

Holme Wood

Services currently available:

Beauty and Nails NVQ L3

Walking group

Employability programmes with local employers resulting in employed work placements

Incommunities STEP programme partnership providing work placements at Library

Awards for All Volunteer training programme

Functional ICT Course (provision for English and Maths once we have enough attendees)

Silver Surfers ICT programme including iPad sessions

Young people's engagement, advice and support services run by Bradford Youth Service

CHAS advice service for adults

Benefits advice session from Bradford council Housing Benefit Department

Nursery stay and play

Hosting meetings for local organisations and providers

Primary school visits

Community cohesion events e.g. Christmas party, big lunch, family fun day,

Cook and eat with local community group

Sit and knit

Bingo

Library book start and reading challenges

Library Children's events

Library borrowing services

Overview

The library project has made a lot of progress since re-opening in May 2017 with support from local Councillors, Library services, Bradford Youth service and of course the Friends of Holme Wood group who have been integral to keeping the space open and working for the community it serves.

The wide range of activities and services provided in the Holme Wood Connect is helping to increase footfall and get resident buy in. Local organisations are beginning to utilise the facilities for meetings and workshops which provides a revenue stream to aid sustainability.

We have renewed the relationship with Local schools who got involved in various themed projects over the Christmas period. This will continue with a focus on working with primary schools in the first instance to encourage children to use the library and introduce families to the variety of activities on offer in the space.

We continue to work with a number of different partners who have a foothold on the estate to help provide meaningful advice and activities for residents with the ultimate aim of creating a hub that

serves all the needs of the local community. These include CHAS advice services, Incommunities who are running job search and functional skills courses and the Youth Service and Early help who are providing services in the space for parents and young people.

We have had more interest in the volunteering programme which is giving us a much-needed boost in staffing of the space as well as developing links with the University of Bradford and TalentMatch to help offer work placements and training opportunities to those who need it.

Highlights of 2017

Some recent highlights of the project include the Friends of Holme Wood group receiving the Community Stars Award in December 2017. This was a well-deserved recognition of the hard work, dedication and support they have given their local library and community as a whole since their inception.

The Christmas writing project with local primary schools illustrated the creativity and determination to succeed that young children in Holme Wood have and resulted in a Christmas Tea party for families to enjoy.

St Columbus school also got involved over Christmas with every Key stage getting involved to create a Christmas Nativity Advent Calendar display for the windows.

The Friends of Holme Wood finished off a fantastic year with a Christmas party for local residents that epitomised the community spirit that exists in Holme Wood and it was great to see parents getting involved in games too.

Overcoming barriers

Initially we struggled with some anti-social behaviour, however I am pleased to say that by involving partners and working together these have subsided. Regular PSCO and community warden visits are helping residents to feel safe in the space and support from the youth service in the evening is helping to keep any disruption to evening classes at bay too. This has led to an increase in numbers and an increase in volunteers too.

The Future

At the moment, Holme Wood Connect is thriving. By working together and involving the local community at every possible step, we are creating a space that really works for the community in Holme Wood.

We are continually looking at what funding we can bring down to help sustain the space and the activities currently on offer, as well as provide more services to residents that increase aspiration and opportunity to succeed. These range from smaller pots of funding for bespoke projects such as the City Challenge funding, and larger pots such as Urban Development and Arts Council funding.

We would also like to develop links with local employers this year to develop skills specific training courses at the Library that recruit and train local residents for local jobs.

This year we will be working in partnership with local residents and partner organisations to set up a community magazine to promote all of the positive activity that takes place in the library and around the rest of the estate. We will also be running events aimed at showcasing the facilities and the services on offer to residents of Holme Wood as well as supporting our partners with their projects.

How Library Services Could Support

Stock has been an issue and we are low on books overall. Whilst we have received around 100 new Children's books we have only got around 1500 stock in total. We are receiving a handful of old books every Thursday so in total have had about 150 books in. So far we have not had any of the Children's books around the themes the local schools have requested. The request process is slow – we requested Christmas books in early November and received these in mid - January! Improving and increasing stock with more up to date and new books and improving the speed at which we get requested books would help to increase library rentals.

We have some new volunteers and a work placement starting next month as so it would be useful to have a refresher training session on Soprano and a trouble shoot session on Library services for new recruits. In general, any training relevant to the library staff would be great to help ensure a more joined up approach across the different libraries so that customers can expect the same level of service.





