Supporters of Cowes Library
Minutes of Meeting Friday 2nd October 2026 at 1pm
held at the Beckford Centre

1. Present:
Olivia Battley (Chair), Joyce Blizzard (Vice Chair), Lesley Johnstone, Jacqui Joyes, Maureen Briscoe, Penny Acton, Kim Oliver (Secretary)

2. Apologies for absence:
Adam Gaterell (Library Supervisor), Jo Townsend (Treasurer), Wendy Wardrop (Cowes Town Council), Lin Hayward, Bev Thompson, Judy Ottaway, Gaye Whitewood, Catherine Fitton

3. Agree Minutes of the previous meeting:
The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

4. Address Action Points:

- Joyce has emailed Gurnard's Parish Clerk about removing the out-of-date Page Turner and he has replied saying he will do so.
  Penny suggested the minutes also be sent to Sarah Preston at Cowes Town Council.

5. Treasurer's Report
On behalf of the Treasurer, Joyce had viewed the last bank statement that had arrived. Since the last reported balance, there have been no payments in, and £71.96 has been paid out - £70 to Cowes Magazine and £1.96 bank charges. Our balance as at 13th September was £4457.76. Since then, Joyce has paid Jim the carpenter, as his quote of £136 for the teenage display board had been accepted by the officers; she paid him by bank transfer and used a SOCL cheque to pay herself back, leaving a balance of £4321.76. Before the next meeting, a payment of £2000 will be made, to pay for the shelving.

6. Library Supervisor's Report
We have received the shelving, and it is in place and looks great, as I expected I have had to downsize some sections very slightly and we have lost room for the CHCG publications at the moment. I will speak to Lin at some point soon so we can work out a way to find a space for these again. I can deliver a cheque for the shelving to Library Headquarters with the agreed amount on, please let me know exactly how much, and thank you again, it has really changed the library space, given us more room, brighter space and far easier to move shelving.
(Joyce confirmed that the agreed amount was £2000.)

We did have a provisional date of October 12th for the continuation of the building works but I have just received an email while writing this report to state it will now be early to mid-November, but we do not have an exact date yet. This is possibly to do with lapsed permissions to do with neighbouring land and Crown Park being able to fit us in around the other work they have had to continue with due to our delays. I was told that only half the Museum will be affected and there would be noise some days but that the library would essentially be able to stay open with limited disruption.

Due to this delay and how the start may affect the rest of the building I am thinking we may not be able to have a Christmas Fair like last year as I honestly don't know now what the impact will be with everything starting just before and it taking 6 - 8 weeks. We would need to advertise but that will rely on getting a date from Crown Park soon so that we can work out if it will impact the event. Please let me know if there are any ideas, I have spoken with Joyce and briefly to Lin about stalls over at the Beckford Centre and just supporters related stuff this side. And once the works are done, looking like New Year now, we can have a bigger joint event to celebrate the finished space.

EVENTS:

We have had good numbers recently for our regular events like rhyme time and Lego club, but we have seen a drop in numbers of the chess to a family or 2 and no one for adult games, occasionally 1 person, but then others don't show up, I think partly due to the lack of toilet facilities.

The Summer reading challenge (read to the beat) was very successful, we had 9 more children than last year, and a high percentage finished this year too, even with the extremely hot weather. Natalie had 2 very successful music themed Storytimes, we held an all-day musical LEGO club which was popular and for Cowes Week we had a fun session of creating silly sea creatures, which was also well attended by all ages.

Will has been having monthly sessions of the Vectis Wargaming Group again, which have been very popular. I think based on the rise in hire charges coming and change to insurance policy that this may mean the group have to pay a small fee to be covered, but I am waiting on final council decisions.

Des Pawson ran a very well attended and thoroughly enjoyable World Knot Tyers Day event, which I enjoyed too and gave Sallie the idea, once we have a toilet, to try and run a club, with basic easy to do knot activities and maybe Des could pop along every so often to teach something more complicated. We will need to discuss this with him and see if we can easily source materials, but it seems like a fun idea.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

We have 2 Halloween Storytimes coming in the October half term, hopefully they will be as popular as the musical summer ones.

We also have a Spooky Portraits Halloween craft activity set for Tuesday October 27th from 2 - 4pm and could do with 2 volunteers if anyone is available. (Joyce and Lesley volunteered.)

We are also going to try a LEGO Halloween themed all day session and see if it is also popular.

7. Previous events
Already covered in (6) above.

8. Future events

Christmas Fair, Saturday 21st November, 10am-2pm, held jointly at Cowes Library and the Beckford Centre. Adam thought a finishing time of 2pm was better than 2.30 as it would be easier to keep the crafts going until then.

- We cannot have an event with lots of craft stalls as we would have wished, but we could have a few situated in the Beckford Centre.
  Jo – sea glass jewellery; Catherine - Brains Trust cards; Lin - decorated stones; Titania - feltwork. Joyce and Olivia had also met a lady at the Daisy Bus event who makes natural serums and creams who would be good to invite. If possible, Joyce thought it would be a good idea to have the Homemade Produce table (jam's & chutneys and anyone who may have produce to sell on the table) in The Beckford Centre. If space is restricted, then maybe one of the other table holders could be placed in the library.
- Children's Christmas crafts; Lucky Dip (Jacqui has bought prizes already). Joyce will ask Adam to get the Lucky Dip box out of the cupboard from the new kitchen; Name the Teddy (purchase for £8-£10); Tombola- please can people donate prizes which can be brought into the library beforehand? Guess the Weight of the Christmas Cake - Penny will kindly make.
- Cakes and refreshments will be available at the Beckford Centre. Donations of cakes would be appreciated. Jacqui suggested having wrapped cakes to sell which can be sold on the Homemade Produce table or even with the refreshments as we want most of the cakes to be sold. Any cakes/produce provided, please include a list of ingredients. Jacqui's whose granddaughter runs the Cake Shed, will ask her if she wants to contribute some smaller cakes, and can possibly include an ad for the Cake Shed.

- Lin said that 4 tables for craftspeople can be accommodated in the Beckford Centre and one for people having tea and cake. Joyce will meet with Lin to sort out arrangements.
- All present volunteered to help. (Joyce, Olivia, Kim, Maureen, Jacqui, Lesley, Penny and Gaye.) If any others are able to help, please contact Joyce on email: j.blizzard@mail.com
  Lin will encourage volunteers from the Beckford Centre to help with refreshments. If this is not possible, then SOCL members would obviously help.
- Please bring donations for the Tombola to the library.
- Penny will lend an "event here today" noticeboard.
- We will decorate the library on Friday 20th November from 3pm – Adam will get the Christmas decorations out and craft materials before the building works begin. We will also help set up at The Beckford Centre. If you can help, please contact Joyce. Olivia, Jacqui, Lesley, Mo and Penny volunteered.

Action: All

9. Front garden update

People are still doing some weeding when passing. Joyce did some weeding about a month ago and has taken the dead plants out of two troughs which now need weeding and fresh soil and plants. Joyce will get a small bag of soil from Hurst, and some winter plants, before the works start. Aldi and The Range have inexpensive cyclamen. Anyone willing to help, please contact Joyce

Action: All

10. AOB

- Penny suggested planning for a new year edition of the Page Turner, hopefully with the works completed. Penny will also create a "Stop Press" leaflet, and put it up on the Gurnard parish noticeboard, and ask Adam if there is space available on the Cowes noticeboard.

11. Date and time of next meeting: Friday 13th November at 1pm at the Beckford Centre.