

## Introduction

During much of 2020 / 2021, it was not possible for libraries to deliver many of their usual services due to the covid pandemic. The performance of the impacted services has been in recovery since, and this continues to be the case at Kesgrave Library.

## Issues and visitors

Visitors								Book Issues							
Qtr	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	Qtr	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21 / 22	22/23
Q1	11046	11471	10623	13848	0	3015	8927.04	Q1	15519	16250	17487	17752	0	7178	14194
Q2	16345	16058	16893	17032	2070	4654	11451	Q2	19808	21935	22293	22475	5619	14533	18625
Q3	11366	11033	11658	11698	9421	8727	8731	Q3	14856	15640	16223	17235	6701	12641	14259
Q4	10482	10580	10403	8743	4388	8293	9283	Q4	15657	16050	18147	17354	2513	13180	14950
<b>Avg.</b>	<b>12310</b>	<b>12286</b>	<b>12394</b>	<b>12830</b>	<b>5293</b>	<b>6172</b>	<b>9598</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>16460</b>	<b>17469</b>	<b>18538</b>	<b>18704</b>	<b>4944</b>	<b>11883</b>	<b>15507</b>
<b>Tot.</b>	<b>49239</b>	<b>49142</b>	<b>49577</b>	<b>51321</b>	<b>15879</b>	<b>24689</b>	<b>38392</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>65840</b>	<b>69875</b>	<b>74150</b>	<b>74816</b>	<b>14833</b>	<b>47532</b>	<b>62028</b>

Both visits and issues showed a significant increase compared to the previous year. In Q2, visits were the highest they had been since Q3 of 2019 / 2020 and issues were the highest they had been since Q2 of 2019 / 2020.

## Event and activity attendees

Events and activities - attendees and sessions																
Quarter	Children				Adults				Total Attendees				Sessions			
	18/19	19/20	21/22	22/23	18/19	19/20	21/22	22/23	18/19	19/20	21/22	22/23	18/19	19/20	21/22	22/23
Q1	915	1085	37	578	775	870	30	465	1690	1955	67	1043	83	89	10	66
Q2	2620	2688	235	1573	1989	2059	178	1043	4609	4747	413	2616	107	104	33	102
Q3	950	1131	319	777	786	856	265	598	1736	1987	584	1375	79	80	51	72
Q4	1094	833	608	930	878	756	466	704	1972	1589	1074	1634	86	69	69	78
<b>Average</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>1434</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>1107</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>2502</b>	<b>2570</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1667</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5579</b>	<b>5737</b>	<b>1199</b>	<b>3858</b>	<b>4428</b>	<b>4541</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>2810</b>	<b>10007</b>	<b>10278</b>	<b>2138</b>	<b>6668</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>318</b>

2020 / 2021 is not included in the above table as there were no physical events and activities during that year.

Events and activities have been popular at Kesgrave Library over the years. The number held during the year was nearly double the previous year, and the number of attendees was over three times higher. This represents a significant recovery since 2020 / 2021 when it was not possible to hold any events / activities.

## Activity summary

- **Book Groups.** Both library-run book groups are proving successful and have had new members join since restarting after Covid.
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award.** Six young volunteers have successfully completed three months volunteering at the library and been awarded their bronze DofE awards. Two are still volunteering with the library, with one now working towards their silver DofE award.
- **Beach Bonkers.** This was a successful activity where young customers learnt all about beach combing and how to care for the environment.
- **Word Play Sessions.** We are continuing to see more parents / carers and children attending Tot Rock, Baby Bounce and Story Time
- **Sunday Crafts.** These sessions continue to be popular and have recovered to pre-covid numbers.
- **Beavers.** The library had a successful visit from a local Beavers Group who were working towards their Book Readers badge.

- **Humpty Dumpty Playgroup.** The library continues to have a close link with the local playgroup. Recently, a staff member has been to visit to run a Word Play session and a Story Time session which included making enormous caterpillars to celebrate *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.
- **Lego Club.** This has become very popular with weekly numbers exceeding pre-covid levels.
- **Home Library Service.** This is a service where volunteers deliver books to people who struggle to get out of the house. This has become popular, with Kesgrave now running 5 different routes to meet the demand in the community.
- **PC Hannah Canning** has been running a monthly drop-in session at the library to enable customers to pop along and talk through any issues concerning them. She is also security marking children's bikes and raising awareness of a police presence in the area.
- **Heath School Year 1.** The library has continued to welcome Year 1 classes to the library. They recently visited for an afternoon to borrow books and enjoy the literacy games we have on offer.
- **People's Champion Awards 9th June.** Two of Kesgrave's young volunteers, who help alternate weekends with our children's craft sessions and have helped for many years, were both given 'highly commended' awards for all their work and commitment to Suffolk Libraries and for making the sessions such a success.
- **Summer Reading Challenge 2022.** This once again proved very successful with more taking part than the previous year and numbers beginning to increase towards pre-covid levels. The daily crafts also proved popular with over 1000 children taking part. To enable staff to run such a successful challenge we had 26 volunteers helping us with 14 of those under 15 years of age. The volunteers contributed an amazing 359 hours during the seven-week challenge.
- **Cancer Support Group.** This has recently restarted with our volunteer available offering help and support to our customers, a couple of whom have found the information helpful both with speaking to consultants and completing financial forms.
- **30/10/22 Halloween Fayre.** The staff and friends' group held a very successful Halloween Fayre with customers enjoying free craft activities, guess the word, raffle and tombola.
- **Knit & Natter.** This has resumed on a twice monthly basis. New members have joined and are enjoying the opportunity to chat and help reduce their feelings of isolation.
- **Christmas Cards.** This year Suffolk Libraries launched the sale of Christmas cards to make money for the library service. These were very successful with Kesgrave being one of the top five libraries for sales in the county. The library also sold cards for the Somersham Ward Support Group which are particularly popular with our customers.
- **Literacy Games.** The library has recently purchased a new range of literacy games with a grant from SPARK. These are very popular with our customers both to borrow and play when visiting the library.
- **Gorseland Primary Year 6.** The library recently welcomed the Year 6 classes from Gorselands. The children were issued with a library card, learned all about what is on offer at the library and how this could help them as they make the transition to High School.
- **Bookshelf in Tesco.** To raise funds for the library, staff maintain the bookshelf in the local Tesco's branch replenishing the stock 2-3 times a week with withdrawn stock and donations from customers.
- **Easter Raffle.** The staff and friends' group are currently running an Easter raffle and Name the Sheep competition to raise funds for the friends' group. The money will be used to fund additional staffing during this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

## Conclusion

Kesgrave Library has continued to recover significantly from the impact of the covid pandemic in all areas. The wide range of events, activities and initiatives outlined in the report demonstrate the breadth of service that Kesgrave Library delivers. Books are at the heart of what the library does, but the library is also hub of free community activity and support which is so important to so many people from a social and wellbeing perspective.

As always, the support provided by Kesgrave Town Council is hugely appreciated. Kesgrave Library continues to be one of the busiest small libraries in Suffolk, and the significant contribution that the Town Council makes enables the library to better meet the demands of the community than it would otherwise.