Key Information for Friends Groups

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1. Art exhibitions

Some libraries have art exhibitions where community groups display a local artist or society's collection. How this looks will depend on the space and security. Some library spaces are not easily monitored by staff and some do not have the hanging structure to accommodate exhibitions; some material is not suitable and some libraries have space restrictions - it really depends on the space, exhibition and building – it is best to talk to the local library supervisor in the first instance to discuss what is and isn't viable.

2. Bike racks

LifeCycle are a charitable organisation that have an initiative called "Take a Stand" which offers free Sheffield stands. Installation costs will need to be covered.

3. Cafés

At present, there is only one café in a library. This is at Central as that has the highest footfall. Cafés require services, space and enough income to break even as a minimum. They often impact on the amount of space required for a library. It is unlikely that smaller libraries than Central would have enough visitors and spend to sustain a café.
All library visitors can bring drinks and food (within reason) into libraries.

4. Coffee mornings

Some Friends' Groups are running coffee mornings with simple urns of hot water and donated tea/coffee. This has worked well in smaller libraries in partnership with the library staff. It is also the simplest way of offering refreshments.

5. Decorating - internal

As most of the libraries are council buildings, they are subject to quite strict regulations about what can be done. The paint and methods of work would have to be agreed with our Facility Management colleagues and the work usually supervised. There is no rota for decorating by the council in place – it is usually done as required in changes or refurbishments.
Decorating often requires removing books and shelving and a possible temporary closure, which can be is tricky and costly for the service.
A simpler and quicker solution is the use of decals or canvas boards that can be decorated and changed and are not permanent.

6. Decorating – external

Libraries owned by the council are maintained and painted by Property Services. Again – just like internal decorating – there are strict guidelines for the council about what paint can be used, how the painting is done and when. If a volunteer group wishes to paint the railings outside a library, for example, we can put them in touch with the council's property department and ensure that the required procedure is followed. Any painting would usually need to be arranged to take place outside of library opening hours and always in a safe way. In some circumstances and with agreement and discussion with the Library Management Team it may be possible for Friends to do some external decorating. Please contact the Service Development Manager if you wish to do this.

7. Events

The library service has Library Development Officers who may be able to help or support you with your ideas for events. Many literary, theatrical, poetic and sometimes musical events are run at libraries throughout the year including lunchtime lectures, author talks, writing workshops and more. We have active working relationships with bookshops and performers that may be useful to friends groups.

8. Film showings/Movie nights

This is covered in more detail in the separate document 'Film Screening and Licencing' available on the Library Friends Page of the BCC website

3 things to take into account:

- Premises licence –is governed by BCC
- Screen licence –not required if exempt as below
- Film licence –film may have a charge

Screen licence: **Licencing Act 2003, as amended in 2017. Section 182** relates to Community film screenings: in a library still run by Local Authority do not need a licence as long as then group:

- Has an 'open' Constitution (anyone can join).
- Has made it clear that any payment for entry will not be for profit (including for Charity) and solely to cover costs.
- Has paid any other Rights fees relating to the film being shown. Specifically, paid the owner of the Screening Rights any fee they charge.
- Has a clear and verifiable age-rating policy.

9. Funding sources

There are some regional and local organisations and funds that can support library activities. In all applications it is important to talk to the Library Development Officers or the local library supervisor about your plans.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)
Bristol City Council works with councillors and communities to allocate CIL funding.

ACE (Arts Council England)
Awards public money from Central Government alongside National Lottery Funds to support individual arts practitioners, organisations, museums and libraries.

Culture Team – Bristol City Council
The culture team also offer free access to Funds Online, a database of 8,000 organisations and individuals that can provide funding. To come and use the database, book a place on one of the monthly sessions (see web link above).

10. Gardening/Planting

The land around most libraries is maintained and managed by the council's parks department. The entire sites are corporate assets and are managed by Property Services. They advise us that planters, shrubs, bulbs and flowers are all welcome. They advise that trees, orchards, ponds and anything deemed permanent is not possible.
Play equipment comes with quite strict regulations so we are not able to install, maintain or supervise any play equipment.

All plans for gardening/planting should be discussed with the local library supervisor to decide the best day and method for gardening.

11. Noticeboards

The library service doesn't usually arrange noticeboards outside the library; existing external noticeboards are often community noticeboards rather than library noticeboards. They have come from the parks department or Community Development in the past. New boards would have to be approved by the council's design department. They cost about £1,000 for a post-mounted board plus £120 installation fee and VAT. We would have to talk to the council's property/parks departments about the potential location in case there are services in the ground etc.

Things to consider:

- Location

- Cost and funding sources
- Who will be responsible for changing the posters and monitoring it?

12. Public liability insurance

The library service will fund 100% of the cost for the first year and contribute 50% for the second year of public liability insurance for Friends Groups. The detail and support for applying can be supplied by emailing library.ideas@bristol.gov.uk or contacting one of the Library Development Officers.

13. Refreshments/coffee machines

(see also: Cafés; Coffee mornings)
The library service used to have coffee machines in some libraries, but they were heavily subsidised and were removed as it was not breaking even. We cannot install coffee machines where the demand is not strong enough to match the cost.

All libraries welcome walk-in drinks and food (within reason).

14. Volunteering in the library

We do not have any volunteer roles to work alongside staff performing roles that staff would normally undertake e.g. shelving; issuing books to library members.
We do, however, offer volunteering roles that add value to the current service e.g. code clubs, additional story times, using the computers, supporting events.

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