



Friends of Church Stretton Library

Supporting the library in the heart of the community

Annual Report April 2022 - March 2023

Changes at Church Stretton Library

£10,000 Raised for Library Refurbishment

We offered Shropshire Library Service £10,000 from funds raised in previous years, to replace some fixed shelf units with more modern display units. This will allow the library to provide a more flexible use of space when hosting events and school visits. Shropshire Library Services have now managed to find funding to add to this, so we are pleased to say that a complete refurbishment should take place in 2023.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible through your donations and by supporting our events.

New LED Lighting

We are delighted the old lighting in the library has finally been replaced with LED lights. This is in response to a request from Friends, after we learnt people with poor eyesight were struggling to read the Large Print books because the lighting wasn't bright enough. If you have any other suggestions for improvements to the library – please let us know.

Shropshire Council Library Strategy 2022 to 2027



Shropshire council have approved a new library strategy which means libraries have to provide additional services to ensure they stay relevant in the future. Libraries thus face a balancing act: retaining their traditional role while attracting new users. Part of the strategy is that self-service facilities are to be rolled out to all libraries. It is hoped this automation will free up library staff time to handle other enquiries.

Providing additional services in small market towns such as Church Stretton will mean people do not have to travel to Shrewsbury for them. However, this needs to be done carefully, so library staff do not find themselves overwhelmed, or without the time to support more traditional library functions.

You can hear more about all of these proposals at our AGM in June, where we will have a speaker from Shropshire Library Service to answer your questions.

Annual General Meeting, 15th June

7.30pm, URC Hall

Future Plans for the Library

speaker from Shropshire Library Service

The AGM will be followed by wine, soft drinks and nibbles in the URC garden





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Fundraising

Thank you to everyone who helped make this another successful year in which £7,875 was raised by our various activities. This included over £4,000 in donations: regular donors, as well as people making one off donations. We were able to claim 877.51 in Gift Aid from donations.

If you are making a donation and are a UK tax payer, please do complete the Gift Aid form that can be found in the library, or on our website.

A further breakdown of our accounts appears on page 4. A full breakdown of our annual accounts is available on our website, or on request. You are welcome to ask questions about these at our AGM.

Events

Our events team successfully ran events covering a broad range of interests and involving other community organisations.

The Stretton Players repeated their performance of our First World War dramatized reading of “Interesting Times”, raising funds both for the library and the local British Legion.

Brian Stone and Ed Drury delighted the audience at the Silvester Horne Institute with their musical virtuosity.

Ben Warren ran an enjoyable quiz, which is becoming a popular annual event.

Vicky Munro gave a very instructive talk in the library on “Living Longer Better”.



We hosted a winter Zoom talk by Charlie Bell from the National Trust on the excellent Stepping Stones nature project.

David Lyons and Malcolm Phillips gave a talk and video of the ultimate “boys’ day out” flying spitfires.

Finally in March, Janet Longstaff shared her enthusiasm for Turkish literature and culture in the library.

Thank you to all the people who helped with this.



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How we helped the library

Funding children's activities

We paid for an all-day storyteller and craft session for children in the library during the summer holidays. Five one-hour sessions were held during the day, each session covering a different story with a related Art/Craft activity.

Local story-teller Sal Tonge worked with Lesley McKnight from Scrappies to deliver this event. It proved extremely popular and we hope to subsidise more events for children in the library this year.

Are there any events for children or young people that you would like to see taking place in the library? Please let us have your ideas!



Improving library facilities



Following a suggestion made at our last AGM, we refurbished the Visitor Information Centre notice boards and installed a new hanging system for setting up exhibitions. Thank you to Geoff Taylor and Malcom Phillips who volunteered to assist with this. It has really livened up the room.

We also replaced the badly damaged planter outside the building, purchased a new advertising 'A frame' and bought various pieces of kitchen equipment.

Volunteering in the Visitor Information Centre

Our expanding team of volunteers continue to open the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) from February to November on Mondays and Wednesdays when the library is closed. In 2022 they provided help and information to a staggering 1,456 visitors. Our thanks to everyone who has helped to make this possible. This work helps the library meet one of the new Shropshire Library Strategy targets, that of promoting Economic Recovery and Growth. The Visitor Information Centre attracts visitors into the town, which helps keep local businesses financially viable.



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Accounts Summary 2022-2023

Income	Events (net)	2022-2023 events	1,420.53	
		Calendars	1,055.95	
		Book sales/market	773.29	
			<u>0.00</u>	3,249.77
	Donations	Regular		3,776.00
		Other, including Zoom talks		589.49
	Gift Aid			877.51
	Total Fundraising Income			<u>8,492.77</u>
Expenditure	Admin Costs	Incl. insurance		617.79
	Income over Expenditure (profit)			<u>7,874.98</u>
	Grants to Library			1,130.72
	Surplus for year to 31.3.23			<u>6,744.26</u>

More detailed accounts available on separate sheet

How you can help us

Attend our events – and encourage others to attend, this helps us raise funds for the library.

Become a member - membership is free and you will be kept informed of our events and activities and be able to vote at our AGM. Forms available in the library or on our website.

Make a donation - you can make a one off or monthly donation: forms are in the library and on our website.

Volunteer in the Visitor Information Centre - volunteers help once a month on either Mondays or Wednesday, morning or afternoon. Training is provided.

Become a committee member or Trustee - we are a friendly group who meet once a month and each person helps in different ways. You are welcome to attend one or two meetings to decide if it is something you might like to do. If you want to find out more then please get in touch.