

To receive a report from the Community Hub Team Leader and consider any actions and associated expenditure

Report to: Library Sub Committee

Date of Report: 02.12.2025

Officer Writing the Report: Community Hub Team Leader

Purpose of the report:

To provide the Library Sub Committee an update on the work of the Library Hub since the last meeting.

Officers Recommendations

Members are invited to read the following report and ask any questions that may arise from the report.

Report Summary

Established groups and activities continue to run and show good attendance, with some members of clubs coming to additional activities that have been held such as the Wreath Making Workshop. There is a loyal and supportive group of patrons who value the library and the staff. Our beloved Dave the Music Man continues to bring joy to the lives of the local children with his weekly singalongs. Weekly Knit and Natter sessions are still running; the participants have become a valued group of the library.

Adult colouring for mindfulness also takes place once a week, with a calm and thoughtful space for library members to connect and find a creative outlet.

The team continue to provide an excellent, professional service, ensuring borrowers are met with a warm welcome whenever they visit. Daily library tasks are completed effectively, and the library team communicate well with each other and the CHTL.

The events and activities calendar for 2026 is filling with some exciting events, and some outreach initiatives are being held from within the library space – **to view the calendar please refer to Appendix A**. Additional monthly Story Time sessions are

also being held at the neighbouring Family Hub to further outreach efforts and capture new borrower interest.

Efforts to offer more community hub services are well underway, with positive engagement from external organisations. Saltash Library Hub truly is a valued and integral part of the community. The library is now a registered Warm Space, advertised on the Warm Welcome website, offering refuge to all from the cold and wet. To ensure that the library is as accessible as possible, an audit has been arranged with Paul Cadger (NHS), we now await for the results of the audit to be collated and shared with us.

Rose from Memory Box will also be in attendance with the possibility of a person living with Dementia or a carer also joining them. This will offer insight into how we can make the library a supportive environment for those living with Dementia.

Connections

- Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support (DCRS)

DCRS will be holding two women's craft groups in the library to support Afghan families living in Saltash. This will provide a much-needed connection for those who may be feeling isolated or socially excluded in a safe, welcoming space. We will be working with Maia to help facilitate the space needed for these activities and will provide an opportunity for new library signups. Our other free resources are also available to library members, LOTE4Kids being one of particular interest for those where English is not their first language. It is an online book resources for children and there are also world sign language resources included in this.

- Cornwall Council Resettlement Team

Efforts have been made to build a good working relationship with the Cornwall Resettlement Team who support predominantly Afghan families in Cornwall. Having met with Sidonia who supports numerous families in the Saltash area, it has become clear that building on our inclusive space is more important than ever. With the help of Maia from DCRS and Sidonia from the Resettlement team, we are encouraging families to come into the library to sign up and explore the welcoming and comfortable space we have to offer. Conversations with Sidonia has highlighted their need for spaces like ours to provide a sense of community and acceptance. We are looking forward to working with Sidonia to provide a safe space for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Working with Nastassia Player at Cornwall Libraries is allowing us to create a bespoke offering, by seeking recommendations and requests from Afghan families we can ensure that books in the Pashto language are sourced with sensitivity and respect towards culture and tradition. The adult and children's books will help the families feel connected and form an inclusive offer at Saltash Library.

- Saltash Family Hub and Together for Families

We are forming a mutually beneficial relationship with the Saltash Family Hub to promote our services and support the local community. Monthly Storytime is going to be held at the Family Hub to connect with families that may not use the library. Staff member to take a device and library cards to sign up new members to the library. Luisa from the Family Hub is eager to help support the library and vice versa to make positive impact for the local families. A notice board solely for advertising the library services is to be displayed in the Family Hub and we will be working together to signpost to relevant service. Team member from the Parenting initiative to run some drop-in sessions at the library, which have been very popular in Torpoint library and well received.

- Healthy Cornwall

Healthy Cornwall (HC) are offering their services to share wellbeing and lifestyle advice. One of the team members from HC visited the library to have a conversation about how they can support the library and our service. It will undoubtedly be a positive working relationship that will bring many opportunities in the future. We look forward to having HC in the library and working in partnership with them.

- Volunteer Cornwall

Following a positive meeting with Jayne Roycroft from Volunteer Cornwall, Saltash Town Council Library Hub will be included in the Hub Network which will highlight available funding and opportunities. The network will also connect the library with other organisations in the area to collaborate on projects and signpost members of the community. Saltash Together is a networking event that the CHTL will attend to maximise the library's outreach and work with local enterprises and businesses.

Past activities and events

Community events and activities are still proving to be popular within the library.

Over the festive period we held many crafting activities which were well attended. The ornament making workshop was particularly fun and children and parents both enjoyed the event. New feedback forms have been created to provide children the opportunity to voice their opinions in a fun way. The adults feedback form has been created to capture information and present opportunity for any recommendations or things that could be improved.

- Saltash Rotary Santa Visit

The Saltash Rotary Club very kindly supplied the Library Hub with a Santa over the Christmas period. The children who did visit, enjoyed meeting Santa and were offered some free library gifts. The event unfortunately was not particularly well attended, the local area that day was unusually quiet. Next time, the event will be advertised earlier to capture a larger audience. Nonetheless, it was a lovely experience for the children and families that attended.

- Teddys Indoor Picnic

The Indoor Picnic was a huge success with 42 attendees consisting of over 13 families. The children put names into the draw to name the library giant Teddy with the winning name being Patch. Children enjoyed playing with giant games, reading books, bubbles and playing with each other. Feedback was positive and varying ages attended. Families brought their own food to enjoy together and socialise. Interest for similar events in the future was raised. The event brought in families and young people while promoting the library and services.

- Make It Better (MIB) - Collage workshops for adults and children

12 students from Brunel Primary School attended one of the workshops hosted by Joanna White from MIB CIC. The children engaged incredibly well with the creative collage workshop and produced some fantastic pieces. The children were enthusiastic and responded positively.

The adult's workshop was a calmer affair, with 4 participants who created some thoughtful responses to Joanna's theme. The feedback from the ladies was very positive and have said that similar workshops in the future would be well received.

The workshops were free and we would like to work with MIB again in the future.

- Clarks Auctioneers Valuation Day

The Valuation Day run by Clarks was very well attended, with the public bringing in a variety of items for valuation. Ceramics, medals, paintings and jewellery to name a few. The event has increased footfall on a wet and blustery day and would be beneficial to host again. Over nineteen groups were seen by Clarks Valuers and they were back-to-back for the duration.

- Health Information Week

Healthy Cornwall offered support and advice for the Health Information Week.

Healthy eating support, exercise and lifestyle advice, smoking cessation, advice around cholesterol, blood pressure readings and carbon monoxide readings were delivered very kindly by Sharon and we hope to have them at the library in the future. Engagement was positive and Sharon had many conversations with library users over the week.

Please refer to Appendix B to view the images of events and activities.

Upcoming Events

- Lorna Marlow Author Talk

An exciting event, not to be missed by crime fiction fans. Lorna is doing a talk on her new book 'Finding Home' which is set in Cornwall. The talk will be followed by a Q&A and should bring people in over the weekend at the end of January.

The event was well received with 17 attendees.

- Kernow Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (KMNVP)

KMNVP will be visiting us in February to provide support for families and listen to feedback to improve services. This is scheduled to cross over with the Story Time at the library, where new and young parents often come.

- Children's Hospice Coffee Morning (CHSW)

CHSW are coming in Feb and offering a coffee morning drop-in session in line with the Music Man. They will be providing information and promoting the charity. Beth is excited to visit us and meet the team and public.

- Memory Box Choir- St Piran's Day Celebration

Working in Partnership with Rose at Memory Box, we will be hosting a St Piran's Day themed choir session at the Library with the focus on Sea Shanties and Cornish songs. The fun event will be taking place the day after St Piran's Day on 6th March due to World Book Day being held on St Piran's Day.

- Author Talk by Ellie Jackson

Established children's author Ellie Jackson will be holding a talk and Q&A in March to coincide with Science Week. Ellie focuses on environmental issues and encourages young people to think conscientiously about the environment. Her books are meaningful and her talk should inspire the future generations. This talk has been scheduled to coincide with science week, where we will be holding environmental focuses craft activities and workshops.

- Adult Mindful Movement class and Children's Dance Yoga Class

These sessions will be run by facilitator Gee and are being offered to the general public to enhance wellbeing and promote active lifestyles.

- A life in Writing- Audrey Miller Exhibition

The library will be showcasing the work of Saltash resident Audrey Miller who has had over 70 years writing for the Cornish Times. Audrey is also a Freeman of Saltash and wrote for several publications in and around the local area. Her contribution to the community is huge and has also given her time to many charitable organisations over the years. The opening will be attended by the Mayor and hopefully some of the residents at St Annes where Audrey currently lives.

School Outreach

Conversations with Brunel have begun, with the hopes of running some craft workshops for the children of Brunel, promoting our services and encouraging young children to use the library. We will also be conducting tours of the library, welcoming each class in to show them around and read some stories. We will be working with Brunel to offer more support for young people and to encourage reading.

Brunel is a starting point with our engagement with the local schools, our intention is to roll out the same offer to other schools. We will learn from Brunel in the first instance and grow from there. The Town Clerk recently attended a tour of Fountain Head School where they are working hard to engage with the community, and in doing so recently visited with some students. We hope to work with them in regards to work experience.

Event/Activities Feedback Forms

A new set of feedback forms has been created to capture feedback from both adults and children's activities. This data will help staff and members understand the wants and needs of the people using the service, and any areas that have been successful or need improving – please let me know if Members wish to see alternative questions or for the data to be displayed in a different manner. The children's form is colourful and interactive, with age-appropriate language to encourage engagement and make them feel heard.

The adult form is a little more detailed and has some useful information which can be used to see trends, in turn helping us tailor our offer as a library service. **Please refer to the Appendix C to view the feedback forms and data collected to date.**

Survey

Following the approval of the survey by the Library Sub Committee, CHTL and DEM have produced a timeline for distribution and collection of data to be analysed.

The survey has been distributed to the public via social media, notice boards, online using Survey Monkey and paper copies available at the library. The survey will run from 12th January to Tuesday 9th March. This should give the public ample time to complete the survey and submit responses. Social media is being utilised heavily to promote and share the survey to receive as much feedback as possible. Public notice boards and library notice boards are also being used to increase engagement with the survey. A QR code has been created so that people can easily scan the QR code to bring the survey up on their device, whilst paper copies will also be available for those who prefer a physical survey to complete.

The survey has also gone to The Bookshelf, Red Bus, Leisure Centre, Dr Surgeries, dentist, and available at the February Meet Your Cllr stand. We've contacted schools to find out if it is possible to send it out with the school newsletter, awaiting a response.

Results will be collated and analysed to highlight areas that may need improvement and to also recognise what is working for the local community – a report will be produced for a future Library Sub Committee meeting. We may need to extend the survey should little response be received.

The winner of the prize draw will receive a gift card for The Bookshelf in Saltash. Names of entrants will be submitted once the survey has closed and the winner announced on social media.

The survey has been made as accessible as possible.

Loyalty Card Scheme

The Loyalty Card Scheme run by Cornwall Libraries is an initiative to keep borrowers using the services throughout the year by rewarding library users for reading books, engaging with library activities and using e-resources. Each time the user completes an activity or finishes reading a book, they get a stamp at the library. Once the borrower has collected 6 stamps, they are entered into a prize draw. This is aimed to increase user engagement and keep bringing people back into the library.

Numbers drop slightly in the winter months so the hope is that this will encourage members to use the services regularly. Cornwall Libraries has been working with organisations to pool together prizes for the winners.

Page Turner

Saltash Town Council Library Hub was asked to pilot a new software for Cornwall Libraries to record data and capture information regarding enquires and services.

The new app Page Turner will replace the existing software called Lagan. This is a fantastic opportunity to test the app and shape how it is built and used for other libraries. Staff are compiling feedback and noting areas that need improvement so that it can be updated before being launched to the wider library community.

Improved Social Media Presence

The CHTL is developing the social media accounts for the library to engage with a wider community and increase footfall. Feedback forms have already highlighted the use of Facebook and eye-catching marketing to promote events. A new Instagram account has been created and has already picked up 40 followers in the short time that it has been active. Facebook and Instagram are used daily to promote services and activities to draw existing and new members into the library. The online engagement will continue to grow and support the library to connect with not only the local community but the wider community as the library hub expands its offer.

Overall, the Library Hub is successfully building partnerships, enhancing its service offer, delivering high-quality community events, and increasing accessibility and inclusivity.

These developments underpin the library's crucial role in supporting local families, fostering community belonging, and evolving its services in line with community needs.

Outreach work

It is recognised that limited outreach work has taken place in recent years for a variety of reasons. Now that the service is fully supported, there is an opportunity to consider how meaningful and sustainable outreach activity can be developed. I will be reviewing this area in conjunction with the 2026 library events and activities calendar.

I would welcome any suggestions or areas of focus that Members would like considered as part of this review. The intention is to broaden awareness of the valuable work delivered by the library and to increase use of the building through greater membership uptake and participation in events and activities.

Footfall counter

Cornwall Council installed a footfall counter several years ago. Although it is still operational, the display screen has deteriorated and is now increasingly difficult to read. My predecessor arranged for a replacement unit to be fitted at the library entrance; however, the new device is of poor quality and is providing inaccurate daily readings. A request has been submitted for its removal.

I have begun researching alternative options, and there are several advanced systems available at a cost that offer far more accurate and meaningful data than the current setup. Before progressing further, I would like to understand whether Members wish to continue collecting footfall data, potentially at a significantly improved level, so that it can be used to enhance service planning and inform future decision-making.

How Does This Meet the Business Plan?

Strategic Priorities Met

Boosting jobs and economic prosperity by supporting local businesses, employing library staff and supporting charitable organisations.

Promote Saltash as a vibrant and welcoming visitor destination by offering inclusive, creative and fun workshops, we are encouraging people to visit from the wider community. Offering unique workshops and activities will attract people to Saltash whilst continuing to provide an excellent library service to existing members.

Regular activities and groups support **health and wellbeing**, reducing social isolation and digital exclusion.

Educational wellbeing of children and young people is supported by the collaboration with local schools and services provided to young people.

Signature of Officer:

Community Hub Team Leader