

Suffolk Libraries

Working with the community in 2016-2017

The support and contribution of our community groups has continued to have a profound and positive affect on Suffolk's libraries. Community groups help to raise funds for developments and equipment and help Suffolk Libraries to expand the services and activities on offer to our customers. This leaflet gives a flavour of their work over the past year and the benefit they bring to our library service.

Aldeburgh Library Foundation (ALF) worked closely with Suffolk Libraries on a major refurbishment of Aldeburgh Library in September 2016 (*see photo below*). Suffolk County Council replaced the windows and ALF provided new carpeting, furniture, signage and movable shelving. The new shelving allows for more flexible use of the library for adult education courses and other activities. ALF has raised over £30,000 since 2013. Most of this has come from the fees from the increasingly popular adult education classes, from the sale of refreshments and the Friends of Aldeburgh Library (FOAL) loyalty card scheme.



Beccles Library Community Trust raised funds through a 100 club scheme, regular raffles, retail sales and successful events which included a new series of monthly talks and a live music concert. The Friends have helped fund wheeled shelving for increased event capacity, the soundproofing of the large meeting room, a children's garden, and a new weekly Lego club. Another project is the installation of a 'Peace Sculpture' in the library grounds which was unveiled in May 2017.

The Friends of Brandon Library held two Suffolk Libraries Bookfest events in a joint venture with Lakenheath Library. Another highlight was a 'scrumdiddlyumptious' Roald Dahl themed lunch to support the Summer Reading Challenge. The Friends group took part in the library's storytelling activity at the towns 'Pumpkinfest', and hosted an event with author Peter Morfoot. Quiz nights and a Christmas Fayre stall also helped to raise money. Funds raised were spent on an extra public access computer, additional new chairs for events and competition prizes.

The Broomhill Library Friends organised successful Summer and Christmas Fetes together with the nearby Sherrington House Care Home. In March 2017 they held an evening quiz with a fish and chip supper which raised nearly £100. In July 2016, the library increased its opening hours without incurring any additional staff costs and now opens seven days a week. The Friends Group initiated a project to change the library's lighting to LED bulbs which will make ongoing electricity costs much cheaper and improve the quality of lighting.

The Friends of Bungay Community Library have continued their ongoing work to improve and enhance the library facilities. They paid for a series of holiday activities for children, funded staff hours to offer computer training to older users and worked with local volunteers to tidy and refresh the library garden. They also funded new units to help with the library's new role providing tourist information and the library also continues to offer a selection of greeting cards to buy. The Friends have also started to work with other local organisations to hold events and attract funding for Bungay projects.

The last year has seen **The Friends of Bury St Edmunds Library** (FoBL) continue to develop their activity and support. Along with many successful book sales, the Friends also held a very well attended quiz night. Funds raised helped to provide new and improved seating in the children's library.

In April the **Friends of Capel Library** invited children to meet some exotic animals. 40 children turned up for a great event which involved feeding meerkats. Kinetic Adventures came to the library in May to show children how to make helicopters and gave them a chance to fire a rocket. Children's film screenings included Jungle Book and Pete's Dragon and the Friends have now launched a successful Community Cinema initiative. The Friends of Capel Library also had stalls at Capel Fun Day and the Bentley Fete.

As well as supporting all major library events this year, **Friends of Chantry Library**, (FOCL) funds the library's membership of Ipswich Children's Book group, who ran two very successful events in the library. Through FOCL's partnership with Tesco, the courtyard was repainted and an outside noticeboard advertising events was installed. FOCL also sponsor Chantry Grasshoppers football team who promote the library on their football kits. FOCL also helped with a successful funding bid to Ipswich Borough Council to develop the library's work with young people. As well as other successful fundraising activities, the Friends took a stall to a large scout fete and engaged with over 50 non-library users .

The Friends of Clare Library had a busy summer in 2016 running book sales, supporting Clare Library at Party in the Park, quiz evening, and running their Cine Clair cinema evenings. In 2017 they continued to support library events by providing refreshments, launched summer book sales and organised a guest speaker. They have also purchased a magnifying lamp, black out blinds, bookends, book stands and poster displays for the library. The Chair of the Friends Group Harriet Loram sadly passed away during the year and was greatly missed. Money donated at her funeral was used to purchase a small 3D printer which has been much appreciated and well-used by the local community.

Debenham Library Friends (DLF) organised a 'small change for a BIG CHANGE' event just after the library's move to bigger premises at Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School. A line of donated change was laid by volunteers from the old library to the new one with a total of £960 raised (*see photo*). The new library's official launch was held in September. All children at Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School now have a Suffolk Libraries card and visit the library on a weekly basis.



Elmswell Library Friends (ELF) support

Elmswell Library with an extended group of friends who have helped the hard-working committee, led by chairman Jimmy Jewell, to raise money through a variety of events. This has included wine nights run by local expert Bob Stopp, a Christmas raffle and a race night (*see photo*). These have all been hugely popular. A community café run by volunteers has been launched in partnership with Elmswell's village café Dorothy's. This is aimed at people who are new to the area or who have become isolated. This has started to expand with the launch of a book group. ELF and Elmswell Library are at the heart of the community and are forming many partnerships which are benefiting customers.



The Eye Library Friends Group started the year with a well supported stall at the primary school. A coach trip to London and a Christmas hamper raffle both contributed to the fundraising effort and there are plans to use this money to purchase more wheeled shelving. The local Arts Centre continues to display donated books for sale, which is very well supported and helps to raise further money.

At **Felixstowe Library** the Suffolk Libraries Presents screenings have been a great success and there are plans to continue events after the funded element of the project finishes. The Harry Potter Book Night was a sell out with 60 children attending and **Felixstowe Town Council**, as the member organisation of Suffolk Libraries provided sweets for the children. The library has also launched iPad lending and hosted a very successful Bookfest event where author Elly Griffiths launched her new book. Book Mountain book sales and a craft fair in December have also helped to raise money.

The Friends of Framlingham Library had a very successful year of fundraising/ bid writing and events, including a quiz night with supper and a bar, soup and pud lunch, afternoon tea party and the annual button-pairing championship on the market hill. The funds then paid for the full refurbishment of the old cell into a new meeting room and the new kitchen and toilet were redecorated and new flooring was installed.

More of the public library was redecorated by volunteers and new furniture was purchased in preparation for Framlingham Town Council's move to the library.

Voices for Gainsborough Community Library (V4GCL) support the library and run the community cafe as volunteers. Since becoming a charity in 2016, V4GCL have been successful with many funding applications, enabling the library to offer more activities for people of all ages. Funding has been received from The John Dorkin Charity, The High Sheriff Fund, The Pargiter Trust, Suffolk Sports Fund and Sports Relief. In addition, funding from the local county councillor and The Gainsborough Community People's Forum enabled the library to set up a dedicated teen room and install wheeled shelving throughout the library.

2016/2017 was an exceptionally busy year at Glemsford Library and for the **Friends of Glemsford Library**. There were several very successful events including a Battle of the Somme exhibition, a creative writing workshop, a Star Wars Day and a Bookfest event. Fundraising events included a successful quiz night. There were also two very special events with live music from The Anna Mudeka Band and Morgan and West's Amazing Magic Show.

The Friends of Great Cornard Library have helped to organise a series of events aimed at raising awareness of the library in the community and supported library staff with the Summer Reading Challenge, Harry Potter Book Night and other events. Funds raised have also contributed to new library signs. Other highlights included a stall at Great Cornard Fete and a fundraising fish and chips quiz in January.

The Friends of Hadleigh Library have had a successful year with a variety of events. In April they organised a plant sale which raised £86 and in October they supported a Harry Potter event. The group successfully applied for funding from Babergh District Council and Hadleigh Town Council to cover the cost of two fun performances for children in conjunction with Creative Arts East. The most successful fundraiser was a Christmas Raffle with crafts which raised £425. During the year, volunteers from the group have helped customers get to grips with their iPad or Android tablets.

The Friends of Halesworth County Library repeated their successful quiz night in April and October, held a plant sale in May and again ran a fundraising stall at the Halesworth Antiques Fair. They hosted the book launch of 'Fenn Halflin and the Fearzero' by Francesca Armour-Chelu in June. In October 2016 the library celebrated its 20th birthday with a magic show for the children in the library followed by another magic show for adults later on. In December the Friends decorated the library and held a Christmas Bazaar.

The Friends of Haverhill Library have continued to raise funds through a broad range of activities such as quizzes and an event helping children to write letters to Father Christmas. The group has also worked closely with library staff and supported them in the running of initiatives such as Christmas plate decorating and book folding workshops (*see photo below*). They continue to fund the WiFi, provide stationery for sale, have purchased two 'kinder boxes' to display children's books and also contributed to an extensive programme of summer holiday activities for the children.



It's been another busy year for the **Friends of Ipswich County Library**. The regular quiz nights continue to be popular, as do the many children's activities, including Harry Potter Book Night and Super Science events. In November, funk band Primo Nelson played at a sell-out gig in the library. For the first time Stoke and Ipswich friends groups joined forces to bring local psychic medium Ryan Gooding to the library - another sell-out. In the library's Hub, a local artist who is also a library friend runs painting classes and another member of the group has facilitated an informal English course, Let's Talk English. The library also hosted its annual Multi-Cultural Day and its very first wedding.

The Friends of Ixworth Library (FOIL) purchased three iPads and started offering iPad training tuition, linked to a 'Get Connected' event in the library organised by FOIL. FOIL also had a stall at the Ixworth Village Fete. September saw the launch of FOIL's film nights initiative with a screening of Florence Foster Jenkins attended by over 50 people. The film nights continue to run monthly and include a licensed bar and refreshments.

The Kedington Library Friends ran a fundraising quiz in partnership with the Royal British Legion which raised £138. The Friends have supported staff throughout the year, with one member volunteering for the Summer Reading Challenge and some members regularly attend groups such as knit and natter.

The Friends of Kessingland Library have organised four quizzes with Chairman Alan Green acting as quizmaster. The library hosted five school visits in 2016/2017 and FOLK entertained the children with stories. FOLK have also organised and supported various events including a book sale, a Sea Shanties & Tea afternoon and a talk by local historian Gerald Brown. The library also took part in a knitathon with other organisations to create bunting for the beach in summer 2017. Other regular clubs at the library have been very successful including art, Scrabble and prime time, baking and reading groups.

The Kesgrave Library Community Group supported extensive refurbishment and redecoration at the library with funding from local charity SPARKS. The group also secured a grant to fund additional prizes for the Summer Reading Challenge and organised a puppet show for the presentations. During the year, the group successfully ran a Spring and Christmas Fayre and a Halloween event which involved a dragon visiting the library to entertain children.

The Friends of Lakenheath Library hosted a fundraising quiz at the village hall, ran a stall at a street party celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday and were involved in the Lakenheath Carnival. The group provided prizes for the Summer Reading Challenge and together with the Friends of Brandon Library, hosted two Bookfest events in October. The group also obtained Forest Heath District Council funding for two loanable iPads which were launched at a Get Connected event with local county councillor and leader of Suffolk County Council, Colin Noble.

The Friends of Lavenham Library supported further improvements to the library layout, new display stands and new signage. The Friends group has provided support to projects to build links with the local community including activities such as regular sessions for the very young (Tot Rock), for older residents (Top Time), as well as children's crafts sessions every Sunday and during school holidays. The Summer Reading Challenge saw a massive leap in participation – from about 15 in 2015 to almost 50 in 2016. The library hosted a Suffolk Libraries Bookfest event and support for Lavenham's first Children's Book Festival. Promotional pens have helped to both raise funds and the library's profile. The Friends also provided funding for outreach visits to local schools, along with support from the parish council.

This year **Leiston Library Steering Group** has paid for various events and equipment including a magician event, four iPads for lending to customers, equipment to maintain the garden, refreshments for events, promotional leaflets for distribution across Leiston and a new display stand. Committee members supported a speaker event, an iPad users' workshop and an adult jewellery-making workshop.

The Friends of Long Melford Library have been very active in providing both financial and practical support. A significant library refurbishment was paid for by contributions from the United Reformed Church, The Hamilton Charity and the Friends group (*see photo*). Fundraising events included the annual Spring & Christmas fairs - which raised over £1,000, a stall at the Summer Street Fair and a children's craft session at the Olde Melford Christmas Fayre. Promotional pens have also been a successful way of raising both funds and the library's profile.

The Summer Reading Challenge saw a leap in participation – from about 12 in 2015 to almost 40 in 2016. The library has also established new links with local schools with the Friends



group supporting school visits to the library. The group, together with Melford Good Neighbours scheme, also holds a fortnightly coffee morning in the library for isolated members of the community.

The Friends of Lowestoft Library have raised money by holding various events including their annual literary festival with Anthony Horowitz, a free children's festival with a garden party theme and a Shakespeare workshop, as well as running their bi-monthly book sales. The Friends have provided the library with seating for the junior library, trolleys for the Home Library Service and equipment for the meeting rooms as well as partly funding a new CCTV security system. They have also volunteered at the screenings of dance and opera and kept the library visible in local media with press releases.

The Friends of Mildenhall Library held various events over the past year including a puppet show and magic show. They successfully obtained funding from Mildenhall Town Council, their new district councillor and previous councillor James Waters. They have recently purchased five iPads for customers to use and are also starting tuition classes in the library. The Friends have also match-funded new furniture for the library costing £3,500 and have also contributed £400 to the cost of the library's Wi-Fi.

Needham Market Town Council is the membership group who represent Needham Market Library. They have continued to pay for the library's newspapers and photocopier as well as funding a storyteller for a family day in the summer. They have also taken responsibility for minor building maintenance.

The Friends of Newmarket Library. In Autumn 2016 a significant refurbishment of Newmarket Library took place - the first in 40 years. Funding came from the Friends' successful applications to the Newmarket Festival and contributions from local county and district councillors. The project included new mobile shelving which has enabled the library to hold more events, bringing music and film into the library. A successful bid from the Friends to the Racing Foundation also led to the refurbishment of the Racing Collection Room to improve access and awareness of this unique archive.

The Friends of Oulton Broad Library kindly purchased Lego for the library's new Lego Club which is already very popular and is helping to raise the profile of the library. The Friends also held a Christmas raffle and raised about £100. They also helped to fund an animal encounter event where children got the chance to meet reptiles.

Rosehill Library Friends have continued to raise money through quizzes, selling donated books and a Christmas raffle. They have supported the new Library Manager through the process of planning and refurbishing the library which led to significant improvements in 2017. The Friends held a celebration event for the Summer Reading Challenge volunteers and awarded each of them a £10 book token.

Saxmundham Library Friends held and supported various events and fundraising activities throughout the year. These included a New Year quiz, adult colouring sessions, Bookstart singing sessions, computer and language courses, author talks and book signings. The library has also hosted informative talks from individuals, groups, museums and charities, poetry and play reading sessions. A film night was held at Saxmundham Museum and the library had stalls at local community events. In addition there have been coffee, cake and chat sessions and craft activities. New book groups have been launched and new and much appreciated volunteers have been recruited for the Summer Reading Challenge.

The Friends of Southwold Library have had a very successful year with 28 social and fundraising events (*see photo*) raising over £6,000. This has allowed them to provide additional resources for the Summer Reading Challenge, refit the library with new wheeled shelving and leaflet displays, fund Harry Potter Book Night activities, pay for the Wi-Fi and half of the library's newspaper bill. They have also funded three loanable iPads that customers can borrow and have pledged to part fund children's activities throughout the school holidays in 2017.



The Friends of Stoke Library organised the publication of a newsletter that has been delivered to homes in the area raising the profile of the library within the community. For the first time Stoke and Ipswich groups joined forces to bring local psychic medium Ryan Gooding to Ipswich Library with money raised being shared between the groups. The event was a sell out and was such a success a repeat event is being planned for 2018.

The Friends of Stowmarket Library have raised over £800 through various fundraising activities such as a quiz evening, book sales, stalls at the Summer Reading Challenge presentation and Christmas lights switch-on events. The group has also received locality budget funding from two local county councillors and a grant from Argos. The funding has been used to purchase chairs for the library and the refurbishment of the meeting room, giving the library a hireable space to raise future income. The group has also funded Wi-Fi provision in the library, visits from Suffolk Owl Sanctuary and the band Simply Brass, and bought equipment for the library's Tot Rock sessions.

Stradbroke Courthouse & Library Trust (SCALT) has had another good year. The Courthouse Café continues to flourish and with events such as bacon roll Saturdays, afternoon vintage teas/ Sunday luncheon parties and a Scandinavian four course community supper. The café space has become a popular, community meeting place and it provides a much-needed social hub for families, older people and those who live on their own. The café volunteers are justifiably very proud of what the café has achieved since it has been open. The library and post office provide the central axis for the café to operate and all three complement each other and work well together as a community resource.

The Friends of Sudbury Library have been helping to raise the profile of the library over the past year with various events such as quizzes and evening author talks. They have also supported a number of events including Harry Potter Book Night and a talk by local author Erica James. The Friends have also bought a number of children's toys to help boost the Bookstart and newly created Stay and Play sessions.

Friends of Thurston Library. In July the popular annual Friend's Summer Meal took place in conjunction with St Peter's Church, including a Rock n' roll Band. Acoustic duo Honey and the Bear performed live in Thurston Library in October 2016. This was first live musical event in the library and was hugely popular. In November the Friends' AGM took place which included a talk by local author Charlie Haylock. In December the Friends took a coach party of 50 to Kew Gardens for the 'Christmas at Kew' event and the second Christmas Tree Festival took place in conjunction with St Peter's Church and Thurston Community College.

The Wickham Market Library Friends again supported the very successful Easter Reading Challenge with over 60 children taking part. The group provided the funds for prizes and Easter eggs for all finishers. IT support for customers continues to be offered by the resident volunteer IT experts with attendances at these sessions doubling this year and some great feedback. Some refurbishment work took place with planner development money and members of the group helped out during the work.

The Friends of Woodbridge Library have hosted a wide range of events including informative talks, live music, poetry and literary readings, a quiz night and a sell-out performance of Great Expectations by James Hornsby. Funds raised helped to build on this programme of events as well as financing much needed improvements to the library such as decoration of the meeting room and refurbishment of the sofas in the children's' library. Funding has also been used to help the library engage with local schools through author talks, storytime sessions, workshops and library tours.

Many of our Community Groups have Facebook and Twitter accounts and their activities are publicised at www.suffolklibraries.co.uk

You can contact our community groups through their library or through the library branch pages on the Suffolk Libraries website. For more information contact our Community Libraries Team:

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