

Big Scary Stories Halloween Marketing Event

The Event

Shopkeepers were contacted several weeks prior to the event and asked to provide space in their shops for two hours. They were also asked to participate by handing out sweets to visiting children and to display posters publicising the event in shop front windows.

Posters and flyers were created inviting children to dress in Halloween costume for the event which was publicised as 'Big Scary Stories'. A storytelling map was created marking storytelling venues at Bridgend town centre businesses. The map was made available one week before the event. The story trail began at 2pm. Children were able to start at any given point as they used the map to discover story destinations. At each participating business children were greeted by a librarian or volunteer, dressed in Halloween costume. They were told a story and then given some sweets by the shop manager or librarian before heading off to discover another story destination. Librarians and volunteers told several stories to different groups of children during a one and a half hour period.

After this time children were invited back to the library for hot chocolate and a special Halloween party. Children were invited to participate in a special game of Halloween Bingo, Wrap the Mummy, apple bobbing in slime (green jelly). Prizes were awarded for winners of Halloween Bingo and Wrap the Mummy. The party culminated in a fancy dress parade around the library with prizes awarded for best costumes. Children were handed sweets and invited outside for a mass photograph. Pantomime tickets were kindly donated for prizes by local theatre, The Grand Pavilion.

A member of staff was on hand throughout the event to chat to parents and carers about Bridgend library service and to sign up new members.

Aim

The aim of this project was to raise the profile of the library service amongst non-users and to increase membership within the Bridgend central area. We particularly wanted to encourage non-users to reassess preconceived ideas that they may have about the library service and to provide up to date information to the public about library facilities and relevance to children and young people. We wanted to provide a fun event that would help to dispel stereotypical ideas about how the library service operates whilst raising the service profile and getting people talking about us in a positive way. Ultimately the aim was to increase membership amongst children and their parents.

To reach our target audience we decided to take the library service out onto the streets and into the shops of Bridgend town centre. To attract the most footfall it was decided that the event would take place during the half term holiday and would coincide with Halloween. Halloween has become increasingly popular in recent years with children dressing up and participating in celebrations more so than ever. With this in mind an event was planned to include maximum Halloween experience.

Target audience

We wanted to target families with children age 5-9. This age group are open and enthusiastic to the 'library message' when targeted during school visits and we felt that by creating a fun and relevant event parents would be happy to bring their children along. Also by asking children to 'dress up' for competition they were more likely to plan and want to attend rather than just 'see how it goes' on the day. Promoting a fun event to this age group is easy. The idea was that children would want to participate and in doing so would then bring along

parents or other family members or carers who may not be library users. As part of the event was organised to take place in town centre shops, families who may not necessarily use the library or feel comfortable inside a library building would be more likely to participate, seeing the event as a fun activity to do whilst keeping the children busy during half term. Local business owners and managers who also may not be aware of library resources and activities were approached and invited to participate. It was also hoped that interest would be generated by the general public who would see the children around the town centre and in the shops and stop to find out what was going on. Involving local businesses was another tactic to market our services through partnership work.

Partnership

We approached town centre shop owners and managers with the idea about storytelling in shops. We discussed how this activity would be beneficial both for the library service and local business. Managers allowed us to put up posters advertising the event and the Library Service in their windows. Through these discussions we were also able to promote library resources and what we are able to offer to local business. Making contact with local business people opened up dialogue for future events and partnership work. Social media sharing was also used encouraging sharing and retweeting of partnership via social media sites Facebook and Twitter. Good links were forged. Prizes were kindly donated by The Grand Pavilion, Bridgend borough's main theatre thus providing further advertising opportunity.

Participating 'story venue' shops and businesses:

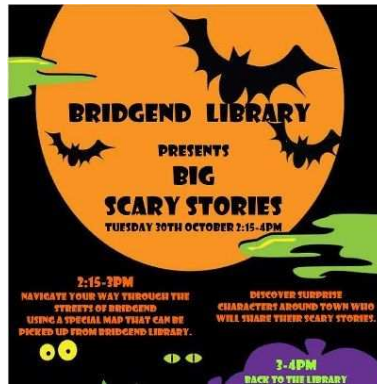
Bauhaus Coffee Shop
Eclectic Vintage Clothes
Bridgend Reptiles and Aquatics
Ella Riley's Sweet Shop
Art About Us

Other partnerships:

Arts and Culture Bridgend Council department
Grand Pavilion theatre
Brynteg Comprehensive School

Publicity

Posters and flyers were created and distributed around Bridgend Libraries and Bridgend Town Centre businesses four weeks prior to the event. Bridgend Libraries website, Facebook and Twitter accounts were used to promote and encourage attendance. Bridgend council also encouraged followers via the Bridgend council twitter account. Prizes were offered for winners of games and best costumes. Schools were also informed and messages were sent via school newsletters and email. A photographer followed children around the town and to the party capturing images for press release purposes. Images were also used to celebrate the event on Facebook and Twitter. Copies were also made available for families who had attended the event. Prizes were kindly donated by The Grand Pavilion, Bridgend borough's main theatre thus providing further advertising opportunity.



(Snapshot from Facebook page)

Staff

Five enthusiastic members of library staff, one member of staff from Bridgend Arts and culture department and a volunteer from Brynteg Comprehensive were available on the day to read stories, host games, judge the fancy dress parade, make hot chocolate, provide information about the service and sign up new borrowers.

Cost

Printing (In-House)	£20
Costumes (borrowed)	£0
Prizes (donated from local businesses)	£0
Miscellaneous including; toilet roll (wrap the mummy), Apples and jelly (Bob Appling), hot chocolate, paper Cups	£17.22
Total	£37.22

Evaluation and Outcome

Parents and carers were asked to fill out media release and evaluation forms. Data was gathered for a distribution database.

67 evaluation forms were returned on the day all responses were positive.

Quotes taken from evaluation forms:

“A brilliant day, thanks to all involved” (parent)

“Great to see the kids enjoying themselves” (parent)

“Well organised and good fun, well done!” (parent)

“Wonderful for promoting the library service and for bringing people into the shop, lovely seeing the town centre busy. Would definitely be involved in anything planned for the future.” (shop owner)

“Lovely seeing the children around the town centre in colourful costume” (passerby)

“I had no idea that the library did things like this, I’m happy to join the library and will be bringing my daughter to future events and storytimes” (parent)

73 children attended the event
97 adults attended the event

32 new junior members were signed up to the library at the event
16 new adult members were signed up to the library at the event

Facebook followers increased by 9 in the week after the event
Twitter followers increased by 23 in the event after the week

It was considered that the event was an overall success. Adults and children were attracted to the event as it gave them something to do during the half term holiday which did not incur cost. Children enjoyed following the map and finding the storytime venues. Adults were introduced to shops which they might not have visited before. Business owners and managers were able to promote their shops.

As a library service we were able to demonstrate our resources to a captive audience who after an enjoyable experience were open to our message.

It has been agreed that a similar event following the same format will be held as part of Bridgend Libraries March marketing drive.

The image shows a screenshot of a newspaper article and a promotional flyer. The newspaper article is titled "BRIDGEND LIBRARY HOSTS A VERY TERRIFYING HALLOWEEN PARTY!" and features a large photograph of children in costumes. Below the photo is a sub-headline "High scores in Quiz KO Cup" and a list of quiz questions. To the right of the article is a yellow promotional flyer for "The Christmas Countdown Continues Week 3 of 7" with various offers like "50% OFF" and "Offer Valid Thur 15th to Mon 19th Nov Only".

BRIDGEND LIBRARY HOSTS A VERY TERRIFYING HALLOWEEN PARTY!

Witches, wolves and everything in-between – children gathered outside Bridgend Library before their trick or treat trail.

BRIDGEND Library held a Halloween party at the end of October, which saw the town centre filled with children in frightening fancy dress.

As part of Halloween festivities happening throughout libraries in Bridgend county borough, a trail of tricks and treats was created between shops, which led back to a party at the library.

The children were given a map with picture clues to navigate their way around the town centre streets, meeting scary storytellers along the way. The library teamed up with local businesses including: Eclectic Vintage, Bauhaus, Art about Us and others, who told stories and gave out sweets to the children before they went on to crack the next clue.

Librarians and volunteers from Brynref School greeted the children at each destination dressed as witches, warlocks and even the bride of Frankenstein. After, they headed back to the library for hot chocolate and party games including bobbing for apples, wrap the mummy and Halloween bingo.

The grand finale was a fancy dress parade around the library where judges picked out the best costumes to win a prize. Brothers Harvey and Radie were dressed as gruesome grim reapers and won the overall prize – tickets to this year’s pantomime ‘Sleeping Beauty’, donated by the Grand Pavilion, Portcawl.

High scores in Quiz KO Cup

It was the first round of the KO Cup, and most of the ties went according to form, but two had a somewhat surprising result.

Tyrisha Royals lost to Laleston Inn ‘A’ by 58-52 and Oldeastle ‘A’ had a touch of the ‘either-ors’ where several times they chose wrongly and were subsequently beaten by Crown Inn ‘A’ by 65-52.

There were three or four high scores. Llangevylld Arms ran up 78 against Six Bells 47, Tondy Railway Club had a 74-38 win at Pheasant Pouchers, Tyrisha Nomads got 66 away to Crown Inn ‘B’ who made 46 and Mackworth Arms’ 67-58 win against Greenmeadow was probably decided early on when Greenmeadow quickly went 21-10 down.

A disastrous individual round saw them in arrears by 28-14, and though they rallied and took the roll-up with a maximum, the deficit was just too much to make up.

In the remaining games, Pheasant Gamekeepers lost heavily to Coychurch Wanderers by 57-38, Laleston Inn ‘B’ eliminated Pyle RFC 48-43 and Oldeastle ‘B’ had a narrow 50-48 win at Cabo Roche.

Here are your four teasers:

1. The name of which metallic element comes from the German for ‘Demon’ because miners thought its dust was harmful?
2. Which former Anglo-Saxon kingdom occupying at one time land from the borders of Wales to the Humber in the North took its name from the Old English for ‘People of the Marches’?
3. When Australia won the Rugby World Cup in 1999, which lesser known country was the only side to score a try against them in the competition?
4. Which document was introduced in its modern form after the passing of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act of 1914?

A Rudge (for Quiz League)

1. Cobalt 2. Mercia 3. *Answers*

The Christmas Countdown Continues Week 3 of 7

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