sea-sickness remedies and, despite (or because of) the occasional revolting image, the audience was well-entertained

5 Christmas Cheer!

Following the lifting of Covid restrictions, we held our first **Christmas social** for three years. The evening began with a very brief AGM, we then enjoyed seasonal refreshments, some excellent music, singing, humour, a quiz and a charming reading by Julia Campling of her winning Flash Fiction entry.

6 The gardens

We believe Rock Road is the only public library in Cambridgeshire with a substantial garden. A hard-working group of volunteer gardeners meets every Monday morning to develop and maintain this invaluable resource both for library users and the community to enjoy.

A new border was developed between the garden's side entrance and the library steps. This has improved the appearance of the entrance into the garden (from the side gate), softened this shadier area with attractive greenery such as ferns and a flowering quince, whilst improving the view looking back towards the library.

Meanwhile, in the front garden, evergreen shrubs such as a daphne and a sarcococca were added to provide greater winter structure. Three beautiful David Austin roses were purchased from a generous donation and added to the front garden so that passersby as well as library users would enjoy their blooms and scent.

7 Major fund-raising events

Apple Day in October was a bumper event and the garden was overflowing with people who brought apples, empty bottles, cake, friends and children for a morning of apple-pressing. Folk enjoyed the fine weather, and a record volume of apple juice was pressed! We were very grateful to Joan Tibbs and her team for providing the equipment and working so hard. We banked £580.

In May the annual **Plant Sale and Children's Fun** returned and was a happy and very successful event. Lots of smiling people and the children very much enjoyed the activities we had for them. We took £754 which was larger than any previous fundraising event.

8) Membership

We understand that Rock Road is the only public library in Cambridgeshire to have a subscription-based membership scheme and we now have 146 paid-up households. Our members are very important because they demonstrate the breadth of support in the community. During the year, members of FRRL generously contributed a total of £2,136, most of which attracted a further 25% in Gift Aid. Shortly after the year-end, Nigel Blackmore resigned as Membership Secretary – whilst remaining a Trustee - and was succeeded by Simon Howarth.

9) Book purchases

Public libraries nationwide are facing year-on-year budget cuts in new book purchases. In addition, there is a chronic lack of investment in school libraries, whilst parents and carers are spending less on books because of the cost-of-living crisis. In response, the Friends of Rock Road Library and Cambridgeshire Libraries jointly agreed a detailed programme of investment in new books, with the Friends setting aside £1,000 to be spent in the financial year. The budget was split 50/50 between Adults' and Children's Books and 50/50 between Fiction and Non-Fiction. This initiative was extended into the current financial year, with a further £1,000 budget set aside for 2023-24. For the first 3 months, these books can only be taken out by users coming into Rock Road Library. After that, they can be ordered by all users in Cambridgeshire via the online system but will always return to Rock Road. The books have a label to state they were bought by the Friends and are flagged on the computer system so we can monitor performance.

As an additional part of our support for the library service, we are now buying one or two copies of books by authors who have spoken at the library.

10) Good News!

Rock Road Library enjoyed one of its busiest summers for a long time with 25 % more issues in August 2023 compared to the previous year. This was down to new book purchases, more stable staffing and the Summer Reading Challenge.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's policy is to (a) ensure that restricted reserves fully cover future spending commitments and (b) maintain an unrestricted reserve of at least £2,000 in order to meet fluctuations in receipts and payments. At 30 September 2023 we had accumulated £4,162 in our bank accounts, partly because of tight controls over spending and partly because of success in fund raising. The trustees have agreed to budget spending of £7,620 in 2023-24, the highest figure for 6 years. The main categories are: book collections £1,100, community garden £900, fundraising and events £1,400, interior refurbishment £1,040 and Rhyme and Story Time £1,200.

Details of any funds materially in deficit**Further financial review details (Optional information)**

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Our principal sources of funds are grants, fundraising, membership subscriptions and donations.

Over the years, much of our expenditure has "seeded" substantial grants which have transformed community facilities in both the library and its garden.

Our day-to day expenditure funds:

- Library events (e.g. author talks, open studios, writing competitions)
- The provision of new books and newspapers
- Equipment for and maintenance of the library and garden

Section F

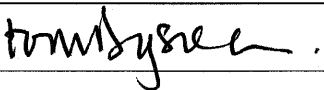
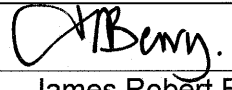
Other optional information

Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Alec William Thomas Dyson	James Robert Berry
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Treasurer
Date	10 July 2024	10 July 2024

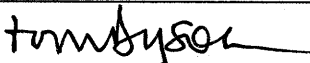
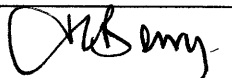


Friends of Rock Road Library		No 1166498		CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts				
For the period from	1 October 2022	To	30 September 2023	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total funds £	Last year £
A1 Receipts					
Collection boxes	325			325	289
Donations	1,043			1,043	530
Gift aid	457			457	781
Fundraising and events	1,831			1,831	1,918
Membership subscriptions	1,093			1,093	1,120
Total receipts	4,749			4,749	4,638
A3 Payments					
Book collections	1,108			1,108	
Community garden	1,049			1,049	2,250
Fundraising and events	1,471			1,471	1,214
Library equipment	132			132	129
Library interior refurbishment	495			495	
Library frontage project					1,507
Miscellaneous	151			151	267
Newspapers	945			945	262
Publicity	246			246	526
Rhyme and story time	775			775	
Total payments	6,372			6,372	6,155
Net of receipts/(payments)	(1,623)			(1,623)	(1,517)
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end	5,785			5,785	7,302
Cash funds this period end	4,162			4,162	5,785

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	Lloyds Bank	4,162		
	Total cash funds	4,162		
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B5 Liabilities		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Alec William Thomas Dyson	10-Jul-23	
		James Robert Berry	10-Jul-23	