

# Barrow Community Managed Library

## Annual Report

**Date of transfer to community management: 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Period being reviewed: April 2023 – March 2024**

**Date and time of annual review meeting: to be agreed**

The requirement for an annual review is contained in the Grant Agreement Schedule 9.

The annual review meeting will take place approximate every 12 months and will be organised by the Community Managed Libraries Support Officer and will be attended by the Principal Manager (Chair) and the Support Officer (Notes)

Sections of this report relating to performance statistics have been completed by your Support Officer. Please contact them if you require assistance to complete any other elements of the report.

### **1.0 Executive Summary**

*Overview of key highlights and issues that arose in the period being reviewed to include update progress achieved against previous years' plans and evaluation of new areas of activity.*

Our major focus this past year has been on securing sufficient funding to keep the library running. We learnt at the beginning of the year that the funding we receive from the Parish Council was being reduced by £2,000 a year. We swung into action and organised a village-wide survey to judge the support we have from villagers for the library. We then presented the outstandingly positive results of this survey to the Parish Council who responded by restoring our funding for the years 2024/25 and beyond.

Our teams also responded to the challenge of a £2,000 shortfall and delivered extra income by means of additional regular scheduled events (See section 3.1), and increased hiring. We have ended the year in a financially sound position.

During the year, we resurfaced the car park and marked out parking spaces including 2 disabled / parent and child spaces, installed a ramp and automated the rear door. All our customers can now park and easily access the library from the car park.

As you can see in the sections below, we have maintained our numbers of volunteers, and as well as book lending, we are providing many other activities in the library, making it a vibrant community facility.

## 2.0 Library Performance

### 2.1 Issue, new joiner, active borrower and annual visitor statistics.

	<i>Previous Year Apr 22-Mar23</i>	<i>Review Year Apr 23-Mar 24</i>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Issues</b>	11,413	12,122	+6%
<b>New Joiners</b>	264	291	+10%
<b>Active Borrowers</b>	602	643	+7%
<b>Annual Visitors</b>			

### 2.2 Analysis of performance

The numbers above show our book lending performance, which is increasing nicely in all categories. We also have a very healthy selection of community donated books which are popular with our readers. See section 9.0 for details.

We hire the library out to various groups, which include Pilates, Yoga and a choir. Almost 100 people a week take part in these activities.

Our own regular scheduled activities, detailed in section 3.1 have a total annual take-up of an amazing 1,500, up from 1,000 in the previous year. This shows the results of the outstanding work this year of our operations team in promoting these activities.

Finally, the user comments in section 6.1 show just how much our library is valued.

## 3.0 Community Managed Library Events and Activities

In the 3 tables below please provide an overview of events and activities undertaken (add rows as necessary).

### 3.1 Regularly scheduled events

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average attendance per session</b>	<b>Average attendance per year</b>
Rhyme Time	Twice a month	10	240
Adult Chess Club (started Jan 2024)	Weekly	6	70
Children's Chess Club	Weekly (term time)	5	130
Sewing Workshops	Monthly	10	120
ICT 1:1 sessions	Weekly	2	40
Scrabble Club	Weekly	6	240
Craft & Chat	Weekly	6	240

Coffee & Chat	Monthly	6	70
Open Mornings	Twice Yearly	120	240
Music Quiz	Yearly	30	30
Beetle Drive	Yearly	23	23
Willow Weaving	Yearly	12	12
Glass Fusion	Yearly	24	24
Adults Craft Session	Yearly	8	8
Volunteer get together	Yearly	40	40
Easter Trail	Yearly	10	40
<b>Total Attendance</b>		<b>318</b>	<b>1,567</b>

### 3.2 One-off activities undertaken in the library

Activity	Date	Attendance
Hall Orchard Pre-School Visits	November, December 2023 January 2024	35
Barrow Playgroup Visits	May, October, November & December 2023	47
Lime Tree Nursery	April 2023	6
SCR Training	June 2023	15
Children's craft activity	August 2023	12
Iris / card making workshop	October 2023	20
<b>Total Attendance</b>		<b>135</b>

### 3.3 Events undertaken in the wider community

Activity	Date	Attendance
Selling library quiz sheets at the Christmas street market.	December 2023	6 volunteers 140 quiz sheets sold

### 4.0 Summer Reading Challenge (SRC)

The theme for the 2023 challenge was Ready, Set, Read. 7,680 children participated in the challenge in Leicestershire libraries.

	Starters	Finishers	% Finishers	Trend
<b>Review Year</b>	92	39	42%	
<b>Previous Year</b>	105	50	67%	

## 5.0 Volunteers

Number of volunteers	Number of new volunteers	Number of volunteers Leaving in year
63	4	4

## 6.0 Library User and Volunteer Feedback

### 6.1

<b>Library User and Volunteer Comments</b>
Customer said how useful she found the library especially the computers and photocopying facilities, she enjoys visiting and appreciated the variety of things on offer, her final comment was 'please never close'. (comments book)
I love the library because it is a good place to do anything such as homework if you go to school, I love the library and come every week. (comments book)
The library is my happy place nothing is too much trouble and everyone is so welcoming and helpful it is such a friendly atmosphere and being alone at home the books are a lifeline thank you to all the staff especially Angeline. (comments book)
Lovely place and lovely people a great asset to the village. (comments book)
Barrow library is a brilliant place for our craft and chat group I love coming every Wednesday morning for a fun and lively time we really enjoy each others company for a wonderful time together the staff are so pleasant and helpful we can't think of a better place to meet thank you so much. (comments book)

### 6.2

<b>Library User and Volunteer Complaints</b>
None

## 7.0 Financial Viability and Sustainability

Summary overview of finances including as appendices:

## 7.1 Annual profit/loss accounts

Independently examined accounts for Barrow Upon Soar Community Association (BUSCA) for the year ended 31st December 2023 are included as an appendix. Please refer to page 4 of 5, for the section that relates to the restricted funds held by BUSCA on behalf of the Barrow Community Library.

In summary total receipts for the year were £53,861 and total expenses £50,183 an increase of £3,678 over the year.

## 7.2 Funding position including summary of grant applications and outcomes

Funding position of the library for the year ended 31st December 2023.

The Community Library's restricted fund increased by £3,678 during the year. The following awards were received during the year:

- Barrow-upon-Soar Parish Council £10,000
- Loughborough Building Society bonus £1,108

And the following grants were received:

- Tarmac £2,584 (for car park resurfacing)
- S106 released by LCC: £16,849 (for car park resurfacing)
- Awards for All £5,000 (for access ramp)
- Charities Aid foundation £4,090 (for access door)

A total of £24,292 was spent on projects:

- Car park resurfacing £19,752 (S106, Tarmac and £319 from Development fund).
- Access ramp £4,540 (50% from Awards for All, and 50% from Charnwood Borough Council).

At 31 December 2023, the Library's total funds stood at £29,630. Of this, £13,462 represents the funds for the day to day running of the Library (down from £14,015), and £11,618 is the development fund (down from £11,937), and £4,550 is grant income not yet spent.

### **Update for 3 months to 31st March 2024**

In the 3 months to 31st March 2023 the total funds held by the library decreased to £24,962 (£38,818 at end March 2023). £3,283 was spent on the access door, and additional grant income of £2270 was received from Charnwood Borough Council.

This is represented by:

Development Fund	£11,618	(down from £11,937 at end March 2023)
General Fund	£9,807	(up from £9,736 at end March 2023)
Grants	£3,537	(£17,145 at end March 2023)

## 7.3 Capital investment plans where applicable

## 7.4 5 year financial projection

<b>Barrow Upon Soar Library - Five Year Operating Forecast</b>						
	<b>Inflation</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
	<b>Year to</b>	<b>Mar-24</b>	<b>Mar-25</b>	<b>Mar-26</b>	<b>Mar-27</b>	<b>Mar-28</b>
<b>Parish Council Grant</b>		£10,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000
<b>Hiring Fees</b>		£3,725	£4,500	£4,635	£4,774	£4,917
<b>Loughborough B.S.</b>		£1,108	£956	£985	£1,014	£1,045
<b>Other Income</b>		£12,246	£12,613	£12,992	£13,382	£13,783
		<b>£27,079</b>	<b>£30,069</b>	<b>£30,611</b>	<b>£31,170</b>	<b>£31,745</b>
<b>Salaries</b>		£17,641	£18,700	£19,261	£19,839	£20,434
<b>Running Costs</b>		£9,371	£9,652	£9,942	£10,240	£10,547
		<b>£27,012</b>	<b>£28,352</b>	<b>£29,203</b>	<b>£30,079</b>	<b>£30,981</b>
<b>Annual Surplus / Deficit</b>		<b>£67</b>	<b>£1,717</b>	<b>£1,409</b>	<b>£1,091</b>	<b>£764</b>

## 8.0 Progress Update on Current Plans and Future Plans for Development

Outline of future development plans including services to be provided and income generation.

<b>Plan</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Risks</b>
100 Club for income generation	Start in May 2024	Licence obtained and we expect 50+ members to sign up initially.	None

## 8.1 Future Training Requirements

It would be useful for LCC staff to do a drop-in session at Barrow during opening times for volunteers so they could ask any questions they have about the (LMS) Library Management System. This would be useful for a lot of volunteers, especially when queries come up that they don't deal with on a regular basis.

## 9.0 Additional Information

Please use this section for any additional information you wish to provide.

### 9.1 Community Book Stock

#### **Community Book Loans by month:**

2024 - Mar: 106  
2024 - Feb: 85  
2024 - Jan: 122  
2023 - Dec: 127  
2023 - Nov: 152  
2023 - Oct: 113  
2023 - Sep: 164  
2023 - Aug: 163  
2023 - Jul: 144  
2023 - Jun: 103  
2023 - May: 142  
2023 - Apr: 124

**Total: 1545**

The previous year total was 1786

### 9.2 Governance

#### *Policies*

The work carried out around the annual review of policies in September 2023 highlighted two issues for the committee's attention:

- We needed a policy on lone-working.
- The two policies covering safeguarding of respectively, children and adults, were in need of re-thinking.

Since then, a lone-working policy has been created and approved. A revised policy on safeguarding for children was agreed by the committee in April 2024. A revised policy on safeguarding for adults will come to the committee in May.

Once that is in place, the only potential policy gap that we are aware of is one covering CCTV.

#### *Governance of the library / Terms of reference for working groups (ToRs)*

These documents were first agreed in April 2023 and received their first annual review in April 2024. There are five of them in all:

- Governance of Barrow Library
- ToRs for the library management committee
- ToRs for the ops team
- ToRs for the hiring team
- ToRs for the maintenance team.

Amendments have been agreed to three of these. The other two did not need any changes at this stage.

The review did however highlight that we needed to be clear with regard to the fund-raising group, which was established by the committee last year at a time when our funding appeared to be precarious. Now that it is, happily, more secure, there is a requirement to agree whether this group is a permanent body that needs its own ToRs, or whether it is temporary, in which case we need to agree what milestone of activity will trigger its dissolution and its work absorbed into the committee's responsibility. This is a good example of a situation where 'ToR' thinking can help us ensure that groups do not acquire too much in the way of legs before a proper, documented remit has been agreed for them.

### *Structuring our conversations at committee meetings more robustly*

Our meeting agendas have been re-thought and made into a standard template with regular items, rather than a less structured agglomeration of 'let's have an item on xxx' etc. Each agenda also includes a summary of all actions from the previous meeting, recorded under the appropriate item. So, for example, the Finance item shows the finance actions from the previous meeting that have been carried out, the actions that have not yet been carried out, and whatever is new for Finance this meeting. This means that everything current that needs to be said and known about Finance is all visible in the same place in the same document and nothing is lost sight of. And so on for all other standard items. The intention is that this approach will enable us to have proper, informed, sighted conversations in the round, on each of the standard items on the agenda.

### *Risk management*

As a recap, we have taken a strict 'existential-only' approach to risk management. That is to say that we are only including in the register, those risks that are existential to the continuing operation of the library, of which there are three:

- Barrow Parish Council removes or sharply reduces its annual grant.
- There is a serious fire in the library.
- One or more individuals suffer serious harm while on library premises.

We have now had two regular, formal quarterly reviews of the register (November and February – the next is in May). However, risk management appears on the agenda every month as there is always something to say or discuss about these risks.

It is this part of the agenda that sees us:

- Monitor the progress at LCC re the new lease, as it is the only thing preventing the Parish Council from extending their funding of the library.
- Focus on having the right fire extinguishers in the library and satisfy ourselves re whatever training regime we need to have in place.
- Ensure that our safeguarding policies are fit for purpose.

A proper consideration of risk management therefore drives the discussions that we have in these areas – it's not just a case of digging out a document every so often and making sure it's up to date.

### *Overall*

Our sense is that our approach to governance and risk management is now in place



and, with the exception of a CCTV policy as noted above, it is generally a question of keeping on top of it rather than adding anything new to it.

### 9.3 Hiring

We have hired the library to generate income over the past year as follows:

Activity	Hours	Income
Pilates	193	£2,220
Yoga	128	£1,476
Choir	23	£258
Crafts	6	£108
Private Hire	2	£30
Playgroup	2	£18
Parish Council	3.5	£52.50
Total		£4,162.50

Note that this total income figure differs from the figure in the 5 year forecast for the year to March 2024 due to payments being a month delayed compared to invoices.

## 10.0 Documentation Review

As part of the annual review process the Support Officer will review the following documents. These can be submitted electronically alongside your report or hard copies can be reviewed at the annual review meeting.

### 10.1 Insurance

Reviewed

### 10.2 Risk Log

Reviewed

### 10.3 Policies reviewed:

Safeguarding Children

Safeguarding Adults

Health and Safety

Trustee Conflict of Interest

Data Protection

Volunteer Management

Complaints Procedure

Equality and Diversity

Financial Management and Control

Library User Complaints and  
Compliments

CCTV (if applicable)