

Libraries in your community

The recent Library Service Review highlighted the importance of working closely with local communities to enhance their experience of the library offer. Listening and responding to local needs has a key role to play in the development of library services in Cumbria for the future.

In recognition of this, we appointed two Community Library Workers in October 2012. Working in the Carlisle and Whitehaven areas, their remit is to :

- Facilitate increased access to local library provision;
- Increase awareness and use of library services.

This can be in a variety of ways

- Developing and supporting Book Drops and Library Links in local communities;
- Working in partnership with members of the local community, colleagues and other organisations to develop library services;
- Promoting regional and national initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge in local communities;
- Developing and promoting library service provision in key thematic areas such as literacy, health and wellbeing, reminiscence work adult learning and ICT skills.

Here are some examples of the projects our Community Library Workers have been involved in to date.

Book Drops have been set up in Great Corby, Upperby, Thursby, Kirkbride and The Fox and Hound Pub, Ennerdale. Book Drops are small collections of up to 100 library books to borrow hosted in a community space in an area where there is no other library provision. Harraby Library Link, a larger collection of 500+ library books to borrow, has also been created in Harraby Community Centre.

Working with Age UK we use volunteers to offer pre-bookable ICT sessions for beginners in Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Moorclose Libraries.



Library Friends Groups have been established in Egremont, Gosforth, Seaton and Moorclose Libraries. The groups - drawn from members of each local community – meet up on a regular basis to look at ways of raising awareness of their local library.

Working in partnership with Barnardo's to offer Chatterbox sessions to parents and children at Yewdale School Nursery and Morton Library to improve the children's speech and language development.



Social@thelibrary is a project aimed at getting the local community engaged with Kells Library. On the first Thursday of every month we run a themed session where everybody in the community is welcome – themes include **Local History**, **Make A Noise In Libraries** and **Try Reading**, a regional initiative to tie in with the Rugby League World Cup later this year.

