



Friends of Greenhill Library

Registered Charity Number 1158656

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE 2026 AGM (Start)

This report covers activities from October 2025 to September 2026 and the finances for the year ending 31st March 2026.

Foreword

Greenhill community library continues to be highly successful through offering a professional standard of service and vibrant program of activities and events for the local community. Its success is only assured because of the hard work and dedication of all its volunteers and for all those who have been, and continue to be, involved in Friends of Greenhill Library.

Running a successful library requires us to be alert to the number and range of volunteers we need to cover all aspects of its work. Sadly, this year, and all for personal health reasons, three long-standing and invaluable volunteers have either had to withdraw or are looking to significantly reduce their involvement. The significance of these changes has necessitated a review of the operation of the library with the aim of achieving a restructure leading to a more distributed workload. This restructure is being co-ordinated by Lindy Stone (Library Services), and Lynne Raven (Volunteer Co-ordinator). There have also been vacancies in the number of trustees and so we have been interviewing for some new members to bolster the skills base of the board. Agreement to the appointments proposed will be made at the AGM.

Finally, unfortunately for various reasons and despite efforts to keep it open, sadly the sub-branch at Lowedges has had to close. What follows is a more detailed account of the library's operation and, should you have any questions about it, it can be raised at its AGM which will be held at the library on October 7th, 2026, at 7.00 p.m. and I look forward to seeing you then.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Clive Opie", written over a light blue rectangular stamp.

Clive Opie
Chair of Trustees – Greenhill Community Library
September 2026

2025-26 activities

Library Service

We are grateful to all our volunteers in whatever capacity they operate but special thanks must go to our operational lead Ann Hartley who works extremely hard to ensure smooth operation of the service. We continue to welcome around 6000 visitors each quarter. Total book loans for the 12 months ending 30/06/2026 were 25,967 with 15,996 (62%) of these being Greenhill stock and 9,971 (38%) SCC owned stock. In terms of new registrations there have been 431 in total - a reflection of the high esteem the library is held in by the community.

With respect to links with the council, we continue to have good relationships with our library contact Darrell Porter. However, a recent communique from him indicates he is being reassigned to another role and whilst he aims to keep up support for volunteer libraries, he also notes his time to do is likely to be reduced. We have become increasingly anxious over what the future support from the council for volunteer libraries will be and are arranging a meeting with them to try and get some clarification on this matter.

As noted in my forward our sub-branch library at Lowedges, has had to close. This decision was not taken lightly as its value to the community in the area was undeniable. However, being unable to source further funding; and despite numerous efforts an inability to source new premises; and its lead Catherine Samengo-Turner leaving the area to be closer to relatives, provided a 'perfect storm'. What is pleasing is that aspects of the Lowedges work, such as the craft club, continues at Greenhill.

Our Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) for children run at Greenhill Library in 2026 has been another success and thanks go especially to Phoebe Pearson in managing this with support from a range of young volunteers. This year we have bought a complete set of books, as recommended by the Reading Agency, to support the SRC. The table shows data for the SRC for the last four years.

	Signed up			Completed			
Year	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	%
2023	64	102	166	22	49	71	43
2024	61	97	158	15	35	50	32
2025	59	108	167	25	46	71	43
2026	63	94	157	31	41	72	46

We continue to expand our selection of books both through donations and the purchase of new titles adding over 1316 new books to our “Yellow sticker” collection. We are grateful for the £500 book grant from Sheffield City Council and for an award of £500 from the Freshgate Trust, which is being used to buy audio and large print books. Donated books we cannot add to our catalogue ensure our ever-popular bookshop remains well stocked as book sales provide us with a steady income stream. It is still the case that to avoid a storage crisis, we have continued to be more selective in the donations we will accept.

Earlier this year the authority replaced its computer screens to provide better visual displays and by all accounts these have achieved their aim. We have upgraded our security system with additional cameras of higher resolution and new computer software allows us better to store the data from these cameras and to view each of them on-line.

As in past years there is continuous upgrading of facilities to support the library administration and users. Such as transferring a computer to provide more computer availability in the main front office and putting in mobile bookcases to allow further categorization of certain series of Youth Adult books thereby providing more space for the remaining books in this section. The new section in the children’s library, complete with murals and bean bags, continues to prove very popular with our younger users.

There has been a drive to clear the stacks of material collected over years which has not been used and was basically lying idle. Lindy Stone has spearheaded this process and on the 5th July a very large skip was duly filled providing significant additional space. There is more to do and future discussions as to better use of the space generated are on-going.

We have had some specific issues to deal with such as the use of the library; and being able to support those wishing to access our printing facility. With respect to the latter offering this facility has not been without its problems. Whilst we try to do our best not all volunteers are conversant with technological issues and at times, we may not be able to support requests. Because of these issues some guidelines for visitors of expected use and support from the library have been displayed along with similar guidelines for volunteers so they are fully aware of them.

Link trustees

Last year, to improve communications with volunteers, link trustees were set up with the view of the latter becoming more familiar with the various roles and tasks completed by the volunteers through active engagement, meetings, or e-contact as appropriate with them. In this way the library volunteers could hopefully be assured that their beneficial contribution to the library is better understood and recognised. The role of the link trustees is working well but there have been some minor changes to roles:

Team	Link Trustee
Library Services	Lindy Stone
Community Events & Communications	Kirsty Atkin
Buildings, Grounds & Maintenance	Michael Gormnaly
Finance, Admin & Fundraising	Lyndon Hennard
Children's Activities/Volunteer Co-ordinator	Lynne Raven

Community Outreach and 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”.

Events and collaborative working program over the last year has included:

Greenhill

- an enjoyable a range of **one-off events** at the library including a music day for children provided by a violin and cello duo Jonny and Lucy joined by an oboe player; a wreath-making workshop provided by local florist Cheryl Hartley.
- a **monthly film program** for both adults and children continue to attract a good audience with many showings enjoying a full house.
- our ever popular regular **evening talks**, with several local interest talks including: ‘The History of Water in Sheffield’; ‘Portland Works’; and ‘Railways built for the construction of the Derwent reservoirs’. Lynne Brown has done a sterling job co-ordinating these events but has had to step down from this role and so we are looking for a volunteer to take this role on.
- weekly **coffee mornings** which remain extremely popular serving often more than 40 people. The 3rd Thursday of each month includes a lunch club visit to one of the local pubs. There have also been coach trips to Llandudno, Bury Market, Liverpool, Skipton, Filey, Whitby and this December, to Stratford on Avon Christmas Market. For many people these are the only holidays they take and, in the company of friends from coffee morning, adds to their enjoyment.
- **Greenhill school classes** who visit the library each week to further explore a particular topic they are studying. The last few visits have covered topics such as: ‘Brazil (Y3)’; ‘The Great Sheffield Flood (Y4)’; and ‘Mary Queen of Scots (Y5)’.
- three **book clubs** which continue to meet once a month.
- the ever popular **Story time**, and thanks go to Lyn Clayton for taking the lead on this.

- the **Craft club** which runs every Friday from 3.15 to 4 pm during school term. It is very popular with young people with their parents/carers. It is run by recognised volunteer mums and a nurse from Children's Hospital on days when she is not on shift. Activities include youngsters replicating the work of the mums, painting and drawing and the youngsters go home with the items they have made.
- the annual **Open Gardens event** (now in its 8th year) was held on an obligingly sunny weekend in mid-June and featured 18 local gardens. It raised over £2,200. Our thanks to Kristi Flint for taking over the organisation of this from Mike Davis. We are also very grateful to all those who opened their gardens and made contributions
- the **Scarecrow Festival** in August 2026 that attracted **20** entries. We have particularly encouraged participation from the local shops (8 scarecrows) in support of the 'Growing Greenhill' initiative. Our thanks to Jennie Wilson who took over the organisation of this event
- two **Artisan Market** events during the year. These continue to be busy community events and a significant source of income. Our thanks to Jennie and Keith Wilson, and to Jackie and Rob Goodrum (amongst many others) for their hard work in organising these.
- a **Lego Club** for children aged 8+ continues to be popular with sessions booked to capacity and a new display cabinet to show of the work done has been purchased. Our thanks to Richard Biddulph for leading on these.
- the popular and productive **Knit and Natter** group which meets twice a month. Thanks to Lynn Munroe for leading on this. The group welcome donations of any spare/ unwanted wool.
- a children's library that continues to enjoy **fantastic displays** throughout the year which catch visitors' attention and no doubt help spark children's imaginations. Notable mentions go to the "Secret Garden" and "Sea Life" displays. We have been very grateful and offered huge thanks to Lynne Brown for all her work on these but again it is a role she must step down from.
- the start of a new fundraising initiative - a monthly **lottery**. Numbers now generate a monthly income of around £205, of which 25% goes in prize money and 75% is retained in library funds. Thanks to Joy Arnott for initially organizing this, although the role has recently passed to Kristi Flint.

Lowedges sub-branch closure

As noted in my foreword we have, sadly, had to oversee the closure of the sub-branch at Lowedges. This decision was not taken lightly by the board, as the range of activities it undertook (noted at last year's AGM) reflected its importance to the community. However, the imminent loss of its venue coupled with being unable to secure another suitable site alongside Catherine's departure, for family reasons, all culminated in the decision, as a board, to close the Lowedges sub-branch.

It is pleasing to see that the craft activity is now run at Greenhill, and the coffee morning continues to be attended by a number of those who used the Lowedges venue. Dawn Davis, our treasurer has been successful in getting agreement from the Lottery Fund to spend any remaining money on purchase of various things to support the on-going commitment to the community and to be able to thank the volunteers who worked so hard in keeping the site open.

Communications

The website continues to be the most definitive source of information particularly for our events program and we continue to maintain a significant presence on Facebook now having 2083 followers.

Our 8-page printed **newsletter** is distributed every 4 months alongside a digital newsletter sent out monthly to just over 760 recipients (up from 500 last year), making it one of our most effective publicity channels. Chris Brown is stepping down from co-ordinating the newsletter and we send our thanks for all his work on this over the years.

Organisation and 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.

Lynne Raven has the role in the Library as Volunteer Co-ordinator. She responds to all applications and meets with prospective volunteers to discuss whether there is a role suitable for them. Successful candidates are introduced to other key volunteers and complete an induction which includes fire safety and safeguarding. In the last 12 months, 21 volunteers have started volunteering at the library

As part of her Volunteer Co-ordinator role, Lynne also writes a newsletter for volunteers and organises occasional social events for them. As of 1st September 2025, we have 124 members, of whom 108 are registered as volunteers and 21 are Friends contributing at least £20 p.a.

Trustees

Clive Opie	Chair
Lyndon Henard	Secretary
Dawn Davis	Treasurer
Ann Hartley	Operations Manager
Lynne Raven	Volunteer Coordinator
Kirsty Atkin	Community Events & Communications
Lindy Stone	Library Services
Janet Crowther	External hire
Michael Gormanly	Maintenance
Angela Fry	Volunteer

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.

Finance for the year ending 31/3/2026

Our finances remain very healthy and our strategic objective to maintain financial sustainability with multiple diverse funding streams continues.

Receipts for 2025-26 were £69,927 (2024-25 £84,684). This is a decrease of £14,757 mainly due to the loss of the Lottery Funding for Lowedges Library.

Payments for 2025-2026 were £53,805 (2024-2025 £71,589). This is a decrease of £17,784 mainly due to overpayment of utilities in 2024/2025 and one-off building development work.

We are grateful to Sheffield City Council for their annual grant of £17,069

Fundraising and earned income for 2025-2026 was £23,760 compared with £23,086 in 2024-2025. This is an overall increase of £674 and is comparable with 2024-2025.

Total funds carried forward on 31/03/2026 were £195,558 Most of this is unrestricted reserves and includes a policy of £29,460 to cover the uncertainty of the Council Grant reducing in the future; holding a fund of £32,000 for repairs; and £15,095 designated to fund community events in the coming years.

We have money invested with Charity Bank and Hampshire Trust.