



## Friends of Greenhill Library

Registered Charity Number 1158656

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### ANNUAL REPORT TO THE 2019 AGM

#### Main Achievements During the Year.

In October 2019 the Friends have been running Greenhill Library for 5 years. After consulting its members and associated organisations, the Trustees adopted a 10 Year Plan in May 2019, building on a previous 5 Year Plan. The trustees consider the achievements in relation to the Plan, which are outlined in this report, to be of substantial benefit to local residents. A Summary of the Plan is available with this report. The Plan has sections on

- A) Library Service,
- B) Community Outreach & New Activities,
- C) Organisation & People,
- D) Finance, and
- E) Building

In respect of all activities, the automatic people counter at the front door recorded an average of 5,974 visitors per month (all statistics in this report are for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019) compared to about 6,000 p.m. the previous year.

#### A) Library Service.

Our **strategic objective** is to provide a high-quality library service.

We have continued to keep the library **open for 26 hours per week** except at bank holidays. 134 users completed a survey about our provisions in Feb. and March 2019. A detailed summary of the responses, most of them very positive, is on our website and an outline summary was put on a poster in the library. In the light of answers to a question on opening hours, they were extended on Saturdays for one hour from June 2019 for a trial period, but few extra people came so this has been discontinued.

**386 new users** were registered in 2018-19 on the Council LMS system (320 in 17-18). They comprised 191 adults and 195 children (81 under 5's, 9 Young Adults and 105 5-15 year olds). We also registered 604 people on our local Koha system.

## Book Loans.

		2017-18	2018-19
<b>Adult</b>			
	<b>Council</b>	<b>13,169</b>	<b>10,922</b>
	<b>Own books</b>	<b>4,655</b>	<b>5,919</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17,824</b>	<b>16,841</b>
<b>Children</b>			
	<b>Council</b>	<b>6,860</b>	<b>5,851</b>
	<b>Own books</b>	<b>3,737</b>	<b>4,474</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,597</b>	<b>10,325</b>

Some of the fall in book loans seems likely to be because of the re-opening of Woodseats library during 2017-18. Nationally library book loans are falling as ebooks become popular, but there will always be a demand for printed books. Indeed, a more complete measure of the number of books going out of the library should also include the sale of donated books through our bookshop. Recently we started counting sales, which are about 700 per month.

To encourage more loans the Board has embarked on the purchase of more new books using funds we raise and grants from Sheffield Council and from the Freshgate Trust. A bequest in memory of two library users, Mr. and Mrs. Richards, has provided an Island Displayer and Multi Media Display Rack; we also publicise new acquisitions through our social media channels. We have refreshed our stock of Large Print and Talking Books through a swop with Totley Library and purchases from a Ward Pot grant. Under the guidance of our Operations Manager, Session Leaders have taken responsibility for sections of the book-stock, moving unpopular books to the stack shelves and checking on the physical state of all books.

Another innovation during the year, useful to users, was the introduction of emails to advise when own books on loan were due back; this mirrors the Council system with their books. Our own book system, Koha, has continued to function well. We helped other associate libraries adopt it and now have robust shared maintenance arrangements.

With a view to increasing use of the library by Lowedges residents, the trustees commissioned research into residents' views of the library last summer. Building on that, funding has been obtained for a 2 year Outreach Project from Sept. 2019 with a part-time paid post and volunteers, who will run a sub-branch library in Lowedges Community Centre. Earlier outreach to Lowedges Academy boosted the number of Lowedges participants in the 2018 Summer Reading Challenge; in this year's Challenge Lowedges Academy pupils participating went up from 13 to 19. The trustees have agreed to work with others to campaign for a light-controlled crossing on Greenhill Parkway to facilitate passage between Lowedges and Greenhill.

Children's reading continues to be encouraged by **Chatterbooks** sessions for 7-11 year olds on Mondays from 3.30 to 4.30 in term-time. **Story Time and Fun Time** sessions continue to flourish for Pre-school children. The former is for 2-4 year olds in term-time on alternate Fridays between 10.00 and 10.45. Fun Time is for 0-4 year olds and their carers on the second Monday of the month in term-time. A phonics session for pre-school children started in Sept. 2019. We are fortunate in having excellent volunteers for these activities.

The library computers continue to be popular with users, particularly adults, despite some teething troubles. In anticipation of the Sheffield roll-out of Universal Credit from Nov. 2018 two volunteers prepared to assist applicants with computer-related problems; take-up has been low so far.

## **B) Community Outreach & New Activities.**

Our **strategic objective** is to grow outreach into our community and new activities. These would be to fulfil our mission "to work with local residents, groups and organisations to promote other educational, cultural, recreational and social activities that respond to their needs and contribute to community cohesion and development".

Our 10 Year Plan details many very valuable outreach activities, which continue:

- A Friday coffee morning.
- Employment Advice sessions weekly.
- A Yoga group.
- Monthly evening talks.
- A weekly computer advice session.
- Classes in Spanish, Architecture and Maths.
- Monthly film shows, one for adults, one for children.
- Friday afternoon craft sessions for children in term-time.

This report concentrates on developments in them and on new work.

Our second annual **Open Gardens** event was over two days this year, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June, and was a great social and financial success. We are very grateful to those opening the 21 gardens and to all involved in organising the event. Two new gardening activities were a **Plant Swap** day in May and **Bulb Planting** in the grass in front of the library in Oct. 2018. Many enthusiastic children participated in the planting; we are grateful to the organisers and those providing the bulbs.

A **Knit & Natter group** has been established this year on the first and third Wed.'s in the month as a contribution to tackling loneliness. For similar reasons **Age UK** supplemented their weekly sessions for the elderly with a special Saturday event in January. We regret that the **Lowedges Lunch Club** decided to discontinue their monthly visits and hope they might return.

The year has seen increasing co-operation with Lowedges Academy and Greenhill Primary School, both entertaining the many visitors to our 2018 **Christmas in the Library** event with their singing. At Greenhill School's request we accepted their **Food Works** supplies during two half-terms; this was mainly to stop food being wasted, but it also brought us some donations. We hope children from both schools and Bradway Primary School will attend a **music appreciation day** being organised in Oct. 2019 in the library. In term-time a weekly **Code Club** to teach programming skills to older children has run successfully since Sept. 2018.

A major family event on Sat. 10<sup>th</sup> August, a **Harry Potter Day**, filled the library and grounds with activities. It was enjoyed by many and we hope it has inspired much reading. A magnificent Harry Potter quilt was raffled for library funds.

Since March 2019 a weekly **Play-reading group** has met and a monthly **Book Club** started in July 2019. On occasions during the year our local Police Community Support Officer, Ken Blake, has been able to hold Friday surgeries in the library.

We now regularly post on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; our Facebook page has nearly 600 followers. The monthly e-newsletter goes out to about 260 people and the tri-annual printed newsletter, which continues to be the main source of publicity for many, reaches about 4,000 people.

### **C) Organisation & People.**

Our **strategic objective** is to maintain a workforce of volunteers with the skills, capacity and motivation to operate the library to the same standard as those operated professionally, and to provide a high-quality offering of community events.

**In Sept. 2019 we had 162 members**, of whom 132 were registered as volunteers, 1 an employee and 29 were Friends contributing at least £20 p.a. Last year we had 153 members, 118 being volunteers. Well over 10,000 hours of service a year are given, which equates to about 6 full time staff. Details of the organisation and support of volunteers are in the 10 Year Plan. During the year one social event for volunteers was arranged.

**Governance.** Friends of Greenhill Library was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2014 with a model constitution, which was amended on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in order to clarify the process for electing trustees and to remove destabilising clauses requiring a rapid turnover of trustees. The object of the charity is to advance and promote lifelong education for all, particularly locally. The trustees believe that the activities described in this report do deliver public benefit; they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

#### **Trustees**

Chris Brown:

Chair

David Wildgoose:

Treasurer

Patrick Coghlan:

Vice Chair (to May 2019)

Laurence Coates: Secretary  
Mick Black: Volunteer Coordinator  
Ann Hartley: Operations Manager  
Richard Brown, Wendy Crookes, Janet Crowther, Shelley Walsh.

The Board welcomed 5 new members at the Oct. 2018 AGM. **Trustees are elected**, usually for a period of 3 years, by the membership of the Friends of Greenhill Library. They meet monthly and review FROGL's policies and procedures on a regular basis. Volunteers can access the minutes, policies and procedures on the Three Rings website. Members and library users may also consult them in the library on request.

### **Names and addresses of advisers**

**Solicitor** Kerry Maddison Taylor Bracewell Solicitors  
17-23 Thorne Road, Doncaster DN1 2RP

**Bank** Yorkshire Bank  
681 Chesterfield Rd, Sheffield S8 0RY  
sort code **05-08-68 a/c** 33308374

### **D) Finance.**

Our **strategic objective** is to maintain financial sustainability with multiple diverse funding streams.

This objective is being achieved; details are in our Plan and in the annual accounts. Receipts in 2018-19 were £52,654 and Payments £42,662 giving a surplus on the year of £9,992. We are grateful to Sheffield City Council for their annual grant, understandably at a reduced level, as well as for the support of their libraries staff.

The trustees consider that our **fundraising** is compliant with the standards set out in the Code of Fundraising Practice required by the Charity Commission. Our fundraising is overseen by a Fundraising Team, which meets regularly; meetings are attended by two trustees. Most fundraising is run by volunteers through the bookshop and events, such as Farmers & Artisan Markets; this year we have found new ways of selling valuable donated books. Keith Wilson continues to lead on contacting and organising vendors for the Markets, but more volunteers to assist at them would be helpful. The Fundraising Team has also successfully made grant applications, notably for the Lowedges Outreach Project, for which we are particularly indebted to Margaret Davis and Phil Petty. We do not usually use professional fundraisers, but part of an Awards for All grant is funding a consultant to apply for the capital funds to develop the library building.

Hire charges have been raised and conditions for hiring the library amended.

**Reserves Policy.** The trustees' policy is to keep unrestricted reserves of between 3 to 6 months of normal unrestricted expenditure (i.e. between about £7,000 and £14,000) and have a designated building fund for major repairs. Financial projections

are in Annex 2 of the Plan. Funds carried forward on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 were £107,731, of which £4,663 is held for the 11 associate libraries for marketing. The designated building fund is currently £15,100 and a minimum of £3,000 is added each year. There is a large surplus available to match-fund capital grants for building developments over the sum required by the Reserves Policy. During the year reserves were invested in two interest-bearing accounts with the Charity Bank.

## **E) Building.**

Our **strategic objective** is to have a fit for purpose and developing building.

We continue to be indebted to Rob Goodrum, buildings manager, and his team of handypersons and to Linda Stevenson and team of cleaners for their constant attention to maintenance, painting, cleaning and health and safety in the library. The walls on the ramp and steps have been re-anchored and secured and the steps repointed. We are also very grateful to John, who has cut the grass for five years but is too busy to continue. We have invested in LED lighting, which will reduce costs. Unfortunately, the Emergency Lighting System and hot water boiler have needed further spending. We have just been able to replace the two external windows of the bookshop, thanks to a grant from the J. G. Graves Trust, which will reduce heating costs. A difficult problem this year, not yet resolved, is removing the scourge of graffiti.

Following the signing of the lease of the buildings from Sheffield City Council new **signage** has been erected-Greenhill Community Library, "More Than Just Books".

After consultations with members, local residents and organisations using the library on options to develop the buildings set out in a Feasibility Study, the trustees have engaged architects to refine their plans. These include improved toilet and kitchen facilities, a new community room, lettable offices, an extended area for very young children and a storage room. Proposals to make the buildings as green and as affordable as possible are being prepared. When costings and a plan to implement the changes with minimal disruption are available, planning permission and funding will be sought. The Property Services section of the Council, our landlord, agrees to us seeking planning permission. We have just applied to exercise our option to extend the lease from 5 to 25 years.

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**



Chris Brown (Chair of Trustees)

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019