



**Castle Cary Community Library
Performance Report April - September 2019**

1 Castle Cary Community Library is in receipt of funding from Castle Cary Town Council for a period of three years. Conditions attached to that payment are :

- 1 the issue of an annual report to the Town Council by September of each year
- 2 one Town Councillor to sit on the board of the Trustees
- 3 a further Town Councillor to sit on the management committee

2 The attached report is provided in accordance with condition 1. It is later than required, but this was simply because we were unaware of the condition.

3 Judi Morison who sits on the Board of Trustees was appointed a trustee in her personal capacity

4 No Town Councillor has sat on the management committee to date, but the Town Clerk is sent meeting agendas and action lists.

5 If you require any further information please contact me.

Les Kimberley

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Castle Cary Community Library Manager

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1 Library Opening

The library is open for the same days and hours as when it was run by the County Council. We always have two desk volunteers in the library when it is open, and we also now have a self-service machine. We can therefore offer a good service to users and we have more capacity to perform library related tasks. The library was run with one library assistant before we took it over.

2 User Numbers

We have 548 active borrowers and have signed up 91 new users of the library since 1 April. The one public computer which we have is well used. We are told that the level of use merits provision of a second computer but we do not have space for it.

3 Library Events - Adults

The small size of the library building, (we are told that it is the second smallest in Somerset), limits our ability to hold events. This said, we ran a Virtual Reality session during the school holidays.

Computer and tablet, (I Pad) workshops are particularly popular elsewhere. We shall be considering what demand there is for events and what we can do in 2020/21. We plan to make further use of the Shambles when we need a space for volunteer and other events.

4 Library Events Children

Storytime, (previously Rhymetime) is the weekly opportunity for parents to enjoy reading sessions with smaller children in the library. We have recently decided to move the session to an earlier time in order to help parents and minimise any inconvenience for other library users. Numbers have to be limited at present due to the small size of the library.

5 Summer Reading Challenge Participation

The Summer Reading Challenge is an important tool to encourage children to read during the summer holidays. This year 52 children from local schools took part in the "Space Chase" challenge.

6 Home Library Service

Some of our volunteers are now working with the Royal Voluntary Service to help people select books and audio books who cannot get to the library.

7 Budget Position

The annual costs of running of the Library is £8170 per year. The bulk of this, (£6400) is for the lease of the building. Electricity (£1200) is our second largest cost. We are within budget. The Friends activities provide much needed financial support. We have been reluctant to spend on improvements until we have funds to cover them.

8 Stock Management

Our customers want to see an attractive selection of books when they visit the library. We therefore have to understand what they would like us to stock, and ensure that there is a good selection available which changes regularly. As a community run library we have an advantage in that we have volunteers who have the capacity to spend time doing this.

9 Library Presentation

The library was given a thorough clean prior to opening as a Community Library on 1 April. We have reviewed all presentation material and focused on displaying information which is related to library services. We have been particularly lucky to have a volunteer who provides excellent window displays as well as attractive children's display material. Fresh flowers are regularly provided and we pride ourselves on making the library as attractive and welcoming as we can.

10 Volunteers

We have 27 desk volunteers who have been trained and who can run the library, plus 3 stock management volunteers. We have an effective process to ensure that there is cover for planned and unplanned absences. In addition, there are 110 Friends who have signed up to support the library and who help us with fund raising.

11 Volunteer Training

All volunteers have undertaken training sessions on subjects such as equal opportunities and health and safety. In addition, desk volunteers have been trained in the I.T. systems which are used to manage the library stock - issuing books, reserving books, fines and reservations, running the public computer, printing, county intranet etcetera.

12 Liaison with Somerset County Council

We have regular support from the SCC Library Supervisor Cerian Amery who is based in Frome, as well as email and telephone contact and support from County Council staff. Quarterly Review Meetings are held in order to consider our performance. These provide a forum for discussing general issues as well as our service performance against the SCC contract.

13 Public Comments

We have not received any complaints in the time we have been open but we have received many comments of support from people who are very grateful that the library is still open as they find it useful for choosing books, ordering and picking up books ordered on line, and using the public computer. We are also a source of information for visitors, particularly if the Market House is closed.

14 Forward Planning

Our first year has been a steep learning curve. Our principal objectives have been to learn the library systems, ensure the library is open for the advertised hours, and continue to provide a good service to users.

During our second year we will no doubt want to learn more about what the community wants from a community library so that we can develop the services which we provide. We shall also need to look at how we safeguard our medium to long term financial position.
