



Annual Report 2021/22

Introduction

The Community Library opened its doors on 3 June 2021 and we have operated as a Community Library successfully since then – with both visitor numbers and loans having increased during the period.

About the Community Library

The Community Library is a Committee of the Llanfair Caereinion Public Hall and Institute Registered Charity Number 217716. We operate under a Memorandum of Understanding between Powys County Council, Llanfair Caereinion Town Council the Institute and the Community Library. Under the Memorandum Powys County Council agree to provide books, IT and other services. The Institute provide serviced premises, the Town Council provide financial support to both the Institute and the Community Library and we provide volunteers to run the library.

How the Community Library Operates

Volunteers staff the library as needed – all senior volunteers are DBS checked and have received training from Powys County Council on issues such as data security. We receive a weekly book delivery/collection service for holds and stock rotation as do other Powys libraries. We offer most of the services available in a Powys staffed library. We are visited bi-monthly by a senior County Council librarian (Mair Dafydd) to discuss any issues and check how we operate – these sessions have been supportive and positive and I would like to record our thanks to Mair and the other Council staff we deal with on a day to day basis for their support and help.

Performance

Membership : the Library has 473 members of which 336 have been active in the last 3 years and 200 in the last year. We have joined 85 members since 1 April 2021, most being since we became a Community Library.

Visitor numbers : Numbers tend to vary month by month and were affected by Covid restrictions – but in June we had 112 visitors and 221 in March – so footfall is increasing.

Loans : In the quarter ending March 2022 we loaned 743 books, 50% higher than the comparable figures for the previous two quarters. The best quarter was April to June at 922 loans.

What our members read : Of the 2721 loans 63% were fiction and 17% non fiction. 5% were Welsh language and 13% junior.

Changes

Much of the way we operate has been similar to that operated by Powys. We have increased the number of Welsh language books we hold and we have moved our book stock around within the library to better use the space we have. This has enabled us to sell donated books and DVD's as a fund raising activity. We partly used the start up grant provided by the Town Council to repaint the ceiling – which had significant flaking paintwork and gave the library a dilapidated and uncared for appearance (thanks to Carl Harmer for his help with this). We have also put the two central bookcases on wheels – which has allowed us to create a central meeting and activity space. Our Facebook page has 104 followers and we use it, and the Llanfair Town page, to promote our activities.

Finances

The Community Library gratefully acknowledges the financial and in kind support provided by the Institute and the Town Council without which we could not operate. We have started to raise our own funds in a limited way and will look to use these funds to further develop the services we offer as opportunities arise.

Volunteers

The Community Library was very fortunate to retain most of the original volunteers but also three former County Council librarians. So grateful thanks to our volunteers Carol Wilkinson, Frances Robinson, Janet Jenkins, Jenny Bracegirdle, Kait Duerden, Meg Ringrose, Tristram Cole and Wendy Piggott.

Future Developments

Our ability to promote the summer reading challenge was limited by Covid and we intend to promote the 2022 event as much as possible – the Challenge is our main showcase for young people. We also intend to have a stand at the Carnival Field and Llanfair Show both for booksale and also to join members. We want to raise our profile with the community. Post covid we also hope to offer new surfer sessions for those who need help to use the internet. The Library versions of Ancestry and Find my Past are very underused and we hope to encourage local people – and especially those who might find subscription costs out of reach – to use these tools.

Personal Note

My time as Chair comes to an end at this meeting – I am proud that we have retained our library and see no reason why the library should not continue to operate as long as the community needs us. Grateful thanks to all for support given during the conversion process and during our first 10 months as a community library.

Stephen Purser

2/5/22