

Keswick Reading Room Annual Report 2024

Overview

Over the pandemic period the Reading Room received generous business rate relief but lost users. We were also in receipt of a grant from the District Council in 2022 to install a projector. Over the pandemic we used the cash windfall to carry out work that was reported on last year. The bank balance returned to more normal levels after paying for the projector, railings, and repairs to the fence (in February) between the Reading Room and the Old Laundry that had collapsed.

We are now in a position where the bank balance has returned to normal levels, bookings are steadily increasing and no major expenses are imminent.

Report

The number of users has steadily increased, despite the loss of one group that booked a consistent 8 hours plus a month. We have produced a postcard to help market the Reading Room to potential users. There is interest in starting a playgroup for under 5's.

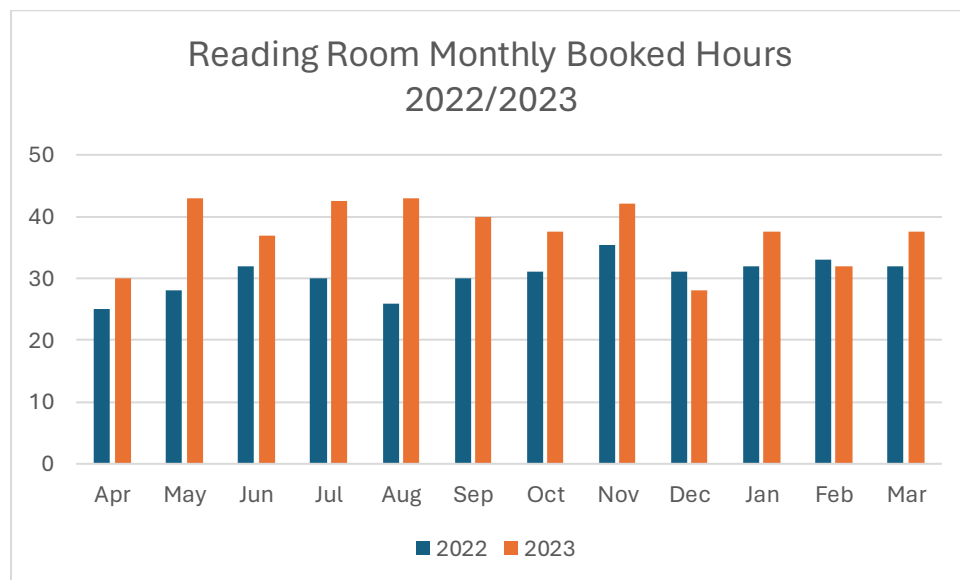


Figure 1: Booked hours for 2022 and 2023

There have been no accidents or near misses reported, but we have received the two complaints about the room not being left tidy for the next user after a weekend party.

The room is still booked out at £10 per hour.

Future concerns are rising energy bills. We have ongoing minor repairs to take care of the exterior of the building.

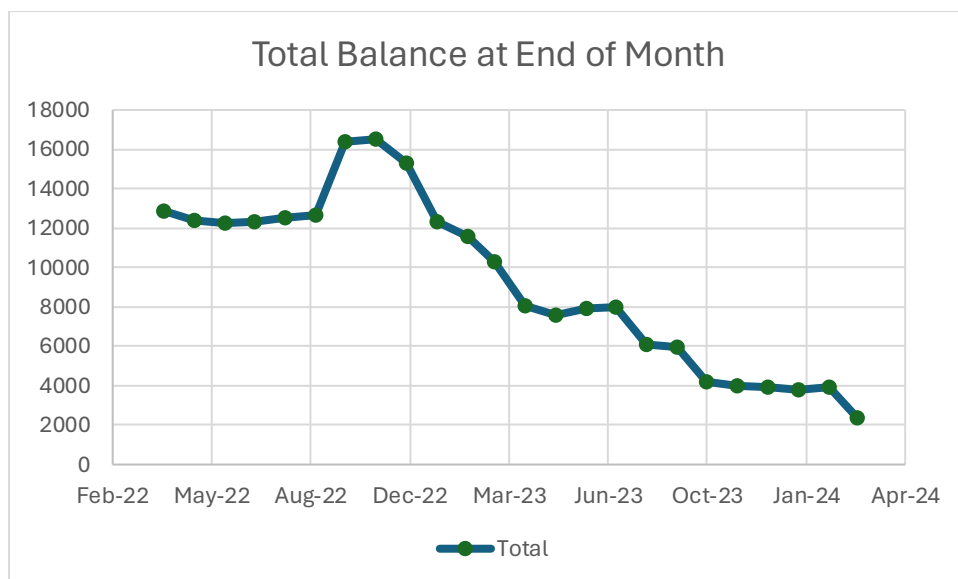


Figure 2: Monthly bank balance

This chart shows bank balance over two years. The period from October 23 to January 24 reflects normal use without abnormal bills. The dip in March reflects the cost of repairing the fence.

We do need to look at increasing bookings and/or reducing costs next year if we are to avoid an increase in the charge.

The four months from October 23 through January 2024 reflect “normal” operation with no major incomings or outgoings. It suggests the current level of bookings just covers costs.

The most significant cost is the electricity bill, mainly from heating. We will look into reducing that.

Regular monthly bills	
Electricity	161.64
Internet	49.2
Insurance	26.73
	237.57

Summary:

- Income from bookings roughly balances costs.
- Grant money has been spent.
- The focus for 2024 is a further increase in bookings and a reduction in the electricity bill.
- We would like to find someone keen on taking over the garden.