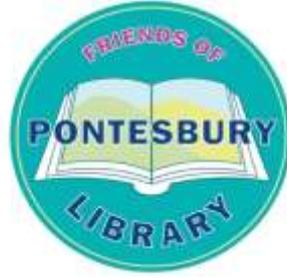


FOPL Report

Annual Parish Meeting, Pontesbury Public Hall, Monday 10th March 2025 6.30pm



Introduction

This time last year there was concern about a possible closure of our library. The previous 5-year arrangement was due to be reviewed and was more pressing in light of Council budget cuts. However two recent meetings have seen a positive outcome to the Friends' current financial arrangement supporting the Shropshire Libraries' contract with the PC & FOPL. A meeting in January, hosted by Parish Council Officers, resulted in an agreement being reached with Shropshire Council Library Service to maintain the Library within the Pavilion Community Hub with FOPL increasing our contribution by £500 more p.a. making a total of £4,000 p.a. towards keeping our community library open.

We are grateful to the Parish Council for their diplomatic handling of the two meetings which resulted in the new agreement.

FOPL, as you know, is primarily a fundraising charity but it's developing to be so much more: a valuable community asset alongside normal Library business and the existing social support given by Library Manager Beverley Link. You only have to look at recent events:

- **Coffee mornings** on the first Saturday of each month providing a social meeting place and contact point for services e.g. Good Neighbours, alongside raising funds via the Library Lottery. (The Library was so full last Saturday, 1st March, we almost ran out of chairs!)
- **Seasonal Art & Craft Workshops** for parents, grandparents and of course children. The next one coming up is Spring.
- **Concerts** – Val Sinclair staged a group performance in the Pavilion turning the Library into 'Ronnie Scott's' in the space of an hour. The event raised funds and was enjoyed by all who attended.
- **School visits** aimed at developing a children's love of books, improving literacy and resourcing teachers.

- **Exhibitions** such as that about local resident Lily Chitty one of the first women archaeologists, and Speakers e.g. local author Laurel Rond who brought her harp.
- Liaison with other key groups in the community e.g. PCEAG & u3a.
- **Spring Plant Sale & Chip it for Charity**

Successful Accountability

1. Co-op Local Community Fund

During February last year two FOPL Committee members attended a 'zoom' meeting with a Co-op representative who interviewed us because FOPL had received funding. The meeting was very successful. FOPL members prepared sets of photographs, accounts and a comprehensive document as evidence of our activities and their value to the community.

2. King's Award for Volunteers (KAV)

We are pleased to announce that FOPL has been nominated for this award, the equivalent of an MBE for groups of volunteers. There was a 3-hour interview with KAV Deputy Lieutenants, followed by preparation of accounts, policy documents and evidence of our activities. We will know sometime in June if our efforts have been recognised and we receive an award.

Changes to FOPL Website

The Committee decided to update our website. Do check it out at pontesburylibrary.co.uk. We will post on social media using the Library FaceBook page -USE PONTESBURY LIBRARY- more often for everyday news and events. Thanks to Emma Lawrence for the new website design and to Mike Fletcher for setting up the IT for the new site.

Upcoming Events

Lily Chitty Exhibition

Ms Chitty lived in Station Road, Pontesbury for much of her life and is only now being properly recognised for her pioneering work as an archaeologist. This fascinating exhibition curated by the Young Collective was recently staged at Shrewsbury Museum. Our Library Manager Beverley Link has managed to secure it for our library for the month of April.



Pontesbury Festival 27th – 29th June

Saturday 1st March saw the launch of FOPL's contribution to the village festival. It's a **WRITING COMPETITION**, open to all ages on the theme of 'It happened in Pontesbury . . .' Further details and entry forms are available from the Library and can be downloaded from the website pontesburylibrary.co.uk. The competition is free! And there are prizes! Please see poster on following page.

Yvonne Davies, Acting Chair, FOPL

Pontesbury Festival Writing Competition



Maximum 500 words
with no lower limit

Closing date
Saturday 31st May

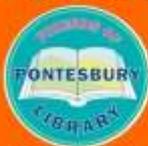
*It happened in
Pontesbury.....*

Photo credit — Philip Bradley

Writing style is up to you — let your imagination fly!

**Entries welcome from all ages with prizes for both
adult and children's age categories**

Organised by



Friends of
Pontesbury Library

**Full details and entry forms from
Pontesbury Library or online at
pontesburylibrary.co.uk**