



# Friends of Church Stretton Library

Supporting the library in the heart of the community

## Annual Report April 2020-March 2021

The outbreak of covid dashed many of our plans for the year. When the library finally reopened, library staff did a magnificent job in providing a covid secure library service while retaining a happy warm and welcoming atmosphere.

We continued with activities where we could. We encouraged people to write poems during the summer lockdown and were delighted when covid restrictions were lifted so Joanna Clark could deliver poetry workshops. These culminated with readings at the URC on 1<sup>st</sup> October to mark National Poetry Day. All the poems for this event were later featured in Stretton Focus. We were very pleased when an even greater number of local poets recited more of their work at our March poetry zoom event.



Local Geologist Peter Toghil led a Geology Walk in October but sadly a second Geology walk had to be cancelled when the second lockdown began. We decided to start running events in zoom which led to three Spring talks on the Church Stretton wetlands, on local Geology and on attracting birds to your garden.

## Fund Raising



Despite having to cancel so many events we raised £5,685.64. Our largest source of income was from our supporters who make small regular donations through standing orders. Thank you so much for your continued support.

We also published a Friends calendar which raised over £1,000.00. This featured photographs kindly donated by James Russell from the Outdoor

Depot. Work is under way on designing a calendar for 2022.

During periods of more relaxed regulation, the Rural Charity Shop provided a much-appreciated location for book sales which provided useful income.

**Thank you to all the people who helped with this.**

Friends of Church Stretton Library, Church Stretton Library, Church Street, Church Stretton  
SY6 6DQ - email [churchstrettonlibrary@outlook.com](mailto:churchstrettonlibrary@outlook.com) Charity Number 1182554  
[www.strettonlibraryfriends.org.uk](http://www.strettonlibraryfriends.org.uk)



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## Library Improvements

After discussion with library staff, we purchased a colourful new rug for when Rhyme Time restarts. We are in discussion with library staff about funding other improvements for the library.

Shropshire Library Service have agreed to convert the lights in the library to LED to improve visibility as well as save energy; however we have still not been given a date for this.

## Looking forward

We had expected to have a clear agreement between ourselves, Shropshire Council and the Town Council by now about future funding of the library. However, Shropshire Council are now developing a new library strategy which might impact on this. This has left us with the dilemma of not knowing whether to build up reserves for when the situation is finally clarified, or spend more money now on improving the library. We have invited a representative from Shropshire Library Service to come to our AGM on the 30<sup>th</sup> June to tell us more about their new strategy and what it might mean for Church Stretton library.

In addition, unexpected problems with the Town Council's financial management have come to light. A high number of town councillors stood down at the May 2021 elections and a new Town Clerk is to be appointed. Our chair Sheila Davies has now been elected as a town councillor and Deputy Mayor. The current situation is extremely fluid, making the work of Friends of the Library more important than ever.

## How you can Help

You can help by attending our events, by making donations or volunteering to work with us. If you shop with Amazon, please remember to use Amazon Smile. You can find out about our events and how to make donations by going to our website or by asking at the library.



### Trustees and committee members

We would like to thank Kate Williams and Janet Newman for their work as trustees. Kate stood down last June and Janet Newman, who is one of our founder trustees, is standing down at the AGM. We were pleased to welcome Beth Furlong onto the committee in November and she became a full trustee in January. We are a friendly group who meet once a month and each help in different ways. If you want to find out more, please contact us for more information.

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## Financial Report 2020 to 2021

### Income

We raised a total of £5,685.64 this year, which is short of our £10,000 target but an extremely good result when you consider most of the events planned this year had to be cancelled because of covid.

We managed to raise £79.00 from the poetry workshops and the geology walk, £126.15 selling books /cards and £1,165 from selling calendars

We received a total of £4,101.75 in donations which included

- £3,594 from local residents making regular donations
- £507.75 as one-off donations from collection boxes and events

We are very grateful to the residents who make regular donations which formed the majority of our income this year. The one-off donations are markedly down on the previous year but this is to be expected because there were fewer events.

We claimed £762.22 from HMRC in Gift Aid on donations received up to the end of February 2021.

### Expenditure

We spent £289.20 on purchasing a new rug for the Rhyme Time Sessions.

We spent a total of £259.28 on running costs. The biggest expense was for a zoom licence so we can run events in zoom.

### Future Library Funding

We had anticipated giving £5,000 towards the running costs of the library in April this year, and a further £10,000 in the following year.

However, Shropshire Council is not asking for a financial contribution this year. This is because due to covid they did not meet with the Town Council in time to agree a final amount. Shropshire Council were to meet with the Town Council in May 2021 to discuss what contributions are expected next year, but this has not yet happened.

### Summary

We raised less than our target for this year but have not had to contribute the £5,000 expected towards the running costs of the library. There remains uncertainty about how much money Shropshire Council is going to require from us in the future.



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## Accounts Summary

<b>Accounts Summary 2020-2021</b>			
<b>Income</b>	Events (net)	2020-2021 events	79.00
		Calendars	1,165.00
		Book sales/market	126.15
			1,370.15
	Donations	General	4,101.75
	Gift Aid		762.22
	Total Income		<u>6,234.12</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>	Admin Costs	Post & Stationery	108.10
		Repairs & Renewals	0.00
		Publicity (Charity)	7.30
		Zoom Registration	143.88
			259.28
	<b>Income over Expenditure (profit)</b>		<u>5,974.84</u>
	Grants to Library		289.20
	Balance for year to 31.3.21		<u>5,685.64</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>	Balance b/f from y/e 2020		10,629.30
	Balance from y/e 2021		5,685.64
			<u>16,314.94</u>
	<b>Made up of</b>		
	Bank	16,294.94	
	Cash	20.00	
	Stock/Prepayments	0.00	
		<u>16,314.94</u>	
	Reserves:		
	FoCSL Charity reserves	4,000.00	
	For Town Council	5,000.00	
	For Library Purchases	150.00	
	Balance available carried forward to y/e 2022	<u>7,164.94</u>	