

FRIENDS OF BENSON LIBRARY

CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (CIO)

Registered Number **1176595**

Address: Benson Library, Crown Square, Benson OX10 6SD

TRUSTEES

Officers:

Frances Swann *Chair*
Mary Phillipson *Secretary*
Judith Pignon *Treasurer*

Trustees:

John Murphy
Patrick ('Barry') O'Connor
Vivien Gardner
Fiona Thomson-Tur
Christopher Swann
Lucy Browne
Brendan Thorpe

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The purpose of the Charity continues to be to advance the education of the public by the promotion of a public library service for the residents of Benson and surrounding villages.

We meet these objects by raising funds to provide Oxford County Library Service with a subvention to maintain a library service in Benson, which also benefits residents in surrounding villages. There is considerable residential housebuilding in the area which has led to a significant population increase and increased demand for library services. We also recruit, assist in training of and organise a rota of volunteers to serve as assistants in the library. This year we have agreed to pay for an increase in the library manager's time of one hour per week to assist with events in the library and general administration.

The Charity communicates with stakeholders and the general community by means of a website, an online newsletter and a monthly column in the 'Benson Bulletin', the latter being a rich source of local news which is widely distributed in the village and surroundings.

In 2023 Brendan Thorpe joined as a Trustee and Frances Swann succeeded Anna Malkin as Chair.

Oxfordshire County Council have completed long awaited works to the Benson Library car park providing a tarmac area for 7 cars and a disabled space. The cost of these much-needed improvements to the grassed area of the library were borne by Oxfordshire County Council. The CIO is currently awaiting an estimate of costs from Oxfordshire County Council for the addition of a storage shed for garden tools, a bike shed, a covered area for buggies, steps to the garden area and improvements to the overgrown area to the front of the property.

This year the library has been well supported by its readers with a large increase in members due to the addition of new houses in Benson, and the Library Manager has hosted a number of events such as the Summer Reading Challenge culminating in the Medal Award Ceremony, a Carers Coffee Morning with local Carers Group, Rhyme Time for mothers and toddlers, Incredible Edibles bug activity sessions, Menopause Group and Volunteers Get Together.

We have continued to recruit volunteers to assist with the library service provision. We have directly provided funds for book purchases that were withdrawn by the Oxfordshire Library Service. In this way, the reading interests of the local users are directly reflected in book stock that doesn't join our regular stock rotation with other libraries.

We have drawn up a document on Governance of the COI including the roles of the Trustees and Financial Controls which we regularly update.

The CIO also sees its role in the wider context of improving Benson Library's environment. We work with local groups planting fruit and vegetables in the library garden, encouraging local families to enjoy resulting produce free.

The CIO has also been working with interested groups in Benson on a project to provide a secure place for local archive materials, which has now been found and located in a space in the Youth Hall. The CIO participated in an open day at the Parish Hall highlighting the history of the village and received a lot of interest in its display and information about the library.

We have two large fundraising events planned for the autumn, a cake stall and a Quiz with a Prize Draw which in the past have proven to be a good source of fundraising income.

We have recently ordered and received branded cotton tote bags, which can be sold or given away to help promote the use of the library. We have also bought two pop up banners to promote the charity at events and stalls.

Oxfordshire County Council has approved the purchase of Lego sets for the library as a capital cost for lending and circulation for variety.

Oxfordshire County Council are undertaking a Library Development Asset Plan which will look at all 44 libraries and the population they will serve in 10 years' time, with an action plan of what needs to be done at each library and prioritisation. It was noted that Benson Library lacks storage and it has been acknowledged that a proper review of opening hours is due on the percentage of Library Manager hours vs volume and population.

We are planning an event to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the opening of Benson Library which will most likely be in the late summer of 2024 to coincide with the presentation of the Summer Reading Challenge Prizes. We are planning a fete in the grounds of the library together with the commissioning of a stone bench commemorating the 50th anniversary.

We have opened a High Interest Bank Account into which we have placed some funds in order to receive interest on our invested funds.

We took part in the Benson Christmas Tree Festival at St Helen's Church which was a highly successful event and provided much goodwill and local publicity for the library and the work of the CIO.

FINANCIAL POSITION

The opening balance on the account was £38,957.74 plus £34.05 cash and the closing balance was £36240.80 + £62.56 cash

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

Frances Swann
Chair

Mary Phillipson
Secretary

Accounts 01 Jan 2022 - 31 Dec 2022

Item	Income	Expenditure
OCLS Salary *See note i		6732
OCLS Books		1500
Tea Fund carers		20
Menopause Party		83.88
Xmas Dinner for Librarian & husband		60
Insurance		250.51
Funds		
Standing Orders	348	
100 Club *see note ii	320	353.37
SODC Registration of Lottery		20
Sale of Books at PO	247.57	
Office Equipment		
Zettle Card Machine		70.8
Norton		84.98
Web Hosting & Domain Name (11.99+59.42)		71.41
Business cards		31.9
Book bags (Stock & giveaways) 200		713.52
Banners x 2		174
Storage box for FoBL equipment etc		22.94
Grants		
Ewelme PC	400	
Benson PC	4088	
Benson Garden club	190	
Events		
Jubilee Fete	80	
Cake Sale	368.92	
Plates etc for cake stall		17.18
Christmas Tree fair (Benson church)		10
Quiz Night ticket sales	1050	
Quiz Night Raffle & prizes	365	111.66
Severn Trent (sponsor £100 first prize)	100	100
Quiz Night Bar Zettle	239.74	
Quiz Night Bar Cash	385	
Quiz Night Bar Beer, wine, etc		292
Quiz Night Hall Hire		134.5
Wreath		18
Totals	8182.23	10872.65
Change for 2022	Minus	2690.42

#£ 3118.00 of the funds in the bank account are in a special fund for children's books

Opening bank balance 38957.74+34.05 cash and closing balance 36240.80+£60.57 cash.

Change in 2022 Minus **2690.42**

*Note 1 Due to Lockdown and refurbishment of the library building three OCC Invoices were issued instead of the usual two per year

*Note ii £180.00 100 Club funds received in 2021. No 100 Club 2022-2023

Accounts examined
1. c. 2021
Independent Examiner
14.10.23