Friends of Reading Museum Annual Report 2025

The Friends has gone from strength to strength this year in fulfilling our objectives of the education of the public by promotion, support, assistance and improvement of Reading Museum.

In 2024 the Friends were informed of a significant bequest to FoRM expected from the Estate of Mr Martin Henry Stone, a Reading Resident. In July 2025 we received **£48,310.13** from the Estate, an amount that made a significant change to the level of support that we can offer the Museum. In the year we also received further income from the Sidney Gold Estate, both directly and through the sale of pictures at auction and we also made a successful claim for some time for Gift Aid from HMRC, receiving £927.

As a result, income grew to over £57,000 in 2025 compared to £5385 in 2024. Most of this money was transferred into our interest-earning Savings Account, bringing an additional income of £315.37 over the year.

As a Charity it is our duty to use this money to further our objective, as set out in our Constitution**: "The education of the public by promotion, support, assistance and improvement of Reading Museum"**. There are four sub-objects in the Constitution, one being "generally to further the charitable purposes of Reading Museum and encourage the development of facilities afforded by it".

Our major project this year has been to support and match fund the Reading Museum's 'Roman Britain – Reimagined in Reading' project. This is the largest improvement programme currently being undertaken by the Museum involving the redevelopment of the Silchester Gallery. The Friends supported the three sold-out Silchester lectures given by Professor Michael Fulford in the Town Hall raising £3182. With the new income in 2025 we were able to support the RBC bid to the Lottery Heritage Fund, pledging £15,000 in total. £1000 was transferred to RBC in 2025 to support the preparation of their bid which was successful, with the museum being awarded over £700,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The new Calleva Gallery will redisplay the Silchester collection and much, much more. Redevelopment will start in 2026.

To support the 'education of the public', the Friends organise monthly coffee mornings at the Museum. The Roman theme continued with a coffee morning talk about the Ogham Stone and the fascinating technology that allowed a replica to be made and which will also be used to provide objects for handling in the new gallery. We rounded off the year with a Roman Themed Quiz at our Christmas coffee morning.

Other coffee morning talks celebrated Jane Austen's birthday, pilgrimage in Reading, a Widdershins Walk around Reading's boundary, Johannes von Stumm talking about his work as a sculptor, Reading's Digital Revolution and a talk given by Tony Page, Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Reading, on 'The Old Town Hall - Threats and Opportunities'.

During 2025 the Friends developed a new website, independent of the Reading Museum website which was previously our online presence. This has allowed us to take membership details online, to promote our events and activities, and to administer the 'Adopt An Object' scheme, where members can help Reading Museum care for its collection by adopting one

of its objects for a year. Adopters receive a certificate including an image and description of the object, and their name will appear on its label in the gallery.

For some time, the Friends have encouraged the museum to trial Sunday opening. The FoRM Council agreed to support a trial of Sunday opening of the museum, contributing just over £1600 to cover the additional staffing and other costs of opening the building on Sundays in September 2025. The museum publicised Sunday opening through newsletters, websites and social media and put on special Sunday activities for visitors. Although the trial attracted visitors on four September Sundays, the numbers were considerably lower than on Saturdays and the trial showed it is unlikely that the Museum will be able to justify extending its opening days.

Once again FoRM paid for the Museum's membership of Art UK . Art UK is the first port of call for national and intemational enquirers looking for paintings by particular artists. Due to lack of exhibition space, the vast majority of the Museum's art works are off display but through this research tool the Museum has been able to help academic and image enquiries, initiated loans to other museums and galleries and enabled work in partnership with other institutions

The challenge for us going forward is to maximise the ‘added value’ of donations we make to RBC for Museum projects, working with the Museum staff to identify and prioritise those areas where our support can improve the visitor experience.

Friends of Reading Museum
Profit And Loss Account
For the year ended 31 December 2025

			2025		2024
			£		£
Income	Bank Interest	315.37		474.29	
	Donations	710.31		2,938.10	
	Gift Aid recovery	927.62		-	
	Martin Henry Stone Estate	48,310.13		-	
	Membership (AAO)	450.00		-	
	Membership Fee	1,855.00		1,104.00	
	Sidney Gold Estate	1,593.46		869.41	
	Silchester Talks Income	3,182.00		-	
			57,343.89		5,385.80
Expenses	Booklets/leaflets	-		(475.00)	
	Coffee Morning Speaker Fee	-		(30.00)	
	Coffee Morning Speaker gift	(14.50)		(38.50)	
	Credit Card Processing Charges	(3.22)		-	
	Donations	(337.86)		-	
	Easily Web Domain	-		(14.51)	
	FoRM Memberships	(325.00)		(270.00)	
	Members Event	-		(54.60)	
	Newsletter	(168.20)		(170.00)	
	Pantry Hire	(827.10)		(600.00)	
	Postage	(46.80)		(36.30)	
	Silchester Gallery	(1,000.00)		-	
	Subscription/Insurance	(298.00)		(298.00)	
	Sunday Opening Trial	(1,609.88)		-	
	Website	(1,124.01)		(1,291.50)	
			(5,754.57)		(3,278.41)
Net profit			51,589.32		2,107.39

Treasurer's Report

I confirm that this record, which is prepared on a cash basis, is a true representation of income and expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2025

Stephen Snook Stephen J. Snook 1 May 2026

Friends of Reading Museum
Balance Sheet
As at 31 December 2025

			2025		2024
			£		£
Bank	Current a/c	3,425.92		2,584.10	
	Savings Account	66,232.36		15,484.86	
		69,658.28		18,068.96	
			69,658.28		18,068.96
Net assets			69,658.28		18,068.96
			£		£
Shareholders' funds	Profit and loss account	18,068.96		15,961.57	
	Net profit	51,589.32		2,107.39	
			69,658.28		18,068.96
Total funds			69,658.28		18,068.96

Treasurer's Report

I confirm that this Balance Sheet is a true representation of assets as at 31st December 2025

Stephen Snook

Stephen J. Snook
1 May 2026

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Friends of Reading Museum

On accounts for the year ended 31st December 2025 | **Charity no (if any)** 284338

Set out on pages attached
(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act.

Signed: [signature] **Date:** 1st May 2026

Name: David Tansley

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): FCA

Address: 108 St Peters Avenue, Caversham, Reading RG4 7DR

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	None

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Stephen Snook

Stephen J. Snook
1 May 2026

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Stephen Snook Stephen J. Snook 1 May 2026