

BEACON VILLAGES COMMUNITY LIBRARY REPORT TO THE 2025/2026 AGM.

In August of last year our manager Shelle West, left the library service after many years at the helm in Ivinghoe, and due to Buckinghamshire Council's funding changes, we are now completely volunteer run. In addition both Avril Davies and Colin Arney have stepped down from the management committee – they both served for many years. Rob Peck, who was a library volunteer and committee member, moved away from the area, so the committee is now somewhat smaller than this time last year. I should like to record my thanks to all of them for their contributions and sterling service.

We have been fortunate to recruit several new library volunteers. We now have an enthusiastic and hard-working team of people committed to making sure the library is a bright and welcoming space for our members and the whole community to enjoy.

The library volunteers are now taking on most of the tasks performed by the manager and have introduced lots of new initiatives. We are tweaking our logo to make it more visible, and once this is completed we will smarten up some of the information leaflets and posters.

We have improved our social media presence and will also be updating our website.

We have regular displays celebrating various occasions such as Poppy Day, as well as highlighting local and national events, for example Mental Health Week. It's lovely to see that many of our younger members have contributed pictures for some of our displays,

In February we hosted an author event at which Tom George, local fireman turned children's author read extracts from his first book, much to the delight of those who attended.

We have also uncovered some archival material relating to the village and Mary Saintey, a long-term volunteer and friend of the library, is working to catalogue what we have and eventually we plan to mount a display in the library.

Lynne, one of our newer volunteers, has tackled the thorny issue of getting our plasma screen up and running again, and we will soon be able to show a rolling programme of useful information.

I'm pleased to say that our footfall remains high, and although physical borrowings are a little down, in common with most other libraries, members are making good use of the e-library resources.

We are rebuilding our links with the local community, including the Hub and the Nursery and are keen to invite other organisations to get in touch.

We welcome small groups from other organisations to pay us a visit, and if appropriate this can be arranged outside of our normal opening hours. It is also possible to hire the library for small group meetings on a regular or occasional basis, for a reasonable fee of £10 per hour.

Our change of status doesn't affect the ability of users to access all the library services across the county. Bucks still provide our book stock, computers, software and so on. Users can still order books from across the county and beyond, access the digital services and their existing library card gives entry to the other libraries in Bucks. For example it is possible to borrow a blood pressure monitor to use at home, ask at the desk if you are interested.

We are most grateful for the support received from the Library Services, notably Roberta Stephens and Laura Davies, together with other colleagues and staff from some of the larger libraries. It has been good to know that someone is at the end of the phone if we need help.

If anyone would like to join us as a library volunteer or on the committee, in order to keep your library a lively and dynamic organisation, please do get in touch.

And finally, once again our heartfelt thanks to Avril, Colin and Shelle for your many years of dedication to our library to enable us to be where we are today – not forgetting Rob who was with us for a shorter time, but his contribution was equally valuable.

Janet Page
Secretary, BVCL
14th May 2026