



Evaluation report



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

CATERed
FEEDING AMBITIONS



Introduction

Plymouth Libraries received funding from the Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Fund to work with CATERed providing free lunches and activities for children during the summer holidays

- **3 library locations**
- **5000 visitors**
- **3000 free lunches**
- **1500 free books given away**

“The lunch at the library means I can feed my children a decent meal at least once a week. It also means we have a free day out so breaks up the summer holiday as the kids get bored. Even though the kids get bored my budget is a choice between having something to eat or a day out this is both it’s great. I also have anxiety and the library is a nice welcoming space so I feel comfortable here. It’s nice to talk to other mums with children too and is a great happy atmosphere”

Lunch at the Library, Devonport



Big Summer Food Tour

For many children and families, the stability, nutrition and education that is provided by the free school meal (FSM) programme ends when the school holidays start. Holiday Hunger is a real problem for many families, finding the money to provide extra meals during school holidays can be a struggle.

CATERed provide meals at locations throughout Plymouth during the summer holiday as part of their Big Summer Food Tour. These take place twice a week at locations carefully chosen by reviewing data of benefit-based FSM eligibility across the city and adding in levels of take up for FSM. Libraries joined CATERed on their tour promoting Lunch at the Library and the Summer Reading Challenge.



Lunch at the Library

For the first time, libraries were included on CATERed's Big Summer Food Tour, increasing the tour to 3 days a week.

Every Wednesday in August at three locations; Devonport Library, St Budeaux Library and a Pop-up Library in Whitleigh, we provided a full day of activities and a free CATERed lunch.

The locations chosen are all in areas of high deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015). St Budeaux and Devonport experience relatively low level of library usage. We also wanted to introduce the idea of a pop-up library in Whitleigh, an area without a library presence.



The pop up library at Whitleigh has been great. Lots of activities for the children to do and also great to keep up with their reading. My son has really been enjoying his time here. All the staff are very helpful and always on hand to help you out. Wonderful idea - will return for the rest of the school holidays.

Lunch at the Library visitor, Four Greens Pop up Library

Working with partners

We worked with a number of new partners to deliver a range of different activities, building valuable relationships that we can take advantage of in the future.

- National Marine Aquarium
- Shark Trust
- Cats Protection league
- Babs Horten
- Plymouth Music Zone
- Dartmoor Zoo
- Theatre Royal
- Emma Carlisle
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Clive PiG Storyteller
- Music Makers
- Tom Palmer



Library activities

We wanted to show off the full range of library activities, to reach those who may not have visited for a while and to dispel some of the myths around libraries and what they offer.



“Was previously unaware of the range of activities provided by the library service such as Lego club, tech club, etc. Really interesting range of books available in both library sites we visit.”

Lunch at the Library visitor

“Great way to get children and families into Libraries and enjoying books. Excellent choice of activities suitable for all ages. Friendly librarians encouraging everyone to take part. Lovely to get a healthy free and amazing that all children got a free book :-)”

Lunch at the Library visitor

Free books!

As well as encouraging library use, we wanted to increase access to books. During Lunch at the Library we gave away 1500 so children who may not have regular access to books will be able to own one.



Very good, encourages them to learn. A lot of children don't have access to books. getting them interested. Lola's only 4 and we want her to get interested in reading!

Lunch at the Library visitor

Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is always popular in Plymouth, but there are some areas of the city where we struggle to engage children. For Lunch at the Library we targeted six schools. All saw the numbers of children taking part, go up, one by an increase of 225% on the year before.

Overall in Plymouth Summer Reading Challenge participation increased by 9%. In the Lunch at the Library locations the number taking part increased by 50% (Devonport) and 20% (St Budeaux). The Pop up library saw 35 children taking part, many for the first time.

“The events this year have been fantastic been coming for the Summer Reading Challenge for about 10 years. This year has by far been the best for activities.”

Lunch at the Library visitor



Feedback

Alongside informal feedback captured through comments to staff and on social media, we asked visitors to Lunch at the Library to complete a feedback form. Over 500 forms were received.

- **23%** said it was their first visit to the library
- **98%** said they were likely to make visit the library a part of their regular routine
- **61%** said Lunch at the Library had made them more aware of the range of services and activities available at the library.

"I brought five kids with me and I could never afford to feed us all and had such a nice time. Lots to do to keep the kids amused. Loved the book signing."

Lunch at the Library visitor



Thank you!

Lunch at the Library was a real team effort. Although we could only run activities at three locations, all staff were encouraged to get involved. Their enthusiasm and dedication to the project was impressive and thanks must go to all of them.

Thank you too to CATERed who were amazing partners to work with and somehow managed to deliver 600 lunches to three different locations every Wednesday for five weeks.

We also worked with Crew Training who delivered visitor engagement training to many of our staff. We really saw the results throughout the project.

A final thank you must go to everyone who attended Lunch at the Library and made those Wednesdays a favourite part of our week. We have had so much fun and have loved every minute of it.



"After spending almost the whole day taking part in all the activities at Devonport library both my children fell asleep on their bed time for the first time in forever! They had so much fun and were shattered by the end 😊"

Lunch at the Library visitor