

An Update from the Reading Room

With thanks from Vanessa & the Reading Room Trustees

We hope that you had a good Christmas and New Year – it already feels a long time ago! Now that the festive season is over, it is time start looking at the year ahead. The last twelve months have seen a lot of changes at the Reading Room and this is reflected in an increase in bookings for private functions and some new regular hirers bringing yoga classes, art workshops and Tai Chi to Curdridge.

Our accounts for the year are still being finalised but they are looking more promising than previous years, with a slight improvement on the operating loss that the Reading Room has suffered since the Pandemic.

Our last fundraising event of 2024 took place in December and everyone who came had a great evening. There was live music from Lisa Marie performing as The Estelles accompanied by some very talented musicians making up the band. Despite low levels of ticket sales, there was a great atmosphere, lots of dancing and laughs. Thank you to everyone who supported our event.

Despite not breaking even on our last event we raised an amazing £16,513 from our own fundraising events in 2024, those held by The Cricketers Inn, donations and grants. This includes £6,912 designated for the play area project and £9,601 for maintaining and improving the Reading Room facilities for the benefit of those who use them.

Looking forward, we are delighted to announce the relocation of the Bishops Waltham Men's Shed to the Reading Room. We are pleased to have such a valuable community group joining us and we are excited to see what the future holds for them. They are doing an amazing job of refurbishing the rooms at the back of the building to turn them into workspace, a kitchen and an office/storage space.

The Mens Shed is a registered charity that provides an opportunity for anyone to take part in practical work or just to socialise and have fun. It is well recognised that social activity and a sense of purpose has a very positive effect on well-being and health, especially in later life. More details about what they do can be found on their website at www.bwmensshed.wixsite.com/shed

Our first events planning meeting is taking place on 20th January and we look forward to sharing the dates for our fundraising events as soon as they have been set. Once available, details of these will be place on our website at www.curdridgereadingroom.co.uk/events.

Last, but by no means least, **we have a vacancy for a volunteer Bookkeeper**. This role works with the Trustees to produce the monthly and year-end accounts. If you can use excel, enjoy working with numbers and can give 3 to 4 hours a month (sometimes less), please contact us on 07704 208703 or email readingroomtrustee@gmail.com for a no obligation chat. No previous accounting experience is needed although it would be helpful. Full training and support will be given.

If you would like to receive our regular newsletter containing updates about the charity and our fundraising events, please visit our website and complete the form at the bottom of the page to subscribe.

With a busy year behind us and another one ahead, we are excited about the year to come and we hope that you will support us in any way that you can.