**Friends of Glemsford Library Report to Parish Council meeting April 2022**

I am very pleased to be here, presenting this report, since my last one in 2019. The library service faced many difficulties and ever-changing regulations, like everyone else, but it adapted well and was able to offer the basic services in various forms. Suffolk Libraries rose to the challenge and offered a lifeline service within days of lockdown, which evolved into the “Phone a Friend Service”., which made 11.000calls in 2 years.

Suffolk Libraries won “Supporting the Isolated” category in the High Sherrif’s Award in March this year. The previously mentioned lifeline, along with the activity zoom classes, laptops loans, and online support for pregnant and new mothers have all left a legacy beyond the lockdown. Suffolk Libraries is the only library service with a dedicated well being service

Friends of Glemsford Library, supported the library and staff as best we could. The trustees were able to keep in touch with our 40 plus Friends and keep them up to date with developments. We were able to update our constitution in line with Suffolk Libraries guidelines and had Zoom contact with Suffolk Libraries.

Our finances remain in a healthy position. We have made money by participating in the Scouts’ Sale Trail, The Suffolk Library fundraising “Home Grown Home Produced” markets organised by Sue the librarian. We produced two very popular and successful quizzes for people to do at home.

This March we felt things were beginning to really get back to normal when we held another author event. We had 50 visitors from far and wide as well as Glemsford who came to hear Elspeth Beard talk about her book and her epic journey around the world on her motorcycle. She was the first woman to do so, back in the 1980s. The audience were enthralled and impressed.

As well as Trustees, the library has a good number of volunteers who support the library in various ways. These include helping in the library, taking the singing and story time sessions for young children, delivering books to those who are house bound and phoning a friend to keep in touch with lonely members of our community. It is great to be part of something that offers so much to so many people in the village. My sincere thanks to all our volunteers.

Last summer we ran a Covid friendly Summer Reading Challenge for the children. Another group of 10 volunteers gave up many hours over the school holidays to discuss books and reading with over 70 children. We booked the village hall for 2 sessions a week which FoGL paid for. The children were also offered several themed activities, at the same time. Parents, children and volunteers were thrilled with this way of working and FoGL agreed that to fund it again this summer. We thank Cllr Holt for forwarding our application for a locality award, which we were delighted to receive. This means costs of hall hire and activity materials will be covered.

We are now planning live events again, so keep your eyes and ears open. Please get in touch if you can think of any innovative ways of advertising our events.

I wish to thank everyone who continues to support and use the library. It is an important hub and amenity that we must preserve. It is a lifeline for many within Glemsford. I still find it necessary to point out that Glemsford as well as all other libraries would not exist as they are, without the amazing organisation of Suffolk Libraries. I have been involved, almost since the beginning, when with the support of several parish councillors, we were the first to join the charity. It has been an interesting 10 years and I continue to be impressed with the development and commitment of Suffolk Libraries, to run an innovative and diverse service, with 44 libraries, 3 pop ups and mobile service, reaching all corners of the county.

My hope is that we are able continue down this successful road. Just a glance at the few leaflets will give you an idea of the range of activities and services on offer. Perhaps the library can offer you something as well as the opportunity to borrow a book.

Thank you for listening.

Anne Edwards