

I'm sorry to enter myself but I do genuinely believe you won't find a more involved & enthusiastic staff member than me. In the twenty years I've worked for the libraries I've always been on the look out for ways to increase interest and custom at Cardiff Libraries. I initiated and run the Capital Reads events team to offer quality, free literary events & I co-founded The Reading Group Scheme (see supporting information for more details of 2013/2014 events). In addition to this I work to promote my branch by running two adult evening groups as well as a children's reading group which I provide refreshments for. Two of my staff run an 8 – 11 year old group and a teenage group. A volunteer runs the daytime adult reading group. Money is provided for refreshments from the monthly coffee mornings I began for the public. Whilst not massively popular the coffee mornings provide a place to enjoy a quiz, crossword and chat for users. However, it's always worth knowing what works and what doesn't and the coffee mornings aren't worth the work involved. With six reading groups all meeting at least once a month (both evening groups meet every three weeks from 6.00pm - 8.00pm) we maintain a strong literary presence in the branch. Backed up with continually changing displays tying in with the calendar of events sent out by Bethan, book awards folders plus a borrowers' recommendations book there is a visually engaging literary theme at all times. Any library event is displayed on the display board to ensure people know where to find this information and I strongly believe in keeping staff informed of all initiatives and also getting them involved in all aspects of the work. Having always practised what I preach, I have taught all classes that now take place in the library before training up other staff members.

For one year, I wrote a book column for a local estate agents' magazine (when I moved house I established links with the estate agent and offered to write a column on books to raise awareness).

I visit (and massively enjoy) the local residential homes on a weekly basis for 'Read Aloud and Reminiscence' sessions with the elderly residents and I continue to co-ordinate the hugely popular and time consuming Reading Group Scheme. With another librarian, Caroline Noall, I give free talks to community groups (Church groups and W.I. groups). We offers two talks; '150 years of Cardiff Libraries' that incorporates the history of British libraries and a 'Cardiff then and now' talk that promotes the new services we offer. Leaflets are taken to hand out on a variety of e-services and general information. I also set up a partnership with The Cardiff Story. In 2013 I arranged talks at Central Library for the Open Doors event. Below is feedback from someone in the audience:

"Dear Sue,

I really enjoyed your talk on Saturday. Sorry I shot off without telling you but I wanted to sneak on to the Old Library tour as well. I learnt a lot, and was reminded of a lot that I had forgotten!

You and Caroline were much better than the other two because they gabbled so fast that it was difficult to catch what they said!

Pat"

At Rhydyppennau Library I've expanded on the weekly Rhyme Time and Story-time afternoon sessions to offer an additional rhyme-time, run each Friday morning so any

babies who have an afternoon sleep can attend. A monthly Saturday morning rhyme-time has also been added and both these additional sessions have been well attended with a dozen children at each session. I've run the sessions myself and now have trained two other staff members, providing interactive toys and musical instruments to make it a better experience all round.

We begin the Summer Reading Challenge with a massively popular party and hold another 'overspill' party halfway through the holidays to continue the interest.

Last year I engaged with the Walking Festival & offered trips around Roath Lake and had a tie in display at the library.

Partnership work involves a Mandarin speaker who offers Calligraphy crafts for the children. We have 'Cyd Cymru' and the 'Open University' setting up a stall in the library this month. We've hosted cycle stalls and have run Craft Saturdays with knitting, card making, felting and creative writing offered.

I started Silver Surfer weekly lessons four years ago that continue to this day and created a handout and lesson for two courses; 'Total beginner's basic course' plus a 'Shortcut to Google' lesson. I have trained up one of the team and she's added an 'E-mail Set Up' session. I'm immensely proud of the team I have and they are a huge part of our continued success in the community. Last Saturday we had a packed programme to promote National Libraries day, including a Rhymetime and Storytime, a local author talk, the chance to win a book token, free worn out books (this proved really popular, we didn't have to pay to get books collected and was great for goodwill), free refreshments for all (My tip? nice biscuits always impress!) and a fun book quiz.

I've secured a speaker to tie in with the WWI centenary & 3 author events at my library this Spring. Last September I appeared with a group member on BBC Radio Wales to promote reading groups and having been contacted by a researcher for a new reading group slot I sent out a request via Jane and Bethan so any authority in Wales could be involved. I received this (edited) email, below, from the researcher:

“Thank you so much for all your help! I’ve already been contacted by lots of groups really willing to get involved all over Wales, so it’s fantastic! I just wanted to say thank you again, it’s really brilliant.

Kate”

I continually try to think how I can promote libraries in whatever capacity suits the situation or depending whom I'm talking to and simply love my job and the library concept.

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Supporting information:

Marketing Innovations Awards 2014

Library Marketer of the year (hopeful contender): Susanna Thomas and her Capital Reads Team.

Susanna is the Rhydypennau Librarian, founder of the Capital Reads concept and team, Reading Group Scheme co-founder, Best Practise advocate and partnership worker whose aim is to promote and enhance the library service.

CAPITAL READS FOUNDER.

Several years ago I wanted to get a group of committed library staff together to focus on offering literary events in and out of Cardiff Libraries. The aim was two-fold – to engage staff at all levels and give them some ownership and pride in their library service whilst offering **top quality but free literary events to the public** in order to attract non library users, delight existing users and raise the library profile (in turn to gain potential partners and put the library service at the core of communities). Stipulation from the management team was that no money could be spared from the library budget for any events and initiatives and the service would not be affected by staff helping with the projects. From the initial interest of 22 staff members this number was quickly whittled down to four committed staff members – Sarah Evans, Sian Kennedy, Ceri Rowlands and I.

Central library had their own marketing team and a budget but this was not available to branches so my idea was to cover all libraries; branches and Central alike. Whilst the four Capital Reads members all work in branches the majority of events have been held at Central library on a zero budget unless a grant can be secured. Good transport links and plenty of nearby parking have been one of the reasons Central is such a good venue, along with the amount of space and the impressive interior. However, events have also been held in branches around the city to ensure they highlight different libraries.

In the past, Capital Reads have run quizzes with book tokens or cash prizes as well as popular author events, Creative writing courses, 'How to get published – e published, self published and via a publisher' all day events, Graphic Novel events and Reading Group initiatives. Each event has attracted a specific audience as well as different but relevant partnership work as well as securing donations from companies (Starbucks, John Lewis, Krispy Kremes, Game of Play) and we have extended these to offer children's and adult events in different libraries and on different days, e.g., Saturday day-time as well as evenings. Finding out what each specific audience wants has worked well – we have worked out events to suit our target audience each time and ensured that we have got

maximum feedback by offering the chance of winning a gift for handing in evaluation forms. I prioritise feedback so that future events are well attended and she has a growing mailing list from previous audience members. I also co-ordinates the Reading Group Scheme which I co-founded in 2007 and now has over 100 groups signed up. Each event is also promoted via email to all the group contacts, attaching e-posters of any events being offered by either Capital Reads or any other literary or library event. Staff are also notified of any grants and 'freebies' on offer plus news from the marketing team of Jane and Bethan.

2013 saw several Capital Reads events, aimed at both children and adults. After the Graphic Novel and St David's Day events we built on the Capital Reads' goodwill and highlighted the opening of one of the refurbished Carnegie libraries in Cardiff by running a 'Canton launch quiz' night. This was fully booked and whilst we did charge £1.00 per entry this was only to cover costs. The four members of the Capital Reads team worked well together in the run up and on the night itself. Sian worked on the quiz questions, publicity; including posters and Facebook/Twitter promotion, Ceri prepared the library for the influx of people directly after the library had closed to the general public. In addition we had one volunteer from the public to help with serving drinks and the Canton librarian to introduce the quiz and round off the night. Sarah and Sue were quiz masters and at the end of the night everyone who filled in an evaluation form was entered into a prize draw to win book tokens. Clean, donated paperbacks were wrapped in plain paper and each audience member was allowed to take a book as soon as they had paid their entrance fee so they felt they were getting a bargain for their pound even if they didn't win the quiz. Such was the positive feedback that another quiz is already promoted for St David's Day 2014. Again to be held at Canton Library.

We have feedback from one of the winning team directly below:

From:pat hayes [mailto:pat.hayes@*****]

Sent:01 December 2013 12:08

To:Library Rhiwbina

Subject:Quiz Night at Canton Library Sat 30th Nov

Hi

On behalf of Taffs Well Reading Group, I would just like to say how much we enjoyed the above event and would be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to Canton Library.

Six of us attended & the icing on the cake was that we, totally unexpectedly, won 1st

prize as the "Taffs Wellers"!!

We all thought it was a well organised evening & were very impressed with the recently refurbished library - which is quite stunning.

Best Wishes

Pat Hayes

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I also bid for a Get Reading Get Better Get Libraries grant with help from Sarah. Below is the evaluation.

Event Evaluation Cardiff Libraries – Get Reading Get Better Get Libraries 2013

Bid Outline

The funding bid was to support 5 different Crime-literary events, held in a number of Cardiff Libraries locations, one event for adults was held in the Central Library and 4 for young adults, aged 11-13, held in four branch libraries around the city. We wanted to appeal to different areas as well as attract the notoriously difficult to reach teenagers.

Crime Knight.

The first event was held in October 2013 in Cardiff Central Library; a Saturday evening event highlighting and promoting Welsh crime authors. At this event we had 3 authors to discuss their books and also their writing careers. The evening was split into two halves; the first half was in a chat-show format with two authors, Bev Jones and Chris Morgan Jones answering questions from Sue with questions at the end from the audience. After a break and a chance for audience members to borrow or purchase the author's work Professor Bernard Knight spoke about his career before becoming an author and then his subsequent writing career and how he researches and forms his characters. We aimed this event at existing and non-library users and were hoping to target the male demographic by choosing the Crime genre.

Teenage event

The other events, held in January 2014 worked in partnership with local high schools and community police to run murder mystery events in 4 locations across the city. This was reduced to three. The aim of these events was to encourage young adults who may be growing away from using the libraries to see their relevance, to illustrate

the resources and facilities we have available for them and also create a welcoming environment to challenge children's view of libraries. The sessions were structured in 3 parts. We held a crime quiz to highlight the online resources and computer facilities available in each library. We had a structured role-playing game to show the dynamic space and the fun side of the library service. Finally input from the police doing finger printing, bringing along riot gear and talking through police procedures to show how the Library is involved within the community as a whole. We used the opportunity to show the wide range of material and stock that we have available for this age range to encourage return visits.

Crime Knight

Advertising and promotion

We had a wide variety of ways to advertise the event, using a number of online advertising options as this proved the most cost effective way of reaching a wide audience. We used the following websites to advertise the event:

Facebook

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/events/221721611328538/?ref=22>

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/cdflibraries/status/387852845040427008>

Cardiff Libraries web page.

The details of the events were also advertised by the authors on their twitter and Facebook pages where available to reach an audience that may not traditionally associated with the library.

<http://www.cuttingedgepress.co.uk/cutting-edge-news/bev-jones-penarth-cardiff/>

The staff pages on the Intranet were also utilised to connect to the thousands of Cardiff Council employees.

We mailed our existing Capital Reads audience members who have previously asked to be included on our mailing list and also all the Reading Group contacts to promote the event. We also used more traditional methods of advertising. All branch Libraries displayed posters and a number of the branches also utilised space within the library to display copies of the author's books alongside the posters.

Event Evaluation

The event was free to attend but we asked people to register in advance so that we were able to ensure that we had enough staff and resources available to ensure that

the event was successful and run safely. We had a great amount of interest prior to the event and had 47 names registered beforehand and 43 attend the event of the evening (it was dreadful weather which impacted on our numbers). We ran a free prize draw offering a signed copy of one of each of the author's books, which contributed to a high percentage of the evaluation forms being returned. We had 30 completed evaluation forms returned which were mostly giving positive feedback.

This is all of the feedback received from the forms;

Could not hear the speakers clearly.	Said clearly only introduction necessary is full name.
We should have had written information about them.	Authors can give details if they want to
Learned a lot about being an author.	If author stood to speak we'd here more as they'd be likely to face us.
Great.	
Brilliant.	Please keep me informed.
More please and quizzes.	
Very entertaining and enjoyable, Perhaps a raised platform for the speakers.	Chair well organised – made talk better.
Entertaining.	I think Sue gave a brilliant introduction.
Informative.	She is funny and lively and kept things moving.
Want to read more of their books.	Very interesting guests.
Very interesting.	Noson diddorol iawn, diolch I'r holl awduron (Very interesting night, thanks to all the authors)
Brilliant.	Some had trouble hearing
Interesting.	
Good balance of input and timing.	
Sue is excellent too!	
Only issue is linked chairs because I couldn't hear Bev very well and couldn't see her which made it harder to hear.	

Unlinked chairs would have meant I could shift and inch or two – enough to help.

But I understand you have to “control” the spread of chairs!

Thanks to the library service!

Great to hear how the authors approach their work including research.

Shall be glad to hear of future events

Very enjoyable.

2 very different presentations

Highly commended. Went to similar authors in Penarth 2 months ago but content was almost totally different and no repetition

Would liked to have seen authors whilst they were talking

Very enlightening.

Wonderful speakers. Thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Thank you.

A great evening.

Diolch!

All 3 writers were very interesting.

It was well organised

Memorable evening – better than Saturday night evening TV

Interesting evening.

Thank you.

Why so few men (25%) and/or youth (3%) in the audience?

I prefer a dialogue with an interview to a monologue.

Keep up the good work!

Would like the authors to be on a stage so we could see them

Would've liked to see authors

Session with both Bev Jones and Chris Morgan Jones very good.

Bernard Knight was fascinating.

A really good informative and entertaining evening.

V/G well worth coming

Got rather wet!!

Very well presented and enjoyable evening

Of the 30 feedback forms we received, 27 were library members, 2 non library members and 1 didn't answer. 28 indicated that it was good event, 1 that it was average and 1 didn't indicate a choice. We received 21 email addresses which we will use to advertise future events.

We also received this email feedback from a staff member at another library shortly after the event

Hi all,

I'm sure you'll know already from their evaluations, but four Roath borrowers who went to Crime Knight have all said (entirely unsolicited!) that it was 'really, really good' - in fact one of them claims that Bernard Knight is now her new best friend :)

So congratulations!

Finances - Breakdown of costing for Crime Knight Event

Chris Morgan Jones (author payment)£50.00

Beverly Jones (author payment) £50.00

Bernard Knight (author payment) £75.00

Prizes, gift cards & vouchers £47.99

Refreshments £33.97

TOTAL COSTING£256.96

Teenage/Murder Mystery School Events

Advertising and promotion

As this was an event specifically designed to be delivered to classes of high school children there was no public advertising. There were three events; one each in Canton Library, Grangetown Library, and Rhydypennau Library so each Library contacted its local high school directly to reach the desired audience. All schools enthusiastically embraced the events. We are hoping that we can use this initial event to build up contacts and an ongoing future relationship with the school and students.

Finances

Breakdown of costing for Teenage Murder Mystery Event

Printing £48.00

Stationery £55.33

Refreshments £42.38

Prizes £80.00

Role Playing games £15.00

TOTAL COSTING £240.71

Total Costing

Crime Knight £256.96

Murder Mystery £240.71

Total Costing £497.67

In Conclusion

The Crime Knight event was very successful and we received a good deal of positive feedback as well as expressions of interest in future events from the participants and attendees.

For the Murder Mystery events we arranged 4 sessions in different Libraries within Cardiff to work with local schools to encourage children to use the Library at an age where they historically move away from using the services we offer. We had arranged the events at Roath Library, Rhydypennau Library, Canton Library and Grangetown Library so we were reaching out to children in a wide geographical area of Cardiff but also a variety of economic and social backgrounds. The aim of the event was to show that the Library was a welcoming, safe, social and fun environment for the children to visit. Our main aim was to showcase the online resources that we have available and to show how these can be used for homework assistance and leisure activities. We also wanted to encourage those who were not existing Library members to join the Library and see all of the facilities that we have. We were also working in partnership with the Local PCSOs who attended and did some work with the children.

Unfortunately, the school that were scheduled to attend the event in Roath Library on the day were unable to bring the children to the Library for the event so we were unable to successfully carry out all 4 events. The resources that we had purchased for the event were redistributed amongst the other scheduled events.

The Event was split into 3 separate activities each given 30 minutes each the classes were separated into 3 groups to maximise their involvement and enjoyment of the activities. These activities were:

- Computer based activity with a crime based quiz using the Libraries online resources
- A werewolf game which was a roleplaying game using the children's logic and powers of deduction.
- PCSOs – This included finger printing, some basic self-defence techniques and trying out some basic police equipment.

Rhydypennau Library

Wednesday 22nd January we had a Year 7 group from Cardiff High with 31 children attending. I have attached a number of photographs of the event. These are only for the purposes of the evaluation and are not to be reproduced. We had 31 evaluation forms completed from Children and Teachers and had some very good feedback.

What did you think of today's event?

Very good	27	Good	2
Poor	1	No Answer Given	1
<i>Are you a Library Member?</i>			
Yes	16		
No	12		
No answer given	3		

Comments made;

I love the Werewolf game

I think they really enjoyed it. The Game was probably most popular. The police seemed to get better with each group! They enjoyed the quiz; I think the girls liked this best as they are very competitive!

Very Fun enjoyed it

It was really good, and the activities were really fun.

Very fun

It was really fun and you were never bored

It was good

The computers weren't shared equally and not many of us got a turn (unfortunately in Rhydypennau there are only 4 PCs so the children had to share, this was not such an issue in the other Libraries)

I think it was really fun

Yes it was fun

It was great

I really enjoyed the Game

I really enjoyed the werewolf game

I really enjoyed today especially the police stuff

Really good

All activities were really fun really enjoyed it

Good

I got to shout

Very interesting and fun

Loved the game and computers

It was very fun and I would definitely come again if allowed

I enjoyed this

It was awesome

It is awesome, thank you.

Canton Library

Thursday 23rd January we had a Year 6 group from Radnor Road Primary School with 28 Children attending. I have attached a number of photographs of the event. These are only for the purposes of the evaluation and are not to be reproduced. We had 30 evaluation forms completed from Children and Teachers and had some very good feedback.

What did you think of today's event?

Very good	27	Good	0
Poor	0	No Answer Given	3

Are you a Library Member?

Yes	21
No	6

No answer given 3

Comments made;

The Werewolf game was really fun. I would like to come here again

I loved the Werewolf game

The activities were perfectly pitched and all pupils thoroughly enjoyed all of them. Diolch

I love the variety of books and activities

Good fun Nice biscuits

I thought it was fun

I enjoyed it today

It was really fun and the Library looks nice

Great activities, kept the kids engaged and interested

I want to do it all the time

I wanted to play more of the Werewolf game

The Werewolf game was good

I liked the Werewolf game thank you

Good fun friendly staff

I really enjoyed the biscuits and squash

So fun

The computer was the best

It was very fun

Fun and fantastic

Nice biscuits, next more variety

It was great

This was really fun and I really want to come here again

I thought it was good

It was amazing

I enjoyed it at the Library today

I think this was really fun and it's nice to see the new Library

It's great

Good so far

The Library is really useful when I need information.

Grangetown Library

Friday 24th January we had a Year 6 group from St Pauls Church in Wales Primary School with 27 Children attending. I have attached a number of photographs of the event. These are only for the purposes of the evaluation and are not to be reproduced. We had 21 evaluation forms completed from Children and Teachers and had some very good feedback.

What did you think of today's event?

Very good	19	Good	1
Poor	0	No Answer Given	1

Are you a Library Member?

Yes	12
No	8
No answer given	1

Comments made;

Had a good time

I thought that today was very fun thank you for letting us come

I liked the Wolf game and the impossible quiz

This is really fun

Nice time

Cool

This was a fun event. I want to buy the Werewolf game! I was a Werewolf. I hope there is another event like this

I loved the Werewolf game

I really enjoyed having my fingerprints taken

It was the best morning ever

It was good

I really enjoyed everything

This was fun

This is a really good place, good activities

Thank you for letting us come

I loved the Werewolf game

Play Werewolf longer

In Conclusion

These were three great events and were enjoyed by the children, staff and the attending PCSOs. We had some very positive feedback. As well as having successful events we have built links with the local schools and with the PCSOs and hopefully can expand on the success of these events and develop these links and the use of the online resources even further. The invoice for the funding was included in the evaluation report submitted previously this report is for evaluation purposes only.

The Children's events were embraced by staff and children alike from the schools, example given below.

Feedback from the Rhydypennau Teen event.

From: Ms Helen Davies [mailto:**@cardiffhigh.cardiff.sch.uk]

Sent: 22 January 2014 16:54

To: Thomas, Susanna

Subject: RE:

Thank you so much for this afternoon - the class had a great time, as did

I and we really appreciate all the work you and your team put into organising it. Hopefully we can do something again sooner rather than later!

Definitely need to buy the Werewolf game too!

best wishes

Helen

