

Cambridgeshire Libraries, Archives & Information Service

Soham Library

Library Profile

2006/07

September, 2007

Foreword

For several years Cambridgeshire's library service has been developing the information it provides about the development and performance of its libraries. In a spirit of open and pro-active provision of information about the service, for the last few years a series of library profiles and other information sources has been made available in both paper and electronic formats.

The library profile is intended to give a rounded view of how each library in the service is performing in relation to others of a similar size within the authority; it is designed to provide contextual information about the library - for example access, local age profile, issue figures; and it investigates the learning, promotional and other activities in which the library has been engaged.

This library profile is a core element in a three-part plan to enable library customers and staff to be better informed about their library. A series of library information posters is displayed in every library - giving snapshot information on performance and other activities, and during the course of the last few years a programme of Library Development events has been rolled out. Using the library profile as the basis for engagement, these events enable library staff and managers to talk to local people, councillors and others about their library, its progress and its future. Findings from the events have been used to inform the service's ongoing planning processes, and progress against the actions identified is now displayed in each library.

If you would like to make any comments or enquiries about your library profile please contact

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Library Profile

SOHAM LIBRARY 2006/07

Note: This profile represents a snapshot of the library during the year 2006/07. The profile is updated annually. Please check our website for up-to-date information (www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library)

A Summary Of Soham Library

Soham Library is a popular community resource providing a range of reading, learning and information services to the town and surrounding area. Many visitors, particularly the growing number of guest workers, make extensive use of the computing facilities. Easy parking, a good bookstock and a friendly atmosphere all contribute to the library's wider appeal.

An Extended View Of Soham Library

1. Accommodation

The library was opened in 1994 in a converted school building. There are a few parking spaces on site and a public car park nearby.

The single storey building offers 191 square metres of space and incorporates a large meeting room with kitchen facilities. There are plans to create a new staff area and update the meeting room so that it can be let commercially.

In 2003 automatic doors were added under DDA and the counter was adapted and toilets upgraded. New guiding was added at this time also

2. Opening hours

This library opens for 25 hours a week:

Monday		2.30 - 7.00
Tuesday	10-1	2.30 - 5.00
Wednesday		Closed
Thursday	10-1	2.30 - 5.00
Friday	10-1	2.30 - 5.00
Saturday	9.30 –	1.30

3. Accessibility

Car Park - Yes, with 6 spaces. Public car park available approx 25 yards

Public Transport - Bus stop - 125 yards

Public Toilet – Yes

Ease of Access - Wheelchair friendly and fully accessible for all

4. IT equipment

Number of People's Network and other computers	PN-Adult	PN-Children's	Total
	7	3	10

5. Activities

- Reading groups

Soham Library hosts the "Chattering Classes" Reading Group, which has operated very successfully for several years now. The library also supplies books for the "Fenland Readers" book group which meet elsewhere in the town.

- Children's activities

Soham Library participates in the Library Service's summer reading scheme for children every year. Last year's "Reading Mission" was particularly successful, attracting strong participation. The Town Council supports the Reading scheme financially, which enables staff to provide a programme of regular library based activities for children each summer.

- Other Activities

A Scrabble club meets alternate Thursday afternoons in the meeting room

The Craft club meets every Friday morning in the meeting room

A Games club meets on Friday afternoons.

The local community of migrant workers, many from Portugal, make particularly good use of the email capacity of the library's Internet facilities, and use the library regularly for this purpose.

6. Special Events Through The Year

- Art and craft activities mornings organised for the summer holidays by Soham Staff.
- Presentation ceremony was held for children who completed the Summer Reading Challenge, 90 children were awarded a certificate and medal.
- Customer Appreciation day
- Walk-in session on People's Network, for the public.

Library Users And The Local Community

1. Active/regular users

- Number of borrowers registered at this library: 4482
- Number of borrowers with one or more items on loan: 540
- Number of "active" borrowers at this library (those who have borrowed within last 12 months): 1922

2. Membership – new members during 2006/07

Average new members per month	36
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	49

3. Visits

	Visits		
	2005/06	2006/07	%+/-
This Library	44369	47983	8%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	44684	44441	-1%

	Visits per open hour		
	2005/06	2006/07	%+/-
This Library	34	37	9%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	28	28	0%

4. Long term trend in visits

	% change over 5 years
This Library	16%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	-2%

5. Local community age profile

This table shows the age breakdown of residents within the catchment area of the library, together with information about the age of customers currently using the library.

Age Group	Residents (from 2001 Census)		Library Customers (from PLUS surveys)
	Number	% of Library Catchment	% of Library Customers
0-4	947	6.2%	5.0%
5-9	1052	6.9%	3.3%
10-14	1027	6.7%	5.2%
15-19	784	5.1%	1.7%
20-24	872	5.7%	4.5%
25-34	2183	14.3%	11.7%
35-44	2482	16.2%	15.2%
45-54	2087	13.7%	12.7%
55-64	1615	10.6%	16.1%
65-74	1225	8.0%	17.4%
75 or over	1015	6.6%	7.2%

6. Library Users Feedback

This information is compiled from the Adult PLUS Survey, taken in September 2006

	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor
Opening Hours	24.6%	52.0%	19.0%	3.6%	0.8%
Staff Helpfulness	80.8%	18.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Choice Of Books	25.0%	57.1%	16.3%	1.7%	0.0%
Condition Of Books	26.9%	62.6%	10.6%	0.0%	0.0%
This Library Overall	54.8%	38.9%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Stock And Issue Figures

1. Stock holding

2006/07	At this library	Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire
Adult books	5850	7547
Junior books	4160	5198
Reference books	231	241
Total:	10241	12986

2. No. of books borrowed

	Books borrowed		
	2005/06	2006/07	% +/-
This Library	44683	44376	-1%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	66492	66909	1%

3. Books Borrowed Per Hour Open

	Books borrowed per hour open		
	2005/06	2006/07	% +/-
This Library	34	34	0%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	42	42	0%

4. Junior Books Borrowed As a percentage of Total

	Junior books borrowed as a % of total		
	2005/06	2006/07	% +/-
This Library	45	45	0%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	43	44	1%

5. Long Term Trend in Book Issues

	% change over 5 years
This Library	-6%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	7%

Enquiries

	Enquiries		
	2005/06	2006/07	%+/-
This Library	4485	5733	28%
Average for this level of library in Cambridgeshire	5896	8801	49%

Note: These enquiries are in-person queries received across the library counter. They do not include telephone enquiries, which are directed to Cambridgeshire County Council's central Contact Centre.

Library Supervisors Comments:

After consulting with the public, the new opening hours continue to be well received. The people's Network computers are always in demand and the meeting room is well used. Due to the success of the activity mornings in the Summer, we hope to hold an activity morning during half term holidays.

Customer Services Manager / Area Managers' Comments

The number of visits to Soham Library continues to increase, and the number of enquiries have risen by 28%, however there has been a slight fall in total issues and new members.

It is an attractive library, in good accommodation, with excellent parking. The staff are very enthusiastic. Typical of unsolicited feedback are the following comments;

"Staff are always extremely helpful and the encouragement given to children to use the library through the summer reading schemes and the craft days is excellent".

"Soham Library staff are charming, courteous and helpful whenever we visit".