

## Annual Report for 2019/20

This is the Report of the Trustees of the Aldeburgh Library Foundation's (ALF) on how it carried out its activities to meet its charitable objectives for the public benefit and the financial resources generated and employed. The report should be read alongside the Report and Accounts as well as the Data Privacy and Protection, Safeguarding, Equality and Inclusion policies that are posted on our Website.

### Partnerships:

Board members have enhanced our collaboration with other local providers, such as the Britten Pears Foundation with the Red House facilities and staff, Aldeburgh Cinema, Aldeburgh Church Hall, Aldeburgh Primary School, and the Aldeburgh Society amongst others.

The Library is seen as a major educational resource, and partners are keen to help us in achieving this aim. Currently with nearly 1,000 users in the Aldeburgh area, and good links with school children and their parents, we believe the Library will continue to serve the whole community across the spectrum from very young to elderly, working adults and retired.

### Adult Education classes:

We provided over 50 different courses during 2019/20; with over 700 enrolments the programme continues to develop. The Computer TV in the Library has enabled tutors to conduct film-related courses and to show art history artefacts. Music, Zumba, three European languages, Literature and American Politics, World History continued to be popular, along with innovations and additions to the programme. In the reporting financial year (to March 31st ,2020), we continued our wide-ranging programme up to and including March 16<sup>th</sup>, when face to face meetings stopped due to the Covid crisis. However, Spanish and Italian classes continued by Zoom.

### The Friends of Aldeburgh Library:

Ensuring wide public participation in shaping the future of the Library was a key commitment of the origins of ALF. The Friends of Aldeburgh Library (FOAL) has been established as an integral 'supporters arm' of the Foundation, initially built around the core of adult course subscribers and others, and by 2016 we had 300 members. Those who join FOAL are also Associate Members of the Foundation, participating in its governance by nominating a member of the Board, as do the Town Council and the Aldeburgh Society. The benefits to FOAL members have been extended to include an Aldeburgh Loyalty Card, which gives members a 10% discount in local businesses.

### The Library Manager:

Sue Osben completed her third year as our Library Manager in Spring 2019. The board had reviewed the work of the Library Manager in progressing the vision of Suffolk Libraries, and of the Aldeburgh Library Foundation. The annual FOAL income was put toward an extension of hours for the Manager, to enable more time to be spent on partnerships with schools and other groups to use the Library, on exhibitions and displays, and on leading the team of dedicated Library Assistants. The board has been delighted with the time that has been given to promoting the work of the Library and ALF, in regular updates in the local press.

### Library Refurbishment

The Foundation has raised funds (via adult courses income, tea/coffee sales and applications for small grants and, through the library staff, the sale of charity Christmas cards) and has from 2013, already carried out improvements to the building and its facilities in the provision of toilets, kitchen and furniture for classes.

### 2019 Capital Building Project

By March 2019 the ALF board progressed the natural stage 3 of the Library's refurbishment, building on what has been done over the previous years. This stage has increased the space in the library, improved the reception and access to facilities, built a new exterior entrance and will provide paved seating areas and access to all parts of the front of the building. Architects Studio Gray were appointed and plans approved by the Board, Suffolk Libraries, Suffolk County Council, and the planners. Builders R Duncan were appointed. The official handover of this project, from ALF to Suffolk Libraries, took place in September 2020.

ALF is able to carry out this work through the support of the community for its adult courses and other events, augmented by donations through its Bees Appeal, and where possible grants. It has also the capacity to borrow when necessary.

### Financial Report for 2019-20

The Foundation had a strong operational year with both Foal membership and Courses generating good surpluses. The main outgoing was the third stage of the Library's refurbishment funded by the Foundation. In March, just before the end of our financial year and Spring courses term, the Library had to restrict access as part of the first Covid lockdown and we had to defer or give credits for the courses underway and cancel the courses that were due to start after March. The Accounts show that we still ended the accounting year with a cash reserve of £10,350 after taking into consideration all contractual obligations.

### Financial Reserves policy

As a Charity we have a declared financial reserves policy to hold sufficient to meet our contractual obligations for running costs of the charity looking ahead 12 months. These costs are now expected to be around £2,000 annually.

## Current Year to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Given the Pandemic it is appropriate to comment briefly on the current year.

The ALF board was able to reduce its contractual commitments further this year to conserve reserves. In September 2020, the Foundation restarted the Talks and Courses in the Library as part of an agreed pilot for Suffolk Libraries as well as successfully using online video via Zoom for courses. The appetite for attending events and workshops in a Covid secure environment was still strong right up until the second lockdown. We are grateful for the generous donations and renewal of FOAL membership that have continued. The Library itself has demonstrated its real value as a Community asset this year, and the Foundation will continue to support it.

The Foundation's free cash reserves remain strong and we are prepared for most eventualities, confident that we can deliver courses and talks safely in the Library, if permitted, as well as online where appropriate.

David Grugeon, Chair  
Robin Boyd, Treasurer

On behalf of the Trustees of the Aldeburgh Library Foundation