

Waterbeach Library

Waterbeach Library continues to thrive with new members joining every week bringing our numbers higher than any other group in the community, and higher than other independent libraries in the Cambridgeshire area. As has always been our aim we provide a service to Library members and the Community as a whole, being frequently congratulated on the friendly, helpful, professional service and environment we generate at every session. We perceive our members as friends, not just members of a Library. During the summer of 2015 Hills, builders of the Sanctuary Housing Development, updated the front facade (windows, lower panels and entrance doors), and provided a new fire door, kitchen window and some high level windows. This recognised the community benefit of maintaining the community room to provide library facilities.

Our system of taking time to ascertain the types of books our clientele enjoy has resulted in considerable feedback to address the needs of our members. In particular we listen to the younger members of the Library who have moved to senior school as these are a difficult group to engage. However watching two young 13year old men walking out of the Library recently carrying eight books each to read, we think we may be achieving our objectives.

At present we have our fifth Scout completing his Library Badge, we also have provided facilities for Guides to complete their Reading Badge. During the past month we have agreed to mentor a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award candidate with his Voluntary Work aspect. This does seem to indicate Waterbeach Library provides a service which is valued by parents, and groups, within the wider Community.

We are providing books to playgroups and nurseries in the area on a three week basis with two being serviced on a collect and deliver system by our Volunteers. This is accomplished with no charge to the groups, nor to the Library, as no expenses are requested by our Volunteers. We understand other groups are considering joining this scheme.

Whilst we no longer have school classes visiting us we maintain contact with the school to provide resources in the form of books and displays for the various projects the children undertake. This term it is the Animal Kingdom, plus we will be covering Shakespeare's 400th Anniversary this month. One of the younger members of the Library recently requested whether he could write a piece for the School Newsletter requesting Volunteers for the Library, both the Head Ms Green and the Library were very willing for him to address this issue. He also requested to raise the matter at his School Council Meeting, again both the Library and School actively encouraged him in his efforts as both encourage children to think outside the box.

The Library commenced the Mum and Babies group on Wednesday 13th April, 1.30-2.30pm, working in conjunction with the Dolphin Children's Centre, which proved a success. At present this will be held twice a term with a view to increase the meetings in the future. The aim of these meetings is to engage parents in the process of reading to children from a very early age which has been proved to expand the vocabulary and reading abilities of children.

The Dolphin Centre, in co-operation with the Library, are holding their next Community meeting at the Library in June which brings together various community and statutory groups in order to discuss possible improvements in service to the individual. This is one more effort on the Volunteers part to work toward the Waterbeach Library providing some hub facilities, regardless of operating on Voluntary staff.

The library celebrated World Book Night on Saturday 23rd April, an event to which all councillors have been invited via the Parish Clerk. The next large project we shall be addressing will be the Summer Reading Challenge 2016. It is hoped we may exceed the Reading Challenge numbers again this year, but as last year was so successful this might be difficult, but we will see.

Recently we have experienced a need to advertise for Volunteers due to some having to cease their sessions due to long term ill health, plus responsibilities for elderly parents. We have no doubts we will be able to address the issue.

Waterbeach Library will continue to act in a frugal and responsible manner as regards the funds we hold as we are constantly aware we have a duty to provide best value and service, as per County Council requirements, for the taxpayers who support the Library.