

adult care & community services

DEBENHAM RESOURCE CENTRE

Report to Annual Parish Meeting April 26 2010

Background

Debenham Resource Centre was converted from the old Barclays Bank Building in Cross Green, Debenham, opening in May 2003.

In addition to Suffolk County Council funding, Mid Suffolk District Council are supporting staffing at Debenham for 3 years from 2009-2012 by contributing £2,300 each year.

The Resource Centre opens for 16 hours per week:

Tuesday	9.30am - 1pm
Wednesday	3pm – 7.30pm
Saturday	12 noon – 4pm
Sunday	12 noon – 4pm

Debenham Resource Centre is a library provided by Suffolk County Council Libraries, Archives and Information Service. As such, it offers the same services to the people of Debenham as every library in Suffolk.

- It's free to join the library and everyone is welcome.
 - With a library card you can borrow books, CDs, DVDs, videos, spoken word such as story cassettes and language courses, and computer games from Debenham Resource Centre or any library (and return them to Debenham resource Centre or any other Suffolk library).
- Access to the internet is free
- The virtual reference library on our web site provides links to a wide range of selected internet resources from travel information to homework help.
- The library online service offers free and supported access to e-government sites, including parish, district, county and national websites
- You can consult the Infolink database which holds details of useful and varied organisations across Suffolk. You can ask a question on AskSuffolk, our email enquiry service.
- From Debenham Resource Centre or any library, you can access services and special collections, such as the Music and Drama collection; the home library service and the Suffolk Record Office; you can also access ancestry websites and research your family history – a very popular pursuit, these days!

Facts about Suffolk Libraries

- Around 500,000 library cards in circulation
- In Suffolk, all libraries are open on Sundays. This is a pioneering service.
- 2500 people are offered library services in their own homes

- Suffolk is one of the first library services in the country to offer a self-service system
- We answer over 700,000 queries each year
- Over 117 million internet pages are accessed from libraries each year
- Suffolk Record Office holds written, aural and photographic historical documentation of Suffolk for the use of present and future generations

Services Offered at Debenham Resource Centre

All Suffolk Library services mentioned above are offered at Debenham.

We also offer:

Free basic internet tutorials for adults

Free Bookstart activities for babies and toddlers – nursery rhymes and story time.

Bookstart is a national programme that works through locally based organisations to give a free pack of books to babies, with guidance materials for parents and carers. It promotes a life-long love of books and is based on the principle that every child in the UK should enjoy and benefit from books from as early an age as possible. The first five years are the best time for learning to talk and most of a child's language comes from the adults around them. Babies and toddlers who love books begin reading sooner and have a better chance at school.

Free craft activity sessions for children at weekends

National Initiatives such as the Reading Game

The largest national reading promotion for children aged around 4 to 11, the Summer Reading Challenge is now run in 94% of UK library authorities (99% in England). It runs in public libraries through the summer holidays, and is supported by leading children's publishers.

A free local noticeboard for events and activities

A selection of leaflets and information about local events and services

A small reference section which includes Parish Council minutes

The newspaper and a cup of coffee

And always, a welcome to every customer.

Use of the Centre

The Resource Centre is a very well-used facility in Debenham. It is a significant community resource for learning, leisure, information, culture and ICT, despite its small size. Its popularity is increasing every year. Use of the centre increased in 2009-10 with visitor figures up from 14455 in 2008-9 to 15,138 in 2009-10.

We are also delighted to report that the number of books, DVDs, CDs etc taken out by borrowers has increased on average by 8% since April 2009.

Volunteers

We run a very successful programme of volunteer placements for young people, helping with ICT, stock work and the Reading Game. One of our regular teenage volunteers donned the Elmer the Elephant costume for Children in Need, and we had a fantastic Father Christmas volunteer for our contribution to the village Christmas Street fair. Other volunteers from the community support the Centre on a weekly basis and particularly over the summer months with the Reading Game. We welcome additional volunteers for the Reading Game in the summer to talk to the children about what they have read

Events at Debenham Resource Centre, 2009-10

National Reading Game

Debenham took part in the annual National Reading Game for school children in Summer 2008. This game is a reading challenge to children to read and describe six books over the course of the summer holidays. It keeps them reading, helping maintain their reading skills in the long summer break. It is a fun, family-friendly way of bringing books into everyday home life. In 2009, we increased participation by over 25% - over 101 local children and families took part in the challenge last summer, topped off by a presentation of certificates by Councillor Eddy Alcock in September. The library will take part again in 2010.

Bookstart

A regular nursery rhyme and story session is now taking place every Saturday morning at 11.15 for the under fives and their carers. This happens while the library is closed, and is very well supported by local dads in particular. Plenty of out-of-key singing and loud musical instrument playing goes on, and children change their books each time they attend a session.

We have set up a second session during the week. This takes place at the Children's Centre.

Internet Tutorials

There's a long waiting list for our weekly, one-hour, basic online sessions now, and over 50 local people have attended between one and six sessions each over the year. They learn how to use the internet and email in sessions which take place while the library is closed.

Christmas Fair opening

Once again, the library opened specially for the Debenham Christmas Fair on a dark Friday night in December. We were Santa's Grotto for the evening. Father Christmas was extremely popular, and some children were so delighted to meet him for the first time. A big secondhand book sale went down very well with over 350 people visiting throughout the evening. The queue to get in went out into the car park on occasions! The children decorated the library for Christmas, and we were delighted to be able to support the village.

Debenham Literature Festival

The library extended its opening hours and opened all day for the Literature Festival 2009. We ran a poetry morning, writing workshop, book and secondhand DVD sale as well as children's activities. We had at least 200 visitors, but luckily we were able to borrow a tent from Dragoman, to extend the space in the library for that day!

Extension of library services

- **Sales of greetings cards, booktokens, secondhand books and DVDs and other items** – we have introduced items for sale at the library as an extension of the service we offer the village
- **Increase of spoken word** – we have extended the selection of storytapes and CDs for adults as there are particularly popular in Debenham
- **Increase in numbers, and refreshed display of books** – we have increased the number of children's books available, and we change the books and DVDs available in the library every few weeks
- **Resource Centre and mobile library are now interchangeable** – both library service points are using the same computerised system now, so that customers can take out and return items to either. Many people are enjoying this increased choice of when and where you can take out and bring back books.

Rearranging the library

- We have ordered more shelving and have worked out ways of packing even more into your tiny tardis of a library.

Extra Bookstart session

- We run an extra nursery rhyme session which takes place at the Children's Centre, during the week.

Activities for Older People

We have been involved with the Debenham Project from its inception, helping in any way we can. We are working with the Debenham Project regularly, attending the Wednesday afternoon sessions at Dove Cottage, offering information, books and using memory boxes and books as talking points.

Information on Prescription and Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Suffolk Libraries have an extensive database of information about health and wellbeing. This is a special service which has been prepared by information professionals who have carefully validated all the information on the database. Our staff are all trained to help you access this database, so that you can look up reliable information about specific conditions, or find out what services are available to you and relevant to your enquiry. We offer this service discreetly – if you prefer, you can write down your requirements and we will do the research and return it to you.

Plans for 2010

Debenham Arts Fair

We are working with the committee to support the arts festival, and we will have a selection of books by the authors visiting the village for the festival. Alongside this, and as part of the festival, we have organised for Suffolk Libraries to fund bringing Bernadine Evaristo, a new, and upcoming author to Debenham during the literature festival. She will talk about her new book, and discuss her work with villagers.

Six Book Challenge

Intrepid Debenham readers are to be challenged to read six books by **authors attending the Literature Festival** before the event...certificates and reading diaries will be available as well as entry into a prize draw...

Community Read

We are inviting as many people as possible to take part in this venture. The idea is simple: we will all read the same book and then go along and talk about it with Bernadine Evaristo, the author of the book.

Annual National Reading Challenge

We'll be running the national reading game in the summer for children up to about age 11. We'll be visiting local schools to tell children about it in early July.

Christmas Fair

We'll be working with the organisers and opening again, specially, for this annual event.

Volunteers

We will be hosting a representative Mid Suffolk volunteer centre on the first Tuesday of each month, from 10-12 from September 7th. This organisation is responsible for promoting volunteer work, and recruiting new volunteers for local organisations.

Melanie Wood, Debenham Resource Manager
Paul Howarth, Mid Suffolk Locality Manager
April 2010

DEBENHAM RESOURCE CENTRE 2009

Opening Hours

16 hours per week :	Tuesday	9.30am - 1pm
	Wednesday	3pm – 7.30pm
	Saturday	12 noon – 4pm
	Sunday	12 noon – 4pm

Plus ICT classes and weekly Bookstart activities

Service Provision

- Suffolk County Council Libraries, Archives and Information service point, part of the Adult and Community Services directorate
- Access point ('C Store') for Customer Service Direct (CSD) – the partnership between Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and British Telecom, offering supported on-line access to Mid Suffolk and County Council services.

Use of the Resource Centre

Issues

May 2003 – March 2004	7869
April 2004 – March 2005	8426
April 2005 – March 2006	9907
April 2006 – March 2007	8936
April 2007 – March 2008	7619
April 2008 – March 2009	10,335

Visits

Annual visitor figures based on a visitor survey that is carried out in the library

2003/04 –	7436
2004/05 –	7696
2005/06 –	7228
2006/07 –	6864
2007/08 –	11,284
2008/09–	13,000

ICT classes

2008/9 Over 30 adults tutored by the manager in basic internet skills

Reading Game

The annual Summer Reading Game for children aged c. 4-12 years. The children read six books over the summer holidays, discuss their reading with staff or volunteers and receive certificates and medals when they complete the Game.

2003 – Starters: 36. Finishers: 23. Percentage finishing: 63%
2004 – Starters: 52. Finishers: 28. Percentage finishing: 53%
2005 – Starters: 60. Finishers: 34. Percentage finishing: 56%
2006 – Starters: 24. finishers: 9. Percentage finishing 37%
2007 – Starters: 47. Finishers: 26 Percentage finishing 55%
2008 – Starters 79. Finishers 49 Percentage finishing 66%

Comments about the Reading Game at Debenham Resource Centre

FROM THE PARENTS AND CARERS:

I think it is a great idea I will be doing it again with children. Kept their reading improving when they have time to enjoy it with us. Many thanks to staff

This scheme has brought two children into the library who would not normally come.
Many thanks

Really good scheme. It means children carry on reading over the summer break. Good for discussion, too, we discussed good books and ones that they didn't enjoy. Really good!!

This has been a great motivation for a reluctant reader. His confidence is unbelievable and this scheme has helped

I thought that this 'Team Read' idea was brilliant! It encouraged my son lots more than he would have and all the stickers were very motivational - a very big plus was it encouraged him to sit down and concentrate and practise his writing too which was an added bonus! Thank you all for the ideas and encouragement it was great fun for parents as well!!

AND FROM THE CHILDREN...

I thort it was reily fun. It's a good thing to do in the summer holidays

I enjoy he team read because it encourages me to read new books. I liked it because this year it was to so with the Olympics (I love sport)

A great way to spend the summer