

IDLE LIBRARY

Idle Library is a community managed library which commenced in March 2016 following the closure of the Library which was situated in the village.

Following discussion between Bradford City Libraries; the Local Councillor, Jeanette Sutherland and Nasim Quereshi the CEO of Inspired Neighbourhoods, Idle Library was established in the Wright Watson Centre with the intention of serving the residents of Idle, Thackley, Thorpe Edge and Greengates. The facilities at the Wright Watson Centre not only provide a large open space, it also light and airy and has benefit of air conditioning during the summer, and heating during the winter. The Library also has access to separate toilet facilities, a disabled toilet and kitchen for making refreshments. There are also 2 large meeting rooms which available to the Library when necessary. There is also disabled access at the rear of the Library. Staff at the Wright Watson Centre and the Library work together to ensure that all people attending the Library feel valued and welcome.

When the Library was opened , a number of local people responded to the request for volunteers so that the library could function and one of those volunteers agreed to be the co-ordinator for the Library.

In February 2017, the co-ordinator decided that he wished to resign and a new co-ordinator was appointed. Without the determination and commitment of the Co-ordinator and those first volunteers the Library will no doubt not have been the success that it is today.

By this time more people had volunteered and a new Co-ordinator was assigned and this was to lead to more ideas being considered in how to make the library for more accessible especially for children

Progression of the Library

The team of volunteers brought some ideas and different skills with them in order for the Library to provide the following.:-

Story/Rhymetime Sessions

Some of our volunteers were former primary school teachers who agreed to run a Story/Rhyme time session each Monday afternoon during school term time. These volunteers through their hard work, not only lead the Story/Rhyme times but include preparing appropriate crafts to go with the stories. The stories are held in our Children's corner in the Library, but crafts are held in the adjoining meeting room giving the children more space to move around freely.

Since the beginning of 2018, another story/rhyme time session has been set by by another two volunteers, one of whom is again a former primary school teacher. These sessions are run each alternate Mondays as might of the children who attend are brought by childminders who attend Sing and Sign elsewhere on the second Monday.

Young Person's Reading Group

One of these volunteers then set up a Young Persons Reading Group. This was to provide one to one reading sessions with any child who was having difficulty in reading or where a parent felt their child needed the extra reading time. This has proved successful with numbers increasing but there has been a noted improvement with children's reading and confidence. In one particular instance, a child who was reluctant to read when starting the sessions is now able to confidently stand up in class and read out loud. Due to the success of the group with more children attending, another volunteer has been acquired to assist. We are still getting a further interest which may result in the need for a third volunteer.

These reading groups are held in a meeting room therefore allowing the children to read in privacy without feeling the pressure of being heard by other people attending the Library.

Adult Reading Group

Towards the end of the first year, an Adult Reading Group was set up for the last Monday evening in the month. This was proposed by a volunteer who was a former librarian and although there are probably around 6 people who attend, discussions about the book often run past the hour which is allocated. Again we have the use of a meeting room for the group and coffee/tea and biscuits are provided. We also have people who borrow the book who are unable to attend our meetings some of whom give some feedback for us to use in the meeting.

Coffee morning

This was started at around the beginning of 2017. During the first few months we were not getting many people attending. Therefore in September, we decided to post leaflets in local properties, advertise in local shops and local Elderly People's Homes.

As of Christmas 2017, we have expanded our coffee mornings by including a raffle and quiz, and sometimes we have a themed morning. The coffee morning was designed to give people in the village an opportunity to have some refreshments in a nice place with very little cost, and to be able to meet other people. We have young mums and childminders who come with young children and one of our volunteers provides a story and singalong with the children. We also have some of the elderly less mobile residents of the local Home for the Elderly who attended with carers and these residents seem to look forward to coming along.

The food is paid by the Wright Watson Centre, and the raffle is charged at 50p and that money together with donations made, helps us replenish prizes for the raffle. The quiz is a lighthearted quiz which everyone seems to enjoy.

The coffee mornings bring in regular members of the public, some library member and some not, but they all enjoy the opportunity of meeting different people with various interests.

One of our volunteers reads stories to children and has a singalong with any children who attend the coffee mornings.

School Visits

We have links with various schools in the area, however since 2017, we have expanded on those links.

Since the beginning of 2018 we have had visits from the following schools:-

Thorpe Primary - Reception, Year 1, 2 and 3.

Swainhouse Primary School - Reception, Year 3 and 5 consisting of 2 classes in each year group..

Parklands Primary School - 2 visits by Reception.

Again our former teachers offer their time to read stories/crafts for the children and we again have had the use of one of the meeting rooms for the children to do their crafts.

Through these visits further applications for children to join the library have been made. One school has a group ticket and after the first visit when each child borrowed a book, the school sends several children to the library to return the books and to select a book for each child in the class to take back to school.

One of the schools has already asked if they could have visits in the school year, as the First World War is on the curriculum. The Wright Watson Centre has a very good display of memorabilia etc of the First World War and Centre has other information about the War which they are happy to loan to the Library for any class visit.

We have been approached by 2 ladies who want to run a Creative Writing Group and they asked if the library can facilitate the same. Inspired Neighbourhoods have agreed that they can use a room free of charge to run this group with the support of the library.

Idle Library has a total of 25 volunteers 22 of whom cover various shifts between 9am and 7pm Monday to Wednesday each week. These volunteers are responsible for the issuing and returning of books via Soprano, dealing enquiries by borrowers, shelf checks from other libraries, general maintenance of the bookcases, supporting events throughout the year. The volunteers also deal with book stock management when requested but also undertake checking for damaged/out of date books etc., to be removed from the shelves.

The remaining volunteers are the ones responsible for story time/rhyme time and the Young Person's Ready Group.

The Co-ordinator provides in-house training where necessary, especially on Soprano, Summer Reading Challenge and National Bookstart Week and the Co-ordinator also attends training sessions provided on events.

In 2017/2018 we held various events in the Library which generated over 100 children attending with adults for such events as Nature event, Thomas the Tank Engine, Teddy

Bear's Picnic. We also had 2 visits from a Nursery where in total 24 children and 7 adults attended.

The Wright Watson Centre provide 5 computers for the use of the public. The Library volunteers assist with queries however if we are unable to attend, then a member of the IT staff at the Wright Watson Centre assist.

Our average monthly figures are as follows:-

	2016	2017	2018
Visitors	364	Increase of 15%	Increase of 2%
Computers	60	Increase of 12%	Increase of 26%
New Members	13	No increase	Increase of 200%
Story Time pm	29	Increase of 20%	Increase of 10%
Story Time am	-----	12	Increase of 200%
Young Readers	7	No Increase	Increase of 2%
Book Group	7	No Increase	No Increase
Coffee Morning adults	4	Increase of 300%	Increase of 40%
Coffee Morning children	-----	-----	17
School visits	-----	28 children 5 adults	196 children 38 adults

Summer Reading Challenge - the number of attendees for 2017/2018 increased (but I do not have the figures at the present time).

Looking to the future

To continue the success of the Library we are intending approaching other Primary Schools in the area to get them more involved in the activities we provide.

We are having a Teddy Bear's Picnic in July for the morning Story Time children and for the afternoon Story Time children we are having a separate End of Year Party. We provide fruit

and water to the children however if parents wish to bring food for their child(ren) this is acceptable.

We are supporting a Creative Writing Group which will be held on a monthly basis.

We are liaising the Literacy Agency into the possibility of starting an adult reading group.

We advertise all our events both in the Library and through mail shots and/or local businesses.

We also have our donated book stand from which we sell books at a nominal fee.

We have jigsaw and games donated, and each week we set up a jigsaw to try and generate interest.

Without the time and help willing given by our volunteers Idle Library would not be the success that it is. Our volunteers are always polite and helpful and go the extra mile to ensure that everyone attends the Library in whatever capacity has an enjoyable pleasant experience.

Finally as a testament to the work put in by our story time volunteers in 2017 the Library was awarded an Achievement Certificate and one of the children from the story/rhyme time won a prize at the Rhyme Time Awards.

