

FRIENDS OF PONTESBURY LIBRARY
REPORT
for the ANNUAL PONTESBURY PARISH MEETING
2021/22

Friends of Pontesbury Library is a registered charity with the following aims:

- to raise funds to secure and maintain a Library building
- to support and help develop Library services in Pontesbury to serve the surrounding local area
- to develop and promote the use of the library and the value of literacy for the benefit of everyone without discrimination

We now have approximately 500 members. The following is a quick run-down of our events across the year. The report concludes with a look to the future as The Pavilion becomes established.

Beginning of the year – under lockdown

Lockdown from January 2021 effected our ability to organise events and use the Pavilion to hold meetings. Even the outdoor **Chip it for Charity** – a Xmas Tree chipping fundraiser by Ben Jones, Wood Matters - had to be stood down. Our **AGM on 11th March** was held on Zoom followed by the film 'A Shropshire Field' shown via Vimeo. It documents the building of Cricketers' Meadow, the building of The Pavilion and has short interviews with the community during the pandemic. Our regular Saturday coffee mornings were replaced with Library Lottery Live on Zoom which often included speakers e.g. Mike Fletcher's bike journey to Helle in Norway to raise awareness of haemochromatosis.

Spring

The Garden outside the library

Volunteers began some serious planting in the garden area, with extra planters either donated by members or funded by FOPL. The garden has been developed in particular by Jenny Wateridge, Imogen Mortimer, Caro Schiansky and Rob Dixon, with extra funding from our local Co-op and support from the Parish Council.

FOPL supported the Spring Blossoms crafting project with a slide show showcasing **Signs of Spring photographs** sent in by the community to lift spirits as lockdown restrictions eased. This was the first presentation shown on the FOPL- funded smart tv.

The Library building re-opened with restricted hours and adherence to COVID guidance on Monday 12th April. A system to 'click & collect' books was put in place. FOPL continued to organise via Zoom and events were fundraising & social events were on hold.

Spring Plant Sale held in May

FOPL was delighted to be the first group to hold an event in the Library garden. In spite of the weather we raised nearly £850 from the sale of plants, books and cakes.

Summer

FOPL applied to the Co-op Local Community Fund for funding and heard in October that we were successful. We welcomed the new local Co-op Pioneer, Sharon Davies. FOPL were present at the Minsterley Show with their tombola stall. Fliers about FOPL and the Library

resources were distributed to the many visitors. The show was a great success and a good PR opportunity for the Library and The Pavilion.

The Reader, the statue created by Bill Sample and commissioned by FOPL, was cleaned up by volunteers and moved to the front of the building by the PC. It has helped establish the Library's presence in the village, though the road signage is still to be sorted out.

Autumn

Council leaders and officers along with the public and representatives from Shropshire Libraries flocked to the Library to celebrate the community library in its new Pavilion location as there could not be a formal opening. The pandemic had prevented marking the occasion before then. There was music, a special cake and a talk **Reading for Pleasure** which all contributed to making it a successful fun occasion.

Winter

FOPL held a successful book sale at the Co-op's Christmas Fair which proved to be a great fundraiser. Nearer to Christmas **Star workshops** were held for free in the Pavilion Meeting Room and the results were used to decorate the Library. Hanwood and Pontesbury Primary schools submitted beautifully made stars from every child in their schools. These were displayed on the library windows and walls.

Santa & his Sleigh visited Pontesbury. A great community event culminating in mulled wine & mince pies at The Pavilion.

2022

Chip It for Charity was able to go ahead. It was very successful with over 50 trees being chipped. Books have been bought by FOPL to develop a 'mini library' for the local community as targeted resources e.g. read aloud extracts for primary schools and older community members.

FOPL was invited to hold a raffle again at each performance of the Players Pantomime **Snow White** and proved a successful fund raiser. **'Love your Library'** event was organised to coincide with Valentine's Day and a Valentine Quiz. It was very well-attended.

There have been two school visits from classes at Pontesbury Primary school since half term, and another planned for this Tuesday 15th March. These are induction sessions and will encourage parents to enrol their children as members.

The Future

We look forward to developing a creative relationship with The Pavilion in the coming months. Our organisation depends on volunteers, of whom we're rightly proud and value hugely, as I am sure The Pavilion Management and the Parish Council appreciates. FOPL aims to develop school visits from the other primary schools in the area and Mary Webb Academy. There is a real need to support the most vulnerable pupils with reading in particular following schools being locked down during the pandemic. We also wish to complete the garden planning for a well-being area for mental health, part of our Co-op funding application.

Further information about FOPL & fundraising can be found at pontesburylibrary.co.uk

Yvonne A. Davies, Chair Friends of Pontesbury Library 10 March 2022