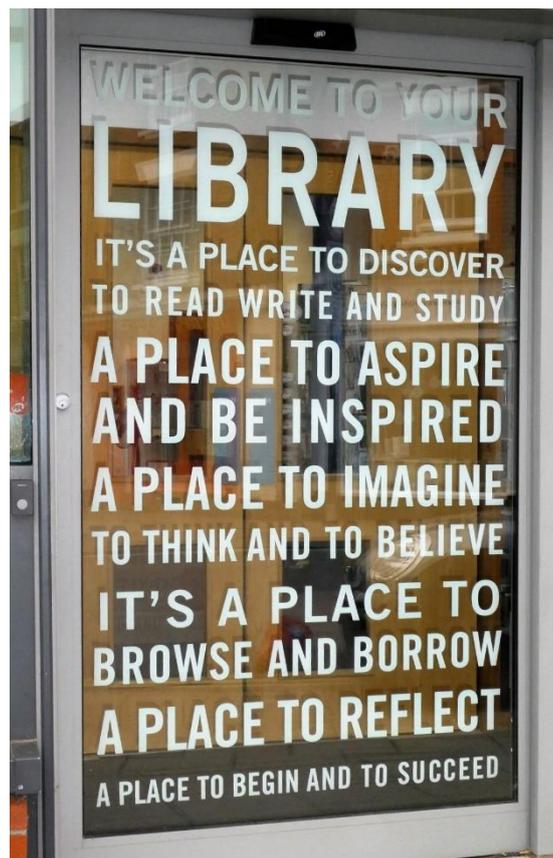




# **Friends of Halesworth County Library**

## **Annual Report 2018-2019**



Except where noted all photos in this report are by Alison Britton



**Annual General Meeting**  
**Friends of Halesworth County Library**  
*Registered Charity No. 1153765*

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

**To be held in Halesworth Library, at 6:30pm**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome from Alison Britton, Chair
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018 AGM and any matters arising
4. Acting Library Manager's Report, Arlene Roberts
5. Executive Manager's Update, Amanda King
6. Annual Report 2018-2019, Chair
7. Treasurer's Report, David Borer
8. Proposed amendment to our Constitution (See below \*).
9. Election of Trustees
10. Any other business
11. Close of formal business

***Please get yourself a drink and some nibbles and come back to the tables and sit in groups of four – try and find at least one or two people you don't know!***

12. Thinking about changing the layout of the Library

**\*Proposed amendment to our Constitution.**

It is proposed by the trustees that Clause 16 of the current CIO constitution be amended to remove the restriction on the number of terms a trustee may serve. Clause 16 would then read "Any person who retires as a charity trustee by rotation, or by giving notice to the CIO, is eligible for reappointment".

# Friends of Halesworth County Library

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018



**Trustees Present:** Alison Britton, (in the chair), Natalie Evans, Sheila Freeman, Ali Hopkins, Evelyn Lindqvist (Notes), David Olds, Yvonne Sandison + David Borer.  
Plus, around 40 members.

**1 & 2 Welcome; and Apologies:** Meraylah Allwood, Pat Atherton, Patricia Benford, Graham Booker, Paddy Flegg, Sue Glazer, Mary Hills, Robert Hoggar, Karen Kerridge, Tony Langford, Sandy Langford, Ezra Leverett, Sandra Leverett, Jill McFarlane, Diane Moore, Lin Richardson, Linda Sherman, Mary Smith, Irene Thomas, Hilary Turton and Audrey West.

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 3. Minutes                  | Minutes of 2017 AGM were read and approved, proposed by Evelyn Lindqvist, seconded by Sheila Freeman. No matters arising.  |
| 4. Chair: Annual Report     | <p>Alison Britton presented the Annual Report, copies of which were given to everyone attending. Anyone interested in becoming a Trustee would be welcome.</p> <p>Fundraising – we have had a successful past year, but donations are always gratefully received. We also have a thriving Events Group and thanks were given to the retiring co-ordinator, Sheila Freeman, who is standing down after several years of leading the group.</p> <p>As the Annual Report shows, various events have been organised, some fundraising, some just for fun. A gazebo has been purchased for external events and some new china plates for use at events (as we are increasingly providing refreshments).</p> <p>Friends who have died were mentioned – Jenny Gray, a loyal volunteer and supporter and Tamsyn Imison, a founder Trustee and fervent supporter of Libraries.</p> <p>Our Social Media, on the Suffolk Libraries website and Facebook page (with currently 460 followers) and Twitter feed continue to be popular communication methods.</p> <p>A request was made to increase the number of Library Friends and everyone was encouraged to try to recruit one more member.</p> <p>Hetty's Little Copy Shop was thanked for printing the Report and for giving us a discount.</p> |
| 5. Library Manager's Report | <p>Ali Hopkins reported that Alison Wheeler had retired as CEO and Bruce Leeke, who has a wealth of experience in the charitable sector and Institute of Fundraising, has taken over.</p> <p>Halesworth has been "promoted" from a "D" to a "C" category Library as we consistently sit in the top half of the performance measurement ranking.</p> <p>A wide range of people use the library with activities for all ages every day plus evening events. Suggestions for new events are always welcome.</p> <p>The 2017 refurbishment of the Junior Library has been a great success and thanks were given to Friends for fundraising.</p> <p>Plans for 2018 include new stock, shelving on wheels for more flexible space, new tables and chairs for the upstairs meeting room.</p> <p>Ali gave thanks to her incredible team of creative staff, and to the Trustees and volunteers for providing excellent service and to Friends and customers for their support. She singled out Sheila Freeman who in her role as Events Co-ordinator made events so enjoyable for everyone.</p> <p>Thanks were given to our Treasurer, David Borer, for all his hard work in updating our systems, and especially for claiming our "back-dated" Gift Aid of £3,000+.</p>                          |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 6. Treasurer's Report                      | <p>David Borer took us through the Treasurer's report.</p> <p><b>Donations:</b> over £10,000 has been received in the last year including £5,000 from private and individual donations and collection boxes and a £3,000 grant from Halesworth Town Council.</p> <p><b>Income</b> came from sales of reading glasses, donated items for sale, lessons, raffles, table top sales, antiques fair and murder mystery.</p> <p><b>Expenditure</b> The major item was the new Junior library to which the Friends contributed £10,131, and there are lots of new plans to spend existing funds. David mentioned his huge gratitude to library staff and volunteers without whom the library could not function.</p>            |
| 7. Report on the 100 Club                  | <p>David Olds presented his report on the 100 Club which gives out 50% of income as prizes. This year we currently have 100 members.</p> <p>The Quiz nights (teams of 4) continue to be popular, organised deliberately so as not to clash with other quizzes organised in the town.</p> <p>Alison also mentioned the availability of the Grand Spring Quiz of literature-related questions, for a small entry fee of £1. (Profit to the Friends)</p>  |
| 8. Proposed amendment to the Constitution. | <p><b>Proposed amendment to our Constitution.</b></p> <p>It is proposed by the trustees that Clause 16 of the current CIO constitution be amended to remove the restriction on the number of terms a trustee may serve. Clause 16 would then read "Any person who retires as a charity trustee by rotation, or by giving notice to the CIO, is eligible for reappointment".</p> <p>This change would enable trustees to immediately stand again. This change would make it easier for people to progress to officer roles and would improve continuity. Evelyn Lindqvist proposed, and Sylvia Knights seconded. Members voted unanimously for the amendment.</p>   |
| 9. Election of Trustees                    | <p>David Borer has agreed to stand as a Trustee, proposed by Sheila Freeman, seconded by Peggy Meredith.</p> <p>As required (rotation of a third of Trustees), Natalie Evans, Sheila Freeman and Evelyn Lindqvist all stood down but were eligible for re-election. Sheila Freeman proposed, Peggy Meredith seconded, that all 3 be re-elected.</p>  |
| 10. A O B                                  | <p>Peggy Meredith asked Sylvia Knights (Vice-Chair of the Suffolk Libraries Board) about the re-appearance of the Walberswick Mobile library. Sylvia Knights reported that the County Council always reviews mobile routes. However, £150,000 would be needed to replace vehicles coming to the end of their life and they are not likely to be replaced. A consultation is in progress, with plans to possibly use smaller vehicles and community locations. A pilot for "pop-ups" is underway as current static libraries are not always in place where new housing developments have been built. Frederica Phillips proposed thanks to Ali, her staff, Alison and all Trustees for their hard work over the year.</p> |
| 11.  | Close of Formal Business   |
| 12. Guest Speaker                          | <p>Sheila Freeman introduced our speaker, the local writer Julia Blackburn, who talked about her books, (including the most recent "<i>Murmurations of Love, Grief and Starlings</i>") nonfiction, novels and poetry, her early life with visits to the library, starting her career with short stories and how random researches can spark the writing process.</p> <p>Julia invited questions from the floor and a discussion took place.</p> <p>She also kindly offered to hold a writing workshop and waive any fees so that the Library would receive all the income.</p>   |



# Friends of Halesworth County Library

## Who are we?

FoHCL is a membership organisation (established in 2013). Currently, April 2019, we have 511 members, an increase of 31 members from a year ago.

Some of these members are loyal **volunteers** who help our staff to keep the Library running by contributing between them approximately 175 hours a month on a regular basis. Volunteers take on routine, but essential, library and administrative tasks: shelving books; tidying the shelves and items for sale; doing general stock work such as unpacking new books and processing withdrawn stock. We would like to recruit one or two volunteers who are happy to do computer work, such as keeping databases up to date! The work done by volunteers frees up time for Library staff to do all the many behind the scene tasks (as well as staffing the desk) that keep the Library functioning.

Other members of the Friends support the **Events Group**. We raise funds to contribute towards major refurbishments and to provide 'extras.' The group also organises a range of free and low-cost activities and events for the local community designed to entertain and educate, or just for fun and companionship. New members are welcome, especially those prepared to take on the organising and running of events and generate new ideas.

**The Trustees** are the management group of FoHCL.

All members are eligible to stand as a trustee, and we encourage you to consider doing so. We currently have up to 4 vacancies, although we are not required to fill them all. We are looking for people committed to the Library who have time and energy to both attend meetings regularly and to become involved in our activities supporting and promoting the Library. No specialist skills are required but it is great if you have some!

### In 2018-2019 the trustees have been:

- Chair, Communications & acting Events Coordinator: Alison Britton
- Vice chair: Sheila Freeman
- Minutes Secretary: Evelyn Lindqvist
- Treasurer: David Borer
- The Library Manager, Ex officio trustee: Alison Hopkins (until January)
- Trustee: Jane Kirkeby (from August 2018 to April 2019)
- Trustee: Natalie Lloyd-Evans
- Trustee: David Olds (retiring after 5 years)
- Trustee: Yvonne Sandison
- Trustee: Irene Thomas

# Fundraising

2018-2019 was another very successful year for fundraising.

Members of the Friends have been very generous with donations which has added to the money we have made from events and activities. We also applied for and received another grant of £3,000 from Halesworth Town Council. We continue to be grateful to our treasurer, **David Borer**, who has devoted a lot of time and energy to keeping our accounts in order.

In 2018-2019 we did not spend a tremendous amount of money because we have been saving up to be able to make some major changes to the Library.

**But here is how just some of the Friends funds have been spent:**

- Financing (or partially financing) events and activities: e.g. theatre events in the Library for adults and children; visit from Kinetic Adventure (children's science workshops); buying materials for children's craft activities and for "Tot Rock & Baby Bounce" sessions.
- Producing the door transfer with its interesting message on the Library door. What do you think of it (see the front cover)?
- A glass of wine each for those attending the Volunteers Christmas lunch (food paid for by the volunteers themselves). Wine for the AGM!
- Replenishing Readyspex glasses supply, as needed, until in profit.
- A smart set of tablecloths for use at events. Always with a purchase like this we spend time sourcing easy-care, good quality items at a reasonable price

## Input to FoHCL from Suffolk Libraries

Three of us from Halesworth attended the Suffolk Libraries 2018 AGM.

The Chair was invited to attend a meeting about volunteering held at Ipswich Library in October.

Community meetings, organised by Suffolk Libraries, give members of Friends Groups the opportunity to meet with those from other libraries to exchange ideas. They are also an opportunity for Suffolk Libraries to update us on developments. During the year Halesworth Library hosted a meeting here (see picture below) and we were also represented at a meeting in Woodbridge.

All Libraries have recently been visited by a member of senior staff who provided information to trustees and library staff about current and future developments and challenges for Suffolk Libraries.



# Events & Activities 2018-2019

Some highlights.

**APRIL – LIBRARY QUIZ NIGHT**



**MAY –  
EXHIBITION FOR NATIONAL VEGETARIAN WEEK**



**JUNE – BOOK SALE (above)  
& WINE TALK, WITH VALLEY FARM VINEYARD.  
(left)**



**JULY– FIRST EVER SPECIAL  
FoHCL EVENT: BOOK TALK &  
TEA**



**AUGUST – OUR 5<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL STALL  
AT HALESWORTH ANTIQUES  
STREET  
MARKET**



**SEPTEMBER – BOARD GAMES CAFÉ  
(10 HELD DURING THE YEAR)**



**OCTOBER – THEATRE VISIT “TALKING IN  
THE LIBRARY” (introduced by Ali Hopkins).**



**NOVEMBER – SECOND SPECIAL FoHCL  
EVENT: SUTTON HOO ROAD SHOW**



**DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS SALE**



**FEBRUARY –  
SUTTON HOO  
CHILDREN’S CRAFTS**



**MARCH – SOCIABLE SUNDAYS**

**APRIL – VELVETEEN RABBIT,  
CHILDREN’S SHOW**



## Remembering Ali Hopkins (1963-2019)

Ali died of cancer after a short, unexpected illness. Her funeral took place at Waveney Memorial Park and Crematorium on January 31<sup>st</sup>. She would have been bemused by the amazing response to her death, the number of people who have been saddened and moved by it, and the outpouring of affection, showing how many lives she had touched. Despite her range of qualities and abilities, Ali was always very humble, often saying she could never do her job without the staff and volunteers she had gathered around her. She very much underestimated the impact she had on those with whom she worked and the customers who she always treated with such respect and warmth. A member of Suffolk Libraries staff trained by her said: “Her knowledge was very deep, and she had vast experience, but she never thought herself better than anyone else”.



Ali arrived to manage Halesworth Library 14 years ago, in January 2005. Becoming a library manager was the culmination of 25 years working for the Suffolk Library Service. Born and brought up in Lowestoft, she attended Kirkley High School and started work at Lowestoft Library aged 17 in 1980. She became a member of a very young team there and dealt with everything with a smile and humour – always taking her turn in tea-making duties for senior managers! She never ducked difficult tasks, and supported managers during tough times. While at Lowestoft she had many roles, including library assistant, home library assistant, sound and vision assistant, team support and IT trainer. She continued to be in touch with that Library and later, whilst at Halesworth, she stepped in as manager at Lowestoft during sickness there.

Interestingly, while employed at Lowestoft, Ali worked with half a dozen other librarians helping other libraries who needed extra support. This included stock work, outreach activities, work in the community, and seeing through any new library projects. Back in 1996 Halesworth Library was one of these projects when it moved to its current location from its old, more cramped quarters on the ground floor of the Steeple End Almshouses. Tasks included choosing new book stock, deciding on the layout, and generally getting the building ready for opening. Ali worked as support for that team, and a colleague at the time emphasised how her attention to detail was so invaluable. Ali never lessened that attention to detail!

She was rightly considered to be one of the best library managers in Suffolk. She took on the challenge at Halesworth with dedication, common sense and always humour. She respected and mentored her staff and created the great atmosphere

which is commented on by everyone. She was always very clear that she couldn't have done it without her team behind her; a testament to her professional generosity. Ali was also known county-wide as one of the best IT trainers.

Ali always gave help and friendship to all her colleagues, acting as formal and informal mentor or buddy to many across the library service. These comments, made since her death, give a flavour of how it was to be her colleague, and how she inspired so many of the people she worked with. "She came over every week on her day off to help me, and I honestly couldn't have done it without her. She was so kind, generous and helpful, and never minded how much of her own time it took up". "I've always held her as a benchmark of what a Library Manager should be". "We had a great time years ago rolling out the training for a new computer system. I so admired her absolute commitment to the Library Service and to the community". "I don't think you'll find anyone with a bad word to say about her".

Ali's daughter, Justine, has said that Halesworth Library was Ali's "second home" and "such a big part of her life". Ali wanted the library to be at the heart of the community and many will certainly agree that she achieved this. After her death was announced on the Library Facebook page well over 8,000 people "engaged with" the post (clicked on it to read it or respond). Many comments were made, and people shared the post, so it was in turn seen and commented on by many more. Ali was often surprised at the reach that our Facebook page posts could have – but, always being such a modest person, she would have been amazed by this response! Many more people have signed a book of remembrance in the Library. These memories will be passed on to her husband David, and her children Justine and Rowan – and will be there for her little grand-daughter to read one day.

A small sample of typical Facebook comments clearly illustrate the relationship that Ali had with her customers in Halesworth. "She really cared about our Library and its importance to the life of the town". "Ali was such a warm, kind lady who always took time to help and to get to know her customers". "So kind and welcoming to me when I was having a hard time. I would not be where I am now without Halesworth Library and Ali". "I loved that she told me off for trying to keep the children quiet. She wanted the children to relax and love the library and thanks to her they read, laughed and loved their time in the library". "She had the unique ability to make you think you were her one and only best friend".

There are many who are mourning the loss of Ali and will never forget this special person. But they, and others who never met her, will continue to benefit from her legacy of our wonderful community-centred library serving the needs of people in Halesworth and surrounding villages. Staff and volunteers will continue to honour Ali's memory by doing our best to build on the inspiring foundations that she laid.

**Slightly adapted from the version written for the *Community News* by Alison Briton with assistance from some of Ali's old colleagues, especially Gill Jenkins with whom she worked in her early years at Lowestoft Library. Photo of Ali by Sue Glazer, member of the Friends and Library volunteer.**

## Remembering Former Trustees

During the last year we have lost two of our former trustees.

**Alan Holzer (below)**, 1937-2018, was a trustee from 2013 to 2017 when he retired due to ill health. He served as Vice-Chair, Minutes Secretary and Acting Chair during his time as a trustee and often came to help with events. Up to his death he continued to support the Library - as he did many other activities and groups in Halesworth. The photo shows him at a celebration of the Library in September 2017.



**Ezra Leverett (right)**, 1946 to

2019, was another supporter of the Library who was a trustee from 2013 to 2014, the first year of the Friends. Like Alan, Ezra had many interests in Halesworth. Both men will be remembered by the Halesworth community for their years of involvement in local affairs. Ezra's photo from the *Beccles and Bungay Advertiser*, contributed by the Leverett family.



## Social Media and On-Line Resources

Not everyone realises that there is plentiful information about the Library available on-line. The **website** for the Library is contained within the larger Suffolk Libraries website where one can access all sorts of useful resources. If you haven't done so already, take some time to explore this site – it is far more than a place to order or renew books. <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/> Look at our site too: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/libraries/halesworth-library/> You can find information about the Friends – a useful resource if you are trying to recruit new members for us.

Have you looked at our **Facebook** page? Maybe you are one of the 849 people (up from 560 a year ago) who follow our posts. Discover what is happening in the Library, but also read a wide range of posts about reading and books and related topics. You do not have to be a member of Facebook to see the page. Put *Halesworth Library Facebook* into your search engine. We also have a **Twitter** account (not updated daily but still worth a look)! Put *@HalesworthLib* into your search engine. Finally, some of the Library staff have posts on the Library's **Instagram** account: to see these, go to Instagram.com and then search for *@Halesworthlibrary*. Something for everyone!

# **Our Plans for 2019 and beyond!**

## **Moving Halesworth Library into the 21st century**

Our successful refurbishment of the Junior Library in 2017 resulted in the rest of the Library looking rather shabby and dated in comparison! The layout no longer seems logical and it feels cluttered. The trustees and the staff both had conversations with Ali, during the last year of her life, about her hopes for the future. We feel it is important that we carry on Ali's work and, indeed, honour her memory, by trying to put into place some of her ideas.

Ali wanted very much to smarten up the mezzanine. We have plans to replace the furniture (we know what she had in mind) and have been granted money by HTC (2018 and 2019) for this. As planned, the Young Adult books have already been brought downstairs into a more visible space. This will allow us to re-arrange the mezzanine so that it is even more useful for meetings, activities, exhibitions etc, for which there is a growing demand.

Turning our focus to the ground floor the hope is to provide a more attractive space, fit for current purpose. As well as being a source of books, other materials and information, we need a library with social spaces. There needs to be space for browsing materials, for reading materials, for holding small and larger group meetings and for providing events for all ages.

Ali was very keen that the Library be welcoming, and we want to think of ways we can achieve this – moving away from “the tunnel between shelving” which is currently the entrance. Some of the other thoughts we have include:

- Making stock more accessible – using the walls as much as possible or having everything easily mobile to clear space for events etc.
- Rationalising where the stock is – this has been made more possible by the reduction in non-fiction texts.
- Providing comfortable seating areas and smaller, lower display tables
- Providing some teenage space.
- Having clearly defined space for computers - possibly providing more privacy with some study carrels.
- Making the counter moveable.
- Better use of office and storage space (low access storage for items only used occasionally).
- Ensuring there is adequate space for disabled access.
- Installing an adequate hearing loop system.

***We invite your ideas!***

# Friends of Halesworth County Library

Registered Charity Number 1153765

## Summary of Account for the year 1/4/2018 to 31/3/2019

### Payments

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Petty cash        | £ 1,562.57 |
| Advertising       | £ 48.00    |
| Kinetic Adventure | £ 200.00   |
| Miscellaneous     | £ 696.80   |
| Glasses           | £ 327.54   |

Total payments £ 2,834.91

### Receipts

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Donations                | £ 6,184.22 |
| Craft commission         | £ 542.92   |
| Bags                     | £ 48.75    |
| Beverages                | £ 128.00   |
| Bookmarks                | £ 24.50    |
| Glasses                  | £ 791.62   |
| Pens                     | £ 121.50   |
| Maps                     | £ 11.98    |
| Quizzes                  | £ 35.00    |
| Donated items            | £ 1,069.65 |
| Artists commission       | £ 7.50     |
| Artists display          | £ 195.00   |
| Fundraising              | £ 3,125.31 |
| Adverts                  | £ 78.50    |
| Poster display           | £ 259.00   |
| HMRC Gift Aid            | £ 4,217.19 |
| Savings account interest | £ 30.30    |

Total receipts £ 16,870.94

Plus, opening balance £ 22,773.10

£ 39,644.04

Less payments £ 2,834.91

Closing balance £ 36,809.13

# Would you like to do more for the Library?

**Here are some one-off actions (nothing to stop some of them becoming regular ones):**

- Recruit other Friends to the group – right now we have over 500 members. If we each found another “Friend” we could soon be heading towards 1,000 Friends.
- Sign up to support the One Hundred Club. This costs £1 a month.
- Cash donations, small or large, are always welcomed. Don't forget you can gift aid them and give us 25% more!

**Actions you can do from time to time but without making a regular commitment**

- Donate items to our regular sales and raffles. We always need good quality retro and bric-a-brac (or even an antique!) for our Antiques Street Market annual stall.
- Do you have links with any local businesses? Might they be willing to donate raffle prizes? Could you approach them?
- Buy our raffle tickets.
- Attend our events and tell others about them. Bring a friend or neighbour with you.
- Point out to others the information available on our website and on Facebook. Remember you do NOT have to join Facebook to view this page with its daily posts.
- If you are planning to attend an event, check if you can come along early and help us to get set up – or offer to help clear up at the end!
- Take photos at events and send them to us!

**If you enjoy talking to people, why not . . .**

- Volunteer to help when we hold recruitment stalls, or when we have a sale, or with the Antiques Street Market stall in August (always a big money-raiser).
- Offer an hour or two to help us to sell raffle tickets! We raised well over £1,000 with our Christmas 2018 & Easter 2019 raffles combined. But tickets don't sell themselves!

**Regular tasks that you could do from home**

- We often need refreshments for events, do you like baking (savoury and sweet)?
- Especially if you live in one of the villages, would you consider distributing posters to village hall/pub/local noticeboards? Give us your name if you can do this regularly.
- Do you like designing posters, we could use some new ideas and some basic (or advanced!) design skills. Or how about writing skills? We can always use those!
- Suggest places where we could advertise our information for free: local magazines, websites or newsletters. Or, better still, offer to do this for us.

**Want to make a more regular commitment?**

- Join the Events Group and help come up with new ideas for events. Help to organise some events, not just staffing on the day but planning beforehand.
- Share your interests/skills. Offer to run a group or lessons. These could be for adults or for children and we'd love someone with ideas for activities for young adults.
- Can you help us with our admin? We particularly need someone who is computer literate and would be able to keep our databases updated.
- Could you keep the FoHCL noticeboard up to date?
- If you want to get really involved, consider becoming a Trustee where you will have the opportunity to really shape the future of the Library.

***Whatever you might like to do, you're sure of a warm welcome and necessary support!***