

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.

The Charity communicates with stakeholders and the general community by means of a website, by Mailchimp communications, posters and fliers in the library and village, and in the 'Benson Bulletin', the latter being a rich source of local news which is widely distributed in the village and surroundings.

In 2024 all trustees and officers remain the same in their posts.

We have a new library manager, Kirsty Shearer, after the retirement of Hilary Rust who had been library manager at Benson Library for 17 years. We had a retirement party at the library in December to thank Hilary for her wonderful service at the library, attended by many volunteers and OCLS staff.

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 gardening activity sessions, craft sessions, Lego sessions 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 and we are hoping to extend the garden into a further area of land which is currently overgrown.

The CIO participated in the local school fete in the summer with a table of merchandise and information about the library to promote the role of the library in the school and village, and also in a Green Day together with St Helen's church, to raise awareness of the environment and the effects of climate change.

We have a large fundraising event planned for the autumn, our annual Quiz, with a Prize Draw which in the past has proven to be a good source of fundraising income. We had a successful cake sale in the Spring which raised funds for the library, and also raised awareness of the library in the village.

We have recently ordered and received branded tea towels, which can be sold or given away to help promote the use of the library.

Oxfordshire County Council provided Lego and Duplo sets for the library which has led to successful sessions in the library for children.

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 2025 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 are planning 6 author talks in the Library during 2025 to promote reading and interest in local authors to members of the library and villagers.

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 in the current account was £36240.80 plus £60.57 cash. The closing balance was £29716.80 in the current account, £10,000 in a high interest account plus £60.57 cash.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

Frances Swann
Chair

Mary Phillipson
Secretary

Accounts 01 Jan 2023 - 31 Dec 2023

Item	Income	Expenditure
OCLS Salary		2244
OCLS Books		800
Children's toys etc for library Note 1		193.92
Tea Fund		40
Book Tokens Reading Challenge		90
Xmas Dinner for Librarian & husband		52.2
Insurance		235.57
Funds		
Standing Orders	348	
100 Club Note 2		46.5
SODC Registration of Lottery		20
Transfer to Savings Account Charity Bank		10000
Membership	12	
Office Equipment		
Top Marks (Paul Kennedy) Web site repairs (Inv 20230126)		180
Web Hosting & Domain Name (Inv 581753 & 581469)		74.39
Design 2 Print Banner (Inv 10593)		66
Wine for Auditor		17.98
Grants		
Ewelme PC	250	
Benson PC	4238	
Events		
Cake Sale Zettle	194.98	
Cake Sale incl £40 float	265.75	40
Christmas Tree fair (Benson church)		10
Quiz Night ticket sales	1340	
Quiz Night Raffle & prizes incl 20.00 float and prizes	599	118
Severn Trent (sponsor £100 first prize)	100	100
Quiz Night Jams etc incl 10.00 float	25	10
Quiz Zettle	492.23	
Quiz Night Bar Cash incl 80.00 float	154.1	80
Quiz Night Hall Hire		134.5
Librarian Leaving present	284.99	274.99
Totals	8304.05	14828.05
	Minus	6524

Change for 2023

(£ 3118.00 - 193.92) 2924.08 of the funds in the bank account are in a special fund for children's books

Opening bank balance 36240.80 + 60.57 cash and closing balance 29716.80 + 60.57 cash**Change in 2023**

Minus

6524**Savings Account with Charity Bank £10000****Total FoBL funds 29716.80 Current a/c + 10000 savings a/c + 60.57 cash**

Note 1 Toys etc purchased from Amazon

Note 2 Prize from 100 club paid by cheque not cashed till 2023

Accounts examined
 1.9.20
 Independent Examiner
 21.10.20