

Bruton Town Forum Meeting 22rd April 2024

Bruton Community Library Report

It has been a busy year for the library and the Trustees of the Frances Jane Ward Library Trust, Bruton (to give it its full title or just Bruton Library!) are delighted that the extension with kitchen facilities, a disabled toilet and desperately needed storage has been completed and was officially opened on July 1st by Mike Brownlow and Emma Craigie, two of our local authors.

The Trustees continue to fundraise as this has been an expensive year: crucial work had to be done on the upstairs windows and some repair work to the roof is now being undertaken as well as the massive hike in electricity prices which have affected us all over the past winter. We would still like to make the library a more welcoming and usable space- the service area particularly needs an uplift - all contributions would be gratefully received.

We are incredibly grateful to Hauser and Wirth for making us a charity of the year – their support has enabled us to extend our opening hours to all day Tuesdays (10-1pm and 2-5pm) and together with a grant from the Town Council towards new baby equipment, we now have an extra extended “Stay and Play RhymeTime” on the first Friday of the month where carers and children can relax and socialise from 10.30-12noon.

We continue to host the popular Stitch It, Don't Ditch it sessions for One Planet Bruton as well as their Seed Swap and have done a number of IT help sessions, both in the library and as outreach to Sexey's hospital as well as two oversubscribed collectables valuation mornings by David Ayling during the History Festival.

The library building has also hosted NHS Wellness checks which proved popular, though these have been paused for reorganisation for the time being, and tie in with our Blood Pressure monitor loans. The blood pressure monitor can be borrowed by any member as can the thermal imaging camera which will be available again from the autumn.

The management committee work closely with the County Library Service and over the next few months the Library Management System will be changing. There may be some periods when not all services will be available as we roll over onto the new system but we hope to minimise these, but please do bear with our volunteers as they get to grips with the new system and its capabilities – we have been assured it is more user friendly and an upgrade.

We continue to offer free Wi-Fi use, computers, printing, photocopying, scanning, fiction and reference books, local history, children's reading schemes, picture books and young adult, audio books on cd, large print and maps on top of the digital services available through Libraries West and the BorrowBox app. Ancestry UK is free to use through our computers and they are also public access points for council services if you need to get in touch.

Thank you to all who have supported us over the last year: thank you to our customers, benefactors, Town Councillors, Trustees and volunteers and everyone who has stepped over our threshold for whatever reason – we are truly grateful.

Emma Madge

Bruton Community Library