



buckbylibraryhub.org

Buckby Library & Hub *for books & buzz*

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Dear Councillors and Parishioners

I am writing to give you an update on the evolution of Buckby Library & Hub, which serves the village of Long Buckby and several surrounding communities and villages including yours.

First, I should say that we are immensely grateful to everyone who has contributed to the survival of the library, now that it is community run and funded. This includes several parish councils as well as numerous businesses and many individuals and families, quite apart from grant-making trusts and foundations – and the former Daventry District Council.

Fortunately, we were able respond to this wonderful show of support by to continuing to provide book borrowing services during the pandemic through a “select and collect” service, and we have resumed other services and activities as government guidelines allowed. I am very pleased to report that since the end of the last lockdown, we have not only resumed our previous service and activities but been able to expand them.

Our craft groups are back in action, as is the social afternoon, and we have expanded our provision of Rhymetime sessions for children under five, as well as laid on themed activities and shows for children during the school holidays. We have developed a relationship with the Workers Education Association to run webinars and have run a series of evening talks on environmental themes, which were so well-attended that we arranged more this spring. We expect to resume our film programme in the autumn – liaising with other parishes to minimise the risk of timetabling clashes.

We have created and furnished a refreshments area where library users can enjoy a drink and a piece of cake, while they browse the newspapers or books for sale. This area is also now an exhibition space, where local artists display their work.

We have been able to raise funds to create green and welcoming outdoor spaces – including a covered area - so that people can meet outside as well as in. We have deep-cleaned and decorated the public spaces inside the library and refurbished the kitchen using donated units and grant-funded equipment. In addition, we have purchased a large-screen TV and video-equipment to facilitate presentations and seminars, and installed a hearing loop throughout the building as well as a new portable hearing loop system with a lapel microphone to aid all of those who use a hearing aid with a T function. Our car park is now also available to hire or private use and has hosted various food vendors and been used as parking for key participants in concerts, weddings and funerals in the village.

Most recently, we have embarked on three new ventures. The first is the employment of a part-time manager who undertakes the demanding and time-consuming task of coordinating all our activities and events as well as our large our team of almost fifty volunteers – many of whom come from the villages around Long Buckby. We have allocated funding from our reserves to fund the post for one year but will need to raise funds to retain the post beyond February 2023.

Secondly, we have been fortunate to receive a sum of Section 106 funding from West Northants Council to develop the library's infrastructure. To this end, we plan to create a new fully wheelchair accessible washroom, provide a wheelchair accessible fire exit and wheelchair access to the garden as well as upgrade the existing washroom and baby-change facilities. Funds-permitting we also have planning consent to enclose our front porch area to create a secure and weather-proofed space for mobility vehicles and prams/baby buggies, simultaneously reducing obstacles and trip hazards within the building and reducing our energy consumption. This work should get underway towards the end of 2022.

Thirdly, Buckby Library & Hub has taken over responsibility for the compilation and dissemination of the former Bugle newsletter –renamed the BuckbyBuzz. We are very happy to include information, features and advertising from individuals, organisations and businesses from the surrounding area. The contact is: buckbybuzz@buckbylibraryhub.org

If you would like any further information about Buckby Library & Hub, please don't hesitate to contact us. In the meantime, I attach a composite poster illustrating many of our activities and events over the past months.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bridget' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bridget Arregger
Chair of Trustees
Buckby Library & Hub

PS. Please note that if you print this letter or pin it to a notice board, you can scan the QR code in the heading and go direct to our website, where you will also find the BuckbyBuzz.