

# Annual Report

Financial year 1 April 2018  
to 31 March 2019



## Introduction

Public libraries are a much loved public service at the centre of our community. They get more visits each year than any other cultural service, with a reach that extends right across income brackets, ages and ethnicities. They play an important role in promoting well-being and community cohesion by producing a range of cultural activities and providing many with free access to vital online services. There is no doubt that these are challenging times for councils and the library services they run. The way that people use libraries is changing along with their expectations of public services. We have worked hard to ensure that West Berkshire libraries reflect and respond to local needs, and provide a safe and trusted space for all.

This is our second annual report and it is intended to give you an idea of what libraries do, who uses them, our staff and volunteers, what the service costs and how much town and parishes contributed to them in the financial year April 2018 to March 2019. We have provided data for each branch library and a summary for the whole service. We have included comparative data for the last financial year 2017/18 as this is a useful way to identify the main trends in library usage and tailor our service accordingly. We are always happy to share general data about library usage - we do not share any customer, staff or volunteer details - but please be mindful that requests take up staff time, while our priority is to help customers use our services.

“Levels of usage and community engagement with the library service in West Berkshire increased significantly during 18/19 and I would like to congratulate our staff and our many volunteers for their hard and innovative work, and for a very successful year”.  
**Councillor Rick Jones.**



## Have you got a suggestion or query?

Email **Paul James**, Culture & Libraries Manager, West Berkshire Council  
[paul.james@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:paul.james@westberks.gov.uk)

## Highlights

The library service is FREE for everyone, of any age, living, working or studying in West Berkshire. We have 8 libraries which are open 221 hours a week between them, and one mobile library.

Last year was the first full year of delivering our library service with 44% fewer staff and resources and with no transition funding to rely on. Our 47 staff (24.8 full-time equivalent posts) have worked really hard with the help of our library volunteers, and we are delighted that our end of year statistics show solid evidence of an increase in library use in many areas.

The number of library visitors increased by 4.11%, and new library members by 2.74%. Use of our e-library, including e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines, increased by a phenomenal 34.53%.

We added 16,159 items of new library stock to our collection, and reservations of library stock increased by 42.40% as a result of our removal of the fifty pence charge for reservations. Towards the end of the year we specifically invested extra funding into replacing non-fiction books which were over 7 years old at Newbury Library and it is pleasing to see an increase in the use of this stock by 16.07% as a result.

Over the summer period the Mischief Makers Summer Reading Challenge was a great success too, with 3,430 children taking part – an increase of 5.05%. With the help of our volunteers we visited 52 West Berkshire schools to promote the challenge at assemblies – a huge increase on the previous year when we were only able to visit 18 schools.

In September 2018 we started our 'Message of the Month' initiative\*, which has been really successful. The aim of this is to highlight certain areas of our service with branded promotions and advertising, and to combine this with staff training if needed. September focussed on our e-library, and we held practical drop-in sessions at some of our libraries to complement the promotion.



Lambourn Children's Library

In October 2018 we launched our new library cards for adults and young children, and developed a library pack which is now distributed by WBC Registration Services to anyone registering a birth. This was timed to link in with Libraries Week nationally, and we spent time in all our libraries getting feedback from customers about the library service. We used this feedback to help us decide on the topics for our 'Message of the Month' for the rest of the year.

We have also invested in our library buildings during the year. The re-organisation of Lambourn Library was completed, and Newbury Library was refurbished in December 2018.

Last year library staff and customers were supported by 322 volunteers. They contributed 12,035 hours to the library service between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 and we simply can't run the service without them. If you would like to join them please have a look at our volunteering opportunities online: [www.westberks.gov.uk/volunteer](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/volunteer).

\*Message of the Month promotions list

- **September 2018:** e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines
- **October 2018:** Libraries Week and launch of new library cards
- **November 2018:** Book groups
- **December 2018:** Library Christmas events
- **January 2019:** Free reservations and SELMS reservations from other library authorities
- **February 2019:** Fines amnesty 'You forgot, we forgive'
- **March 2019:** 'At Home' library service



Hungerford Library

8

libraries in  
West Berkshire

16,159

new items added to  
stock during  
2018/19

## Challenges and plans for 2019/20

The way public libraries are used is changing, and this is reflected in our usage statistics. People are visiting libraries more, but to take advantage of the wide range of services that we offer rather than just borrowing books. Our visitor numbers increased but the number of active borrowers declined by 7.97% (customers borrowing an item in the last 12 months).

More of a challenge is to increase our numbers of new customers. Our statistics show that current customers are loving our new services but the increase in new borrowers was 2.74% - we would like it to be higher.

These are just some of our plans for the coming year to achieve this.

- From April 2019: No fines for customers aged 75+ to increase library usage and support independence for older people in the West Berkshire community
- From June 2019: Launch of our online newspaper service Press Reader, giving library members free access to thousands of the world's top newspapers as soon as they're published
- Refurbishment of Pangbourne Library
- Visit every West Berkshire school to promote the Space Chase Summer Reading Challenge and by doing so increase numbers of children taking part to over 4,000
- Develop closer links with children and families through schools and Family Hubs
- Replace public PCs and software in all libraries
- Create additional study spaces for laptop use
- Make chip and PIN/contactless payments available in all libraries through our self-service kiosks
- Set up library working groups for each library. Library working groups have already proved their worth by directly involving local people who give the service feedback from local communities and help us to increase library usage. To find out more email [paul.james@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:paul.james@westberks.gov.uk)



Neil Gaiman quote at Newbury Library

## About the service

As well as providing free access to over 130,000 books to borrow, we provide:

- A safe place to go and meet
- Free computer use and WiFi
- Self-service printing, photocopying and scanning to email
- Room hire
- Special events and craft activities
- Free downloadable e-books, e-magazines and e-newspapers
- Audiobooks and e-audiobooks to listen to on the go
- Large print books
- Children's services, including regular, well attended children's events (Storytime, Rhymetime, Code Club, craft events and other occasional events such as Watermill Theatre productions)
- Summer Reading Challenge: almost 3,500 children took part last year
- Library sessions for visiting schools and youth groups
- Bookstart: we delivered over 4,100 Bookstart packs to babies and to children aged 3-4 via health visitors and educational settings
- Online resources to use in the library and at home
  - **Access to Research** - 1.5 million academic and research journals
  - **Britannica Online** - age appropriate editions of the much respected encyclopedia
  - **British Newspaper Archive** - millions of pages of historical newspapers from the British Library collection
  - **GoCitizen** - online resource for candidates preparing for the Life in the UK test (British citizenship)
  - **Theory Test Pro** - online simulation of the UK driving theory test and hazard perception tests
- Book groups: hundreds of titles available in book group sets of 10 copies (annual fee applies)
- Family History
  - Local and family history resources
  - Free access to **Ancestry** online database in the library
  - Free bookable sessions with Berkshire Family History Society
- Mobile and At Home services
  - Our volunteers delivered books throughout the year to 145 housebound readers



West Berkshire Library Service	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	539,473	534,968	-0.84%
Active borrowers	17,427	16,038	-7.97%
New borrowers	3,972	4,081	2.74%
Reservations placed	26,461	37,680	42.40%
Visits to the library	335,584	349,365	4.11%
Items added to stock	13,473	16,159	19.94%
No. of public PCs	64	64	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	31,736	25,703	-19.01%
No. of public PC users	4,415	3,959	-10.33%
No. of visits to public PCs	39,707	33,443	-15.78%
Weekly staff working hours	892.67	917.33	2.76%
No. of volunteers	283	322	13.78%
Volunteer hours	10,147	12,035	18.61%
Weekly opening hours	220.3	221.7	0.64%
Yearly opening hours	11,456	11,528	0.64%
Planned closure hours	131	264.5	101.45%
Unplanned closure hours	138	36.3	-73.75%
Total closure hours	269	300.8	11.65%
% closed hours during year	2.35%	2.61%	10.94%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	3,265	3,430	5.05%



Refurbishment of Newbury Library Local & Family History Section

## How much did it cost / how much income did we generate?

People sometimes ask how much a certain library branch costs. Some costs are specific to a particular library – staff, energy, rates, maintenance, etc. – while others are shared with the whole service – professional librarian and back office staff, emergency staff cover, book stock, IT support, etc. All the parts of the service are inter-dependent so all branch libraries benefit from being part of the wider service and the library service as a whole benefits from being part of West Berkshire Council – for example, through corporate support for IT, finance, facilities, maintenance, health and safety, HR, energy and phone contracts.

Our costs include staff, buying books and digital library stock, IT, building maintenance, energy costs, business rate and marketing. Our income includes contributions from town and parish councils, library item charges and fines, income from rent and room hire, events, book sales and grants.

In the information below we have also included information about capital investment into the library service.

<b>Revenue Expenditure (Running costs)</b>	<b>£17/18</b>	<b>£18/19</b>
Staff	815,513	810,406
Premises - energy, rates, maintenance costs	289,506	296,648
Supplies and services - ICT, marketing, transport, e-resources	300,124	200,199
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,405,143</b>	<b>1,307,253</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fees and charges/fines, rent, venue hire, events, sales	-74,923	-96,318
Voluntary contributions from town and parish councils	-89,772	-90,287
Other income including donations	-11,539	-7,709
<b>Total</b>	<b>-176,234</b>	<b>-194,314</b>
<b>Net cost of the library service</b>	<b>1,228,909</b>	<b>1,112,939</b>
<b>Capital Investment including 'Section 106 funding' * (Fixed Assets)</b>	<b>£18/19</b>	
Book stock and associated costs	129,063	
Building improvements	61,456	
<b>Total</b>	<b>190,519</b>	

\* Under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the library service benefits from contributions from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of a new development taking place. This funding is known as 'Section 106'.



## Support from town and parish councils

For a second year, we asked town and parish councils to make a voluntary contribution to help support the service - and if they wish to get involved, to set up library working groups so that we get local feedback about the service and how we can improve it for their residents. Many thanks to all those who chose to do so. We are again inviting voluntary contributions for the financial year 2019/20. Please note the following:

- The council is a local authority responsible for delivering the statutory library service in West Berkshire. We are not delegating or transferring this responsibility to town and parish councils nor are we levying a charge on the parish councils.
- We are asking town and parish councils to support the service at a local level to help their residents benefit from the library service and from the library buildings as community hubs for a range of local activities.
- Contributions are voluntary and ring-fenced within a specific budget. For example: for a specific library branch or for the mobile library service only, so that they directly benefit parish residents.
- We will request a contribution each year rather than request a commitment for a number of years at a time.

Contributing town and parish councils	Contribution £
Aldermaston	1,020
Ashampstead	375
Basildon	1,740
Beenham	1,150
Bucklebury	1,850
Burghfield	5,715
Cold Ash	3,855
East Garston	520
Farnborough	40
Hamstead Marshall	100
Hungerford	Library building costs have transferred to Hungerford Library and Community Trust in lieu of a cash contribution
Kintbury	2,500
Lambourn	4,020
Midgham	100
Newbury	31,275
Pangbourne	2,910
Shaw cum Donnington	1,655
Stanford Dingley	195
Stratfield Mortimer	3,735
Thatcham	24,480
Theale	2,842
Winterbourne	210
<b>Total Contributions 18/19</b>	<b>90,287</b>

Orange = Town/parish where a library is located

## Volunteers

Volunteers are now an integral part of our team and we couldn't manage without them. During the year 322 volunteers spent over 12,000 hours helping in our libraries. We have six volunteer organisers but are still looking for two more to cover Burghfield Common and Mortimer Libraries.

We promoted the 2018 summer reading challenge 'Mischief Makers' to the majority of primary schools in West Berkshire with volunteers visiting school assemblies. In several libraries volunteers have become casual staff or permanent staff members which is a really positive progression. Volunteers have also been helping us to promote our 'Message of the Month'.

We have again extended the range of tasks which volunteers can help us with and some volunteers are now trained to help with basic library stock work using our library management system. In our library branches, volunteers have been assisting customers to use our self-service kiosks more often, saving them time when they visit.

We also consulted with volunteers about our proposed changes to the way that expenses are claimed. Many of our volunteers don't claim expenses and we appreciate this, but we do have a small fund to reimburse those who wish to claim. We agreed that from April 2019 volunteers can claim travel expenses within the West Berkshire borders.



A volunteer helping to promote the e-library

## Burghfield Common Library

In addition to regular activities, we held a Burghfield memories and local history event, and people brought in photographs, documents and artefacts to share with staff from our museum and archaeology teams. This stimulated community interest in local history, and has led to more sharing of memories on the Burghfield Community Facebook page.

One of our volunteers, Jane, puts together a monthly list of new fiction and non-fiction books which have been added to West Berkshire libraries stock. Customers use this to keep up to date with the new bestsellers, and place reservations on the new stock.



Dennis the Menace paper bag puppets

To support the 'Mischievous Makers' Summer Reading Challenge, a community funded children's craft activity session was held at the library. Much fun was had by all making Dennis the Menace paper bag puppets.

We also introduced a bra bank collection point at the library alongside the food bank collection point which has been there for a while. This recycling scheme allows your unwanted or unloved bras to be recycled and prevents them from going into landfill.

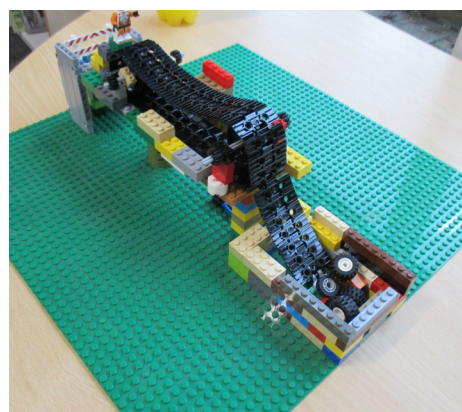
### Clubs and groups

- **Craft Club** – monthly
- **Rhymetime** – weekly in term time
- **Knit & Natter** – fortnightly

Burghfield Common Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	20,774	20,315	-2.21%
Active borrowers	1,043	934	-10.45%
New borrowers	217	241	11.06%
Reservations placed	718	671	-6.55%
Visits to the library	16,426	17,809	8.42%
Items added to stock	728	667	-8.38%
No. of public PCs	3	3	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	229	268	17.03%
No. of public PC users	70	87	24.29%
No. of visits to public PCs	410	415	1.22%
Weekly staff working hours	21	21	0.00%
No. of volunteers	25	37	48.00%
Volunteer hours	676	1,181	74.70%
Weekly opening hours	19.0	19.0	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	988	988	0.00%
Planned closure hours	7	13.5	92.86%
Unplanned closure hours	14	6.5	-54.39%
Total closure hours	21	20	-5.88%
% closed hours during year	2.15%	2.02%	-5.88%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	171	158	-7.60%

## Hungerford Library

While West Berkshire Libraries provide the library service in Hungerford, the building is now managed by Hungerford Hub as a 'not-for-profit' community asset. This successful partnership has seen the space develop into a busy venue outside library opening hours, specialising in art and craft events. During library hours, the building is also used by CAB, the Registrar and Pensionwise to provide community outreach services.



Lego Club – 'Conveyor belt challenge'

### Clubs and groups

**Weekly** – Art group (for adults), English Conversation, Craft & Chat, Rhymetime (term time) & Children's Craft (holidays), Computer lessons

**Monthly** – Love Hue Children's Art, Lego Club, Coffee & Croissants (French Conversation), Book Group, Gardening Club

External providers offer regular Family History sessions and Dyslexia Advice. During the year there have also been one-off events such as Christmas activities for all ages, author visits and Rhymetimes in French and Italian. The library staff have lots of plans for the year ahead including starting a computer code club, archaeological craft and a jigsaw library.

Two volunteers, Zoe and Hilary, enjoyed helping at the library so much that they are now library staff.

Hungerford Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	27,535	27,689	0.56%
Active borrowers	1,517	1,374	-9.43%
New borrowers	275	273	-0.73%
Reservations placed	770	1,240	61.04%
Visits to the library	34,953	42,899	22.73%
Items added to stock	1,057	1,086	2.74%
No. of public PCs	7	7	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	1,391	1,387	-0.29%
No. of public PC users	301	259	-13.95%
No. of visits to public PCs	2,150	1,934	-10.05%
Weekly staff working hours	27.67	51.33	85.51%
No. of volunteers	30	34	13.33%
Volunteer hours	1,471	843	-42.69%
Weekly opening hours	26	26	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	1,352	1,352	0.00%
Planned closure hours	36	59	66.20%
Unplanned closure hours	21	0	-100%
Total closure hours	56	59	5.36%
% closed hours during year	4.14%	4.36%	5.36%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	171	204	19.30%

## Lambourn Library

The new layout has been completed and is making the library a good venue for local community groups to hire. It has also provided a much better space for our regular library activities such as Knit and Natter and the Art Group, which are very popular.

We also have an English Conversation Group which meets weekly to offer non-English speakers the chance to practise their English in a friendly and welcoming environment.

The number of visits to the library has increased over the last year which is very positive. One of our challenges has been to increase use of the library by children and young people, and during the year we have started to forge links with the local primary school. Children's craft activities during school holidays have also proved very popular.



Yarn bombing craft activity

We greatly appreciate the continued support of the Friends of Lambourn Library and an incredible group of dedicated volunteers.

### Clubs and groups

- **Art Group** – weekly
- **Book Group** – monthly
- **English Conversation** – weekly
- **Knit & Natter** – weekly
- **Rhymetime** – weekly in term time

Lambourn Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	10,835	10,045	-7.29%
Active borrowers	547	469	-14.26%
New borrowers	113	107	-5.31%
Reservations placed	364	382	4.95%
Visits to the library	11,164	11,534	3.31%
Items added to stock	450	455	1.11%
No. of public PCs	4	4	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	747	545	-27.04%
No. of public PC users	119	140	17.65%
No. of visits to public PCs	951	810	-14.83%
Weekly staff working hours	10	17	0.00%
No. of volunteers	19	21	10.53%
Volunteer hours	731	997	36.39%
Weekly opening hours	15.5	15.5	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	806	806	0.00%
Planned closure hours	14	7	-48.15%
Unplanned closure hours	10	1.8	-81.58%
Total closure hours	23	8.8	-61.96%
% closed hours during year	2.85%	1.09%	-61.96%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	67	70	4.48%

# Mortimer Library

## Clubs and groups

- **Craft and Chat** – fortnightly
- **Monday Book Group** – monthly
- **Rhymetime** – weekly in term time
- **Board Games Club** – weekly

We now offer refreshments and a Craft and Chat event every fortnight. Also very popular is our new Board Games Club, every Friday between 4-6pm, which is run by Cllr Mollie Lock along with one of our young volunteers who is completing his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.



Mortimer Library Games Club

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council has its office space at the library and is a very important stakeholder working with us to help promote our service to the local community.

<b>Mortimer Library</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>% Var</b>
Loans or renewals of library stock	14,332	14,646	2.19%
Active borrowers	775	659	-14.97%
New borrowers	125	144	15.20%
Reservations placed	688	622	-9.59%
Visits to the library	12,594	13,872	10.15%
Items added to stock	524	479	-8.59%
No. of public PCs	3	3	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	304	274	-9.87%
No. of public PC users	79	72	-8.86%
No. of visits to public PCs	576	456	-20.83%
Weekly staff working hours	20.50	20.50	0.00%
No. of volunteers	22	23	4.55%
Volunteer hours	557	758	36.09%
Weekly opening hours	19.0	19.0	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	988	988	0.00%
Planned closure hours	13	11.5	-11.54%
Unplanned closure hours	8	4	-51.98%
Total closure hours	21	15.5	-27.33%
% closed hours during year	2.16%	1.57%	-27.33%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	120	132	10.00%

# Newbury Library

## Clubs and groups

- Chair Yoga – weekly
- Computer Courses – weekly
- Code Club – weekly in term time
- Craft & Chat – weekly
- Family History Help – weekly
- Rhymetime – twice weekly (Tuesdays and Wednesdays)
- Storytime – weekly

## Book Groups

- Saturday Book Group – monthly
- Thursday Book Group – monthly
- Visually Impaired (VIPs) Book Group – monthly



Connie's Colander performance

The Library was refurbished at the end of 2018, and the redecoration and rebranding of the library have given it a fresh, fun and friendly new look, including a new banner in our family history section, as well as the inspiring quote from Neil Gaiman on the wall – a request to use this was tweeted to the author who replied with the message that not only was he happy for us to do so but he would try to visit the library and sign the wall for us!

In addition to our regular activities, visits from Pets as Therapy dog Bella have proved to be very popular, as well as from four Guide Dogs plus handlers.



Libraries Week in October saw Newbury Library hosting a performance of Connie's Colander. This new play for adults looked sensitively but humorously at the impact of Alzheimer's and was followed by a Q&A session with local dementia specialists. The performance by Human Story Theatre received national newspaper coverage.

As part of our ambition to inspire digital creativity we held two BBC micro:bit workshops during the year which were a great success. Micro:bits are pocket-sized codeable computers with motion detection and help develop core skills in science, engineering and technology. Both adults and children attended the events and one of our Code Club students helped by doing some demonstrations. We now have Micro:bits packs available for library members to borrow and use at home.

Successful links with Open Studios continued this year and, in addition to our usual display of work by Open Studios artists in May, we now have a rolling exhibition of Open Studios artwork on the first floor of the library.

The hire of the Carnegie Lounge continues to be a useful source of income and the room is well used by a diverse range of organisations and individuals. It is regularly used to display Newbury Camera Club photos and other artwork throughout the year.

Newbury Town Council has provided a self-service visitor information screen at the front of the library. This can be used to look up information about local events, restaurants, accommodation and local transport, and is proving to be very popular.

The number of young people volunteering has increased this year, which we are really pleased about. Many of them are volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award and we have found that they are reliable and dedicated - we would struggle without their help! We also have a core of other incredibly dependable volunteers for whom we set aside specific tasks each week. Also we wouldn't be able to run our Code Club, Family History Sessions and Computer Courses without volunteer help.

<b>Newbury Library</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>% Var</b>
Loans or renewals of library stock	185,094	174,603	-5.67%
Active borrowers	10,015	9,186	-8.28%
New borrowers	2,258	2,214	-1.95%
Reservations placed	2,208	2,716	23.01%
Visits to the library	158,926	167,311	5.28%
Items added to stock	5,256	7,091	34.91%
No. of public PCs	27	27	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	22,869	18,259	-20.16%
No. of public PC users	2,806	2,518	-10.26%
No. of visits to public PCs	27,573	22,941	-16.80%
Weekly staff working hours	413.08	424.08	2.66%
No. of volunteers	51	69	35.29%
Volunteer hours	1,105	1,576	42.62%
Weekly opening hours	47	47	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	2,444	2,444	0.00%
Planned closure hours	24	86	265.96%
Unplanned closure hours	12	8.5	-26.09%
Total closure hours	35	94.5	170.00%
% closed hours during year	1.43%	3.87%	170.00%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	1,688	1,683	-0.30%



# Pangbourne Library

## Clubs and groups

- **Coffee & Craft** - weekly in term time
- **Family History** - monthly
- **Pangbourne Heritage Group** - weekly
- **Rhymetime and Storytime** - alternate weeks
- **Book Club** - monthly



We changed some of the library shelving units during the year to allow fiction paperbacks and hardbacks to be interfiled. This makes it easier for customers to find the titles they want, and is working well.

We introduced some new regular events, craft activities and a bookgroup, which are led by volunteers. We also had an event where Guide Dogs for the Blind came to the library.

We would like to thank our volunteers for their continued support.

<b>Pangbourne Library</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>% Var</b>
Loans or renewals of library stock	21,812	20,949	-3.96%
Active borrowers	1,084	1,093	0.83%
New borrowers	248	314	26.61%
Reservations placed	695	823	18.42%
Visits to the library	20,253	21,326	5.30%
Items added to stock	679	611	-10.01%
No. of public PCs	4	4	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	910	758	-16.70%
No. of public PC users	137	117	-14.60%
No. of visits to public PCs	1,287	982	-23.70%
Weekly staff working hours	23	23	0.00%
No. of volunteers	34	34	0.00%
Volunteer hours	894	1,095	22.48%
Weekly opening hours	22.0	22.0	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	1,144	1,144	0.00%
Planned closure hours	12	12	4.35%
Unplanned closure hours	12	7	-39.13%
Total closure hours	23	19	-17.39%
% closed hours during year	2.01%	1.66%	-17.39%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	204	219	7.35%

## Thatcham Library

The Friends of Thatcham Library group has continued to work closely with the library and held two coffee mornings during the year to raise funds. The library also took part in the Family Fun Day organised by Thatcham Town Council.

A new library event, the Saturday Craft Club run by our volunteer Joan, is going really well. The feedback from parents is that the club has helped to create some very important family time for parents and children. Also new is the Children's Chess Club which is held after school on Thursday every week and is run by our volunteers Andrew and Linda. This has proved to be so popular that there is a waiting list to attend.



One of our volunteers shelving library stock

### Clubs and groups

- **Art Group** - weekly
- **Family history** - weekly
- **Saturday Craft Club** - monthly
- **Book group** - monthly
- **Rhymetime** - weekly
- **Children's Chess Club** - weekly
- **IT lessons** - weekly

Thatcham Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	46,840	46,430	-0.88%
Active borrowers	2,626	2,429	-7.50%
New borrowers	383	412	7.57%
Reservations placed	871	1,133	30.08%
Visits to the library	42,528	43,355	1.94%
Items added to stock	1,572	1,196	-23.92%
No. of public PCs	8	8	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	3,113	3,317	6.55%
No. of public PC users	536	500	-6.72%
No. of visits to public PCs	4,180	4,546	8.76%
Weekly staff working hours	32	32	0.00%
No. of volunteers	51	49	-3.92%
Volunteer hours	2,242	2,368	5.62%
Weekly opening hours	33.5	33.5	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	1,742	1,742	0.00%
Planned closure hours	17	23.5	42.42%
Unplanned closure hours	21	3.5	-83.33%
Total closure hours	38	27	-28.00%
% closed hours during year	2.15%	1.55%	-28.00%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	556	509	-8.45%

# Theale Library

## Clubs and groups

- **Afternoon Book Group** - monthly
- **Bridge Club** - weekly
- **Craft & Colouring Club** - weekly
- **Duplo Play sessions** - weekly
- **Evening Book Group** - monthly
- **Family History** - weekly
- **Pets as Therapy** - weekly
- **QuickCraft** - weekly
- **Rhymetime** - weekly in term time



Book sale

Another successful year, with many regular events and one-off activities, including a creative writing workshop, a flower arranging demonstration, and a Detective Training Event offered by local children's author Mez Blume. The children who attended had a great time getting to the bottom of a mystery and parents commented that this really spurred them on to read more.

With the help of our wonderful volunteers we ran a very successful book sale. After a suggestion from one of them, we now use a charity called World of Books to re-cycle the library books that we no longer want. This generates a small income for Theale and helps us to make room for new books in all West Berkshire libraries.

Two events were held in collaboration with the Eastern Area Families Hub:

- Families Love Books - library staff delivered a 30 minute Rhymetime session and then the children chose from a range of craft activities and games.
- Children came in pyjamas with their teddy bears, for Christmas stories and Christmas songs.

The Library hosted a book launch for 'Once Upon A River' by local author Diane Setterfield, which was extremely well attended by 86 people.

Smoke Free Life Berkshire hosted regular visits at the library. Patients who had been referred to this service by their GP visited the library each week to have a review of their progress and pick up the aids to support their attempts to quit smoking. This was a good use of our space and we gained several new library members through this.

Games, jigsaws and activities for both children and adults have been well used, and refreshments have become very popular. Families and individuals spent longer in the library this year as there are more things to do after they have chosen their books.

## Theale Library

*Theale Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	24,124	21,120	-12.45%
Active borrowers	1,449	1,108	-23.53%
New borrowers	255	273	7.06%
Reservations placed	853	725	-15.01%
Visits to the library	24,972	20,908	-16.27%
Items added to stock	749	577	-22.96%
No. of public PCs	8	8	0.00%
Public PC usage (hours)	1,540	895	-41.88%
No. of public PC users	367	266	-27.52%
No. of visits to public PCs	2,580	1,359	-47.33%
Weekly staff working hours	25.92	25.92	0.00%
No. of volunteers	22	26	18.18%
Volunteer hours	1,196	1,960	63.88%
Weekly opening hours	23.5	23.5	0.00%
Yearly opening hours	1,222	1,222	0.00%
Planned closure hours	0	14.5	n/a
Unplanned closure hours	15	1.5	-89.83%
Total closure hours	15	16	8.47%
% closed hours during year	1.21%	1.31%	8.47%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	259	249	-3.86%

\* Please note that 17/18 statistics still include data from Theale Green School (the library ceased being a dual use facility in July 2017).

## West Berkshire Mobile Library Service

One of the highlights of the year has been the new mobile library stop at Welford and Wickham School. This is a really successful coming together of the school, parish and church, and illustrates what could be achieved in other rural communities. Revd Miriam Keen has worked with us and the school to organise a regular coffee morning, when residents use the mobile library and mix with the school children. She has exciting ideas for storytime during the school holidays and using the reminiscence boxes at coffee mornings.

West Berkshire Mobile Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	26,725	26,312	-1.55%
Active borrowers	710	713	0.42%
New borrowers	65	80	23.08%
Reservations placed	642	938	46.11%
Visits to the library	8,550	8,513	-0.43%
Items added to stock	494	528	6.88%
Weekly staff working hours	74	74	0.00%
Weekly opening hours	14.8	16.2	9.46%
Yearly opening hours	770	842	9.46%
Planned closure hours	11	37.5	247.22%
Unplanned closure hours	27	3.5	-86.92%
Total closure hours	38	41	9.19%
% closed hours during year	4.88%	4.87%	-0.25%
Summer Reading Challenge participants	29	41	41.38%



## West Berkshire At Home Service

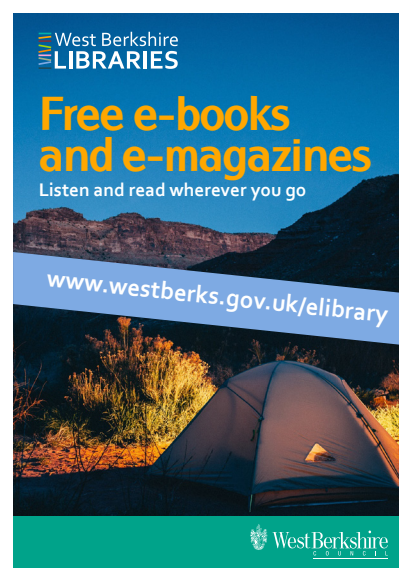
Our At Home library service is provided for customers who find it difficult to visit their local library because of age or disability. Library items are chosen for each customer by our DBS checked volunteers after an initial discussion about tastes and requirements. Volunteers then deliver books or spoken word CDs directly to their customers every 3 weeks. We have an amazing team of 27 volunteers who provide this service. One volunteer has just 'retired' after 17 years!

West Berkshire At Home Service	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	8,861	9,365	5.69%
Active borrowers	146	145	-0.68%
New borrowers	14	18	28.57%
Reservations placed	270	413	52.96%
Visits to the library	1,875	1,838	-1.97%
No. of volunteers	29	29	0.00%
Volunteer hours	1,275	1,257	-1.41%

## West Berkshire e-library

Our free e-library service is our biggest growth area and once again there has been a huge increase in usage – 10,000 more e-downloads this year!

We invested more in e-library stock this year to reflect the demand, and also ran practical e-library workshops at several of our libraries. During the year we looked at the way we supply magazines and newspapers in paper format and online, with the aim of making better use of our resources and providing value for money across the different formats available. One of the outcomes identified was the need to promote our e-magazine service, which offers free, multiple copy access to 140 magazine titles in digital format. It was a really good opportunity to do this through the workshops and make this area of our service more accessible to customers not familiar with using digital resources.



e-library message of the month poster

West Berkshire e-Library	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	29,301	39,419	34.53%
Reservations placed	4,779	7,169	50.01%
Items added to stock	1,964	3,469	76.63%

## West Berkshire website ([www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries))

We listened to your feedback about the difficulties you were having accessing information about libraries through the West Berkshire website. We have worked hard this year to make our webpages more user friendly and it is rewarding to see that the number of website hits has increased as a result. We know that there is more to do on this in the coming year, particularly to make it easier to find out about library events. We are working with colleagues in the Council's Communications team to find the best way to do this.

West Berkshire Website	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Loans or renewals of library stock	116,627	120,093	2.97%
Active borrowers	6,582	6,643	0.93%
Reservations placed	13,492	20,712	53.51%

Meanwhile we are looking at making greater use of social media to promote our activities and provide library news. At the end of March 2019 we had 1,753 followers on Twitter and 874 on Facebook, ([www.twitter.com/WBerkslibraries](http://www.twitter.com/WBerkslibraries), [www.facebook.com/newburylibrary](http://www.facebook.com/newburylibrary)).

## West Berkshire Contact Centre 01635 519900

	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Var
Renewals of library stock	5,228	3,831	-26.72%