

Annual Report for the period From 1st April 2023 To 31st March 2024

Organisation name: Friends of Beechcroft Library

Charity registration number: 1188953

Objectives and Activities

This annual report has been created following guidance contained in the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) issued by the Charity Commission.

	SORP Ref.	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	Purposes as defined in the Constitution agreed in April 2020: The advancement of education for the public benefit in particular by the provision of library facilities and services for learning, for information, advice and other related library provision for the benefit of the residents and the wider community in Stratton St Margaret and the surrounding areas.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	The main activities undertaken to achieve the aims are: • Working with the Library Staff and Stratton Parish Council to develop the library as a community hub • Meeting with Library staff and Parish to agree objectives, approach and activities • Running events and activities such as Basic IT skills, social groups and clubs, developing/ displaying Stratton History Archive material, organising regular events • Promoting the Library via social media, posters, displays, developing a community network • Raising funds to support activities, purchasing craft materials, reference books, Refreshments
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees assess each of their activities with regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP Ref.	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	The Friends do not currently give grants to individuals or other organisations
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	The Friends do not currently undertake any social investments
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	There are no employees, all the Trustees are volunteers. Library Volunteers are engaged by the Parish rather than the Friends but are supported and encouraged by the Friends. Their contribution is vital in enabling the Library and the Friends to undertake the numerous activities and groups which take place

Achievements and Performance

	SORP Ref.	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	When Stratton Parish council took over running the library from Swindon Borough Council in Sept 2017, it was for a trial period of 18 months, and we expected at any moment that the library would be closed. However, over the last 12 to 18 months there has been a remarkable transformation in Beechcroft Library. The library is fast becoming a role model for a multi-functional community library. The Parish councillors and officers are fully engaged with the potential and opportunities afforded by the library as a thriving community hub and we now feel the future of the library is completely secure. The Friends' activities in support of Beechcroft Library are all aligned to our four key objectives, namely: 1. To improve health and well-being, 2. To encourage community engagement, 3. To improve skills and training 4. To help support the library financially. Our achievements this year are discussed under the relevant objective below. Objective 1 - To improve health and well being The regular groups and activities supported by the Friends are all well attended and help to mitigate the loneliness and isolation experienced by some of our residents. These regular groups include: • Fun Art group, • Friendship Group, • Tea and Tech digital drop-in sessions, • Book Club, • Family History Research, • Chess Club • Lego Club. These regular groups are supplemented by activities organised by library staff, volunteers and the Parish team, resulting in a very busy, welcoming and engaging feel to the library. We continue to run the Home Delivery Book Service for local residents who are housebound. This is proving more resource intensive than anticipated and we have not rolled it out more widely yet.

		Between April 2023 and March 2024 we continued to run the self-service mini 'café' for library users, providing hot drinks and biscuits. This is free to users and has supported the library's registration as a Welcome Space over the winter months. This service will finish at the end of March when the new community cafe Brew Book is due to open. Members of the Friends liaise closely with the Swindon Live Well Hub, especially the Social Prescribers and Community Navigators. They direct their clients to the various services provided by the library such as Stratton Advice Point, Tea and Tech, Friendship Group and Art Group. Members of the Friends also work closely with the local Primary Care networks in particular to help with potential digital exclusion as the NHS becomes oriented towards digitisation of their services. We also work closely with Stratton Advice Point which has successfully claimed over £270,000 in welfare benefits for service users during 2023-24. Objective 2 - To encourage community engagement The library has organised or taken part in various one-off community events during the year such as coffee mornings, raffles, book sales etc. These included: • Coffee Morning in May for Mental Health Awareness week when we raised £300 for Swindon MIND. • Book stall, History display and Library information stall at Stratton Community Fete in June • Book stall, History display and Library information stall at Stratton Festival in July • Book stall, History display and Library information stall at Royal British Legion Fete in August • Coffee morning in October which raised £1000 for Macmillan Cancer Support • Cake stall and book stall at Stratton Wellness Day in November which raised £237 for Prospect Hospice. • Music and Mince Pies event in December which raised £220 for Beechcroft Library • Coffee morning in February 2024 which raised £351 for the Prospect Hospice . • We organised two children's film evenings during the winter months, but sadly these were poorly attended. • We hosted a visit from the local Brownies which was very
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		successful and will be repeated each year The Friends maintain a Facebook business page and an up to date website to improve our visibility, engage with residents and widen the reach of the library. The Friends' Web-site has been amended to clarify the role of the Friends and to remove overlap with information on the Parish Council Website. The website has been assessed for both Privacy and Accessibility and appropriate Privacy and Accessibility statements included on the site. Kingsdown School's Art Department has generously provided another eight pieces of art to the Library, in addition to the eight provided last year. Each piece is the final outcome of a Year 10 or Year 11 student's GCSE Art work. All 16 pictures are on display in the Library, Brew Book cafe and Grange Community Centre. We are very fortunate that the Stratton St Margaret History Society is based in the library and the history team work hard to maintain the history archive and curate the various history displays. Their detailed annual report is included in a separate section below. Several of our Trustees are active members of various local organisations including: • The Swindon Trustee Network, • Get Connected Swindon, • Stratton St Margaret History Society, • Local Primary Care Networks • Live Well Swindon • Wiltshire Building Records • Swindon and District Local History Society • Wiltshire On-line Parish Clerks Objective 3 - To improve skills and training The Library is a registered Digital Inclusion hub. This is an important service as there is only one other place in Swindon running digital inclusion sessions for residents. The Friends are also members of the Digital Inclusion Network within Libraries Connected organisation. As important providers of digital inclusion work in Swindon, members of the Tea and Tech team have been working with other local organisations to establish a Swindon forum to improve digital inclusion in the area. One of our trustees has produced the first Terms of Reference for this forum (called Get Connected Swindon) which has been accepted by the various
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		organisations involved, including Swindon Library & Information Service, Live Well Swindon, Swindon Seniors Forum, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Acorn Community Bank among others. We have purchased additional learning resources such as history books, and children's non-fiction books in line with the national curriculum, which are available to use as reference books within the library. Objective 4 - To help support the library financially The library has organised or taken part in various one-off events during the year such as coffee mornings, raffles, book sales, etc and has raised £1,453 in donations and sales to support activities in Beechcroft library. Stratton St Margaret History Society report • Following the Parish decision to locate a café within the library, the area allocated for the Society has been reduced and moved out into the rear vestibule. After discussion we now also have some shelving to also keep out our books for general viewing. • The Society has been holding regular bi-monthly meetings which I'm sad to say have been poorly attended. • The Facebook site membership has continued to grow and is now up to 1,181. We are still receiving information from locals to update our more modern records. • Current research from Clive is increasing our knowledge of pre-roman times. • We did a 'Stroll around Stratton' physical and slide show events last year. • Trolling through old newspaper records continues and a lot has been added during the past year. • A number of new books and items have been added to the collection through the year. ➤ The Railways & History of HMEF Stratton. ➤ Diaries of William Hedges travels in India. ➤ 50 Years of Stratton Boys Brigade ➤ Arkell's memorabilia. ➤ British Leyland memorabilia. • Current projects by Nigel include transcribing 1939 Register records for Gorse Hill, completing history of Stratton Workhouse/Hospital and a photo record of
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		Kingsdown Crematorium burials. - About 12 Family Tree Sessions in last year <i>Clive Carter (Archivist) & Nigel Chalk (Historian)</i> Charity Governance We have been working on improving our governance and risk management in line with new guidelines issued by the Charity Commission during 2023. Our Safeguarding and Risk Management policies were updated to reflect the latest guidance, and the following new policies were developed: - Serious Incident Reporting - Complaints Management - Internal Financial Controls - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Future Plans Our thanks go to all the staff, the volunteers and Stratton St Margaret Parish Council who have supported the Library so wonderfully over the last year. Looking to the future, we are excited to be working with the Parish and with Brew Book Cafe to develop Beechcroft Library into an even more successful and vibrant community hub.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP Ref	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	Formal fundraising objectives were not defined other than ensuring that the objectives described in the previous section were supported financially where necessary.
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	Not applicable

Financial Review

	SORP Ref.	
Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	Our income for 2023-24 totalled £2,253.65, comprising: - A generous grant of £800 from Stratton St Margaret Parish Council £1,320 in donations £133 from the sale of books and cakes We have spent £2,090 on purchases for the library, including new books and equipment. We also repaid £382 of unspent

		grant from last year's Parish grant. Our net worth as at 31 March 2024 was £2,384, (£2.332 in the Co-op Bank and £52 in cash). Please see the Annual Financial Report for full details.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Our Reserves Policy states that we will only hold reserve funds if we have formal financial commitments. As we now have Public Liability Insurance premiums going forward we will ensure that we have sufficient funds to cover the premium and run-off insurance in the event that the charity closes down.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	Sufficient to cover Public Liability Insurance Premium which was £160 in 2023-24, and the estimated premium of roughly £700 for run-off insurance for 7 years in the event the charity closes down.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	Not applicable
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	Not applicable
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	We are dependent on the continued existence of Beechcroft Library. There is little chance that the Library would close in the near future as it is a popular resource for the parish.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	We have received £800 in grants this year from Stratton St Margaret Parish Council We have received £1,320 in donations and £133 from sales of cakes and books
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	There are few risks facing the Friends charity and they are all categorised as low, the highest risks are: - Activities where safeguarding risks may arise - Over-reliance on a few key individuals

Structure, Governance and Management

	SORP Ref.	
Type of governing document	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted?	Para 1.25	Charitable Incorporated Organisation following the Foundation model

Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions	Para 1.25	The existing Trustees can select new Trustees as required following the procedure described in the next section.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	Recruitment of Trustees for the Friends should be in line with the guidance given below: • There is a written job description / person specification for the post • If a trustee wishes to volunteer for the Library they should complete a Parish Council volunteer application form and the Parish Recruitment policies be followed • A suitable induction programme is provided • The applicant is given a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and knows how to report concerns.
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a written constitution. We are not affiliated to any wider network
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	We work closely with Stratton St Margaret Parish Council who run Beechcroft Library.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Friends of Beechcroft Library
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1188953
Charity's principal address	188 Beechcroft Road, Swindon, SN2 7QQ

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Lesley Hemingway	Chair		
2	Richard Hemingway	Treasurer		
3	Indra Robson			
4	Lynette Dodson			
5	Greg Browne	Secretary		
6	Clive Carter			
7	Linda O'Kane	Deputy Chair		
9	Nigel Chalk	Deputy Treasurer		
10	Anne Chalk			

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		
N/A		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
N/A		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	Not applicable
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	Not applicable
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	Not applicable

Exemptions from disclosure

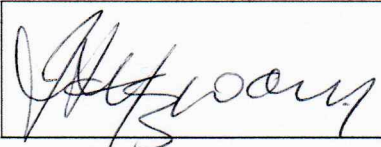
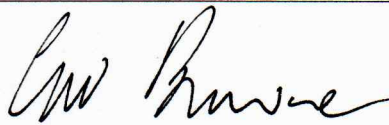
Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Not applicable

Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	JOAN LESLEY HEMINGWAY	GREGORY WADE BROWNE
Position(s) (eg Secretary, Chair)	Chair	Secretary
Date(s)	18. June 2024	18 June 2024.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
Friends of Beechcroft Library

Charity No
1932963

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023

To

31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grant	800	-	-	800	1,820
Donations	1,320	-	-	1,320	1,157
Sales	133	-	-	133	119
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	2,253	-	-	2,253	3,096
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	2,253	-	-	2,253	3,096
A3 Payments					
Non-inventory items purchased	1,252	-	-	1,252	1,085
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,252	-	-	1,252	1,085
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Inventory items purchased	839	-	-	839	1,165
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	839	-	-	839	1,165
Total payments	2,091	-	-	2,091	2,250
Net of receipts/(payments)	162	-	-	162	846
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	162	-	-	162	846

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds				
	Cash	52	211	-
	Bank	2,332	2,392	-

	-	-	-
Total cash funds	2,384	2,603	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

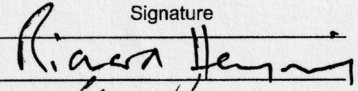
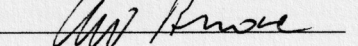
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	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
	Richard Hemingway	19/11/2024
	Greg Browne	3/12/2024