

FRIENDS OF BENSON LIBRARY

Registered Charity Number (CIO): 1176596

Chair: Frances Swann
Secretary: Mary Phillipson
Treasurer: Judith Pignon

The Friends of Benson Library
Benson Library,
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Benson OX10 6SD.
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The Chair,
Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council,
72 High Street,
Dorchester-on-Thames,
Wallingford,
OX10 7HP

Dear Chair,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Friends of Benson Library (FOBL) Trustees to request your support for Benson Library once more.

FOBL was formed in 2011 to save Benson Library and has successfully done so. However, to do so FOBL had to agree to pay a proportion of the annual salary of the Library Manager and assistant and provide volunteers to work alongside the Library Manager. These conditions are incorporated in a Partnership Agreement between Oxford County Library Services (OCLS) and FOBL.

The sum we have to pay to OCLS is negotiated periodically. We have recently agreed the terms for the next three years which will require us to pay OCLS £5495.00 per annum for the year 2025 which includes salary increases for this year.

This is a large sum for FOBL to raise and has increased considerably since the last agreement ended in 2023, and to date we have been supported by donations from the public and fund raising by FOBL. However we do not believe that this level of fund raising is sustainable in the long term with ever increasing costs from OCLS. It is our view, therefore, that as Benson Library is a community service, the funding should come from the local Parish Councils served by the Library.

We are very grateful to Benson Parish Council who have, over the past few years, agreed to partly fund the library, less any contributions by neighbouring parish councils whose members use the Library.

We have divided up the £5495.00 due for 2025 by the average number of members/users in each Parish as shown on Annex A. The Trustees of FOBL would be very grateful if you would consider requesting your Council to approve a grant to FOBL based on the user/member statistics from your parish. The suggested amount for this financial year for each Parish Council is shown in Annex A. Should your Council agree a donation, or we need to make a formal application for a grant by way of application form, please let me know and I can send all details including bank details.

I look forward to receiving a positive reply from you. I would also be grateful if you would let me know if you do not wish to contribute.

On behalf of the FOBL Trustees

Best wishes

Frances Swann
Frances Swann, Chair

Friends of Benson Library

PARISH COUNCIL	Users	Percentage	Suggested Donation
Benson PC	1313	77.6%	£4265
Ewelme PC	74	4.3%	£236
Chalgrove PC	137	8%	£440
Warborough PC	77	4.5%	£247
Berrick Salome&Roke PC	53	3.1%	£170
Dorchester PC	27	1.5%	£82
Crowmarsh Gifford PC	16	1%	£55
	1697	100	£5495

DORCHESTER PARISH

COUNCIL

Grant Application Form

Please read the Council's criteria and grant awarding policy before completing this form. You may continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Name of organisation:	The Berin Centre
Contact name:	Laura Harte
Position in organisation:	Director
Address for correspondence:	The Berin Centre, Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield
	Postcode: OX10 7LZ
Telephone number:	01865 341 944
Email address:	laura@theberincentre.co.uk

Brief description of the aims of the organisation:	Our mission is to provide family and community service to Berinsfield and the surrounding area.
Brief summary of the organisation's activities over the last year, or if a new organisation, the activities you hope to undertake:	2024 was a busy year at The Berin Centre, seeing over 8,500 engagements with our services and supporting more than 2,000 individual beneficiaries. Our work falls into three main areas: Family Services, Community Services, and Food Services. This included Stay and Play groups, School Readiness Programmes, Parenting courses, tailored 1-1 family support, physical activity groups for older people, our Women's Multicultural Group, regular Community Gardening sessions, weekly Community Larder and Emergency Food Bank provision. Alongside this we hosted a number of external services such as Citizen's Advice,

Riverside Counselling, and OXPIP. We also made significant progress towards our aim of establishing a Community Cafe which will not only provide food and drink, but will also act as an extension of our core services, providing space to host a range of support groups, learning opportunities, and cooking groups. Construction for this new building began in January 2025.

We have a strong focus on providing free or affordable services locally - we recognise that rural areas are often overlooked, both in terms of access to vital support and enriching opportunities. Berinsfield, Dorchester, and the surrounding area are no different - we therefore offer a host of activities that are universally available and broad enough to cater for a variety of needs and wants - from building confidence to improving physical health and nutrition. A significant proportion of Dorchester residents, for instance, make good use of our Community Larder and we know that they do this for a range of reasons, including access to affordable food, opportunities to connect and make friends, and access to further support on particular topics such as housing or relationship breakdown in a casual and relaxed environment.

How does the local community benefit from the organisation?

Is the organisation a registered charity? Please give the number:

Yes: 292526

What is the grant for and who will benefit? (give as much detail as possible)	A contribution to our core costs would be incredibly valuable to us, as this enables us to plan and budget for the breadth of our services and to allocate funds where needed throughout the year. We expect to reach even more people with our services this year, as we open the Community Cafe in the Autumn. We know that Dorchester residents in particular are enthusiastic about, and well represented in, our gardening groups, community larder, and our upcoming cooking and cafe plans, so if the Parish Council felt it more appropriate to make a direct contribution to one of these areas more specifically, as opposed to our core costs, we'd be very appreciative. -----
What is the total project cost?	£255,000 annual budget
Amount of grant requested:	£500
Have you applied to any other body for funds towards the project? (give details)	We continually fundraise for all of our costs as we receive no statutory funding. We have a combination of local individual donors, family trusts, SODC funding, and grants from trusts and foundations. -----

Do you receive funding from other sources, and if so who? Give details of subscriptions, fundraising etc	<u>As above</u> -----
What age group do you cater for?	We offer services across the life course, from antenatal classes to a Lawn Games Group for older people!
Please supply financial records:	Attached.
If you have previously received a grant from Dorchester Parish Council, please give details	£750 received in the 2017/18 financial year -----
Bank Account Details (for if application is successful)	<u>Bank Name: Lloyds Bank</u> <u>Sort Code: 30-12-51</u>

Account Number: 00133502

Signature and title
(Chair, President, Treasurer, etc)



Laura Harte, Director

Please attach your latest accounts and your constitution

DORCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL PAYMENTS APRIL 2025

Voucher	Code	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
	2 Subscriptions	02/04/2025	Membership	OALC	250.00	50.00	300.00
	3 Subscriptions	02/04/2025	Membership	OPFA	49.00	0.00	49.00
	5 Subscriptions	02/04/2025	Membership	Community Land Trust	90.00	0.00	90.00
11	Telephone	02/04/2025	Clerk Mobile phone	Vodafone	32.45	6.49	38.94
	7 Software & Support	02/04/2025	Scribe Cemetery software & setup	Starboard Systems Limited	549.00	109.80	658.80
	6 Pest Control	02/04/2025	Pest Control Jan - April 2025	Denis Froud Pest Control	805.00	0.00	805.00
	8 Expenses	03/04/2025	Expenses printing	Mike Corran	24.00	0.00	24.00
	9 CLT Steering Roup	03/04/2025	CLT Incorporation admin fee	Community Land Trust	40.00	0.00	40.00
14	Event Hire	10/04/2025	Posters for AP Mtg	Printinco	75.00	15.00	90.00
12	Parking Signage etc	10/04/2025	car parking	Uma Sharma	50.00	0.00	50.00
	1 Cemetery Rates/Water/Mntnc	10/04/2025	Cemetery Rates	South Oxfordshire District Council	661.18	0.00	661.18
	4 Storage Rental	11/04/2025	Storage	Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd	97.26	19.45	116.71
10	Dorchester Flyer	14/04/2025	Buses	Going Forward Buses CIC	50.00	0.00	50.00
15	Defibrillator Costs	14/04/2025	pads for defib	First Rescue	64.95	12.99	77.94
16	Dog/General wastebins/dispensers	14/04/2025	Dog & Waste Bins	Shield Maintenance Ltd	283.61	56.72	340.33
19	Pavilion Maintenance/Elec/Water	17/04/2025	Pavilion Water	Castle Water	25.20	0.00	25.20
20	Administration	22/04/2025	bank charges	Lloyds Bank	8.50	0.00	8.50
21	Parking Signage etc	24/04/2025	car parking	Uma Sharma	40.00	0.00	40.00
17	Clerk Salary	28/04/2025	Clerk Salary JW	Dorchester PC	xx	0.00	xx
18	Clerk Salary	28/04/2025	HMRC contributions	Dorchester PC	xx	0.00	xx
13	Payroll	28/04/2025	Payroll inc year end.	C & M Accounts and Payroll	20.00	4.00	24.00
					3,215.15	274.45	3,489.60

DORCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL RECEIPTS APRIL 2025

Voucher Code	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
1 Allotment Rent	01/04/2025	allotment rent	Allotment committee	1,730.00	0.00	1,730.00
2 Precept	03/04/2025	Precept 1st half	SODC	31,680.00	0.00	31,680.00
3 Cemetery Fees	10/04/2025	Memorial Fee	Reeves Memorials Co Ltd	140.00	0.00	140.00
5 VAT Refund	11/04/2025	VAT refund	HMRC	519.94	0.00	519.94
4 Cemetery Fees	17/04/2025	cemetery fees	Plot reservation resident	360.00	0.00	360.00
				34,429.94	0.00	34,429.94

Dorchester Parish Council
Annual Return

Accounts for Year from 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025

This is prepared based on the information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils : a Practitioners' Guide"

Important note: These figures have been prepared on a RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS basis.

* Note :- An asterisk to the right of the box below indicates it is an item that has changed by more than 15% and £200 from the previous year and probably warrants a comment in your notes. This is only an indication and should not be considered exclusive. You will only see asterisks if this is the second year you have used the report.

Box No.	Description	Year ending		
		31/03/2024 £	31/03/2025 £	
1	Balances brought fwd	56,946.56	57,178.71	
2	Annual precept	48,000.00	52,800.00	
3	Total other receipts	76,951.12	49,424.23	*
4	Staff Costs	15,960.80	19,680.34	*
5	Loan interest/capital repayment	0.00	0.00	
6	Total other payments	108,758.17	66,494.44	*
7	Balances carried forward	57,178.71	73,228.16	*
8	Total Cash and Short Term Inve	57,178.71	73,228.16	*
9	Total Fixed Assets and Long Ter	0.00	113,551.00	*
10	Total Borrowings	0.00	0.00	

FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-2025 SUMMARY

01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

This financial year presented several challenges due to a budget in place with limited information, which led to some instances of overspending. Despite these hurdles, we were able to navigate through and successfully end the year in credit.

While we did experience some unexpected costs, our financial management ensured that only a limited amount was drawn from the reserve funds to help with operational costs. This demonstrates our ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances while still maintaining a strong financial position.

In summary, despite facing financial constraints and unbudgeted expenses, we ended the year on a positive note, with careful budgeting and prudent financial decisions helping us close the year with minimal impact on our reserves.

Attached are the relevant reports detailing the figures, I am happy to go through these with individuals and take questions.

Annual Accounts Return 2024/25

Bank Reconciliation 31/3/2025

Statement of Accounts 31/3/25

Summary Report 2024/25

Net Position by Cost Centre and Code

List of Payments in Each code for All Cost Centres.

The next step is to send information to our Internal Auditor who will examine the accounts and review our governance. I have a meeting with the IA 25th April following this the IA report will be received. I will schedule the review of this for our May meeting together with sign off for our accounts and submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to the External Auditor which needs to be sent in by 30th June 2025.

JW 4/4/25