



## 'Octoberfest' at Neath Port Talbot libraries

### **Objectives**

The main objective of this project was to increase the positive profile of our libraries thorough out the community by promoting our services to new sectors of the community.

We were going to achieve this through the organisation of events/activities that would have the broadest appeal to members and non-members. We wanted to entice non-members into our 17 branches while also rewarding our current members (both adults and children).

A decision was also made to try and involve outside agencies to try and increase the libraries appeal to organisations who may like to use libraries as venues in the future and to provide professionally organised activities.

### **Summary**

NPT libraries marketing group decided early in 2009 that they wished to organise a library festival at the end of the year which would help promote our services and encourage non-members to visit our libraries.

Neath Port Talbot includes 17 branches in a variety of communities and the easy option would have been to concentrate events in our three main branches but this was another objective-inclusion of all our branches.

The decision to hold the festival during October was to coincide with the launch of the 'Express Yourself' Welsh arts competition, to allow NPT to combine the publicity for the two projects.

### Craft Activities

It was decided that the festival would include free events/activities that would appeal to a variety of borrowers to ensure the broadest appeal. Craft activities for both adults and children were to play a prominent part in the festival. For example:

- Cake decorating
- Silk paper making
- Floristry demonstrations

These types of events are not only popular with our current borrowers but they have the added bonus of encouraging a large network of 'crafters' who may not frequent a library to visit for this specific activity (and bring along their friends). We specifically included workshops that had an added bonus (i.e. you don't see cake decorating every day in a library) this would hopefully work towards breaking down old stereotypes.

### Children's Activities

Craft, art and story activities were also arranged for children of all ages. It was important to create a fun and enjoyable experience that would embody the essence of a festival, therefore a variety of storytellers were invited to take part in the festival. Some of the highlights included:

- Local storyteller Owen Staton's storytelling marathon.
- Making shadow puppets with 'The Crowman'
- Story and Jamba sessions with Michelle McTernan
- Art explosion with Community Arts.
- Bookcrawl Party (with a magician and bookstart bear).

### Author Events

A number of author events were organised on the basis of appealing to a broad audience, including:

- Carole Matthews
- Mari Strachan
- Bernard Knight
- Martin Bell

The diverse line-up was chosen to ensure a variety of borrowers and non-borrowers would attend. Several local history talks were also included in the programme of events as these are not only popular with large sectors of our borrowers but promote links with several local history societies.

The Martin Bell event was so successful at Neath library that it sold out within the first week of advertising the event. People attended from throughout Neath Port Talbot and there were even several visitors from outside the area who read about the event on the councils website.

### 'Octoberfest'

The name of the festival is obviously a play on the very famous 'Oktoberfest'. We hoped that this would sum up the feel of the festival and the positive message we were trying to convey (i.e. visit NPT libraries and have fun).

*[See: Supporting Material 1 for full timetable]*

### **Target Audience**

As this was a month long festival we hoped to target a broad audience:

- Adults (library members & non-members)
- Children (classes, individual junior borrowers and toddlers)

This may seem ambitious but we felt that the variety of events and the diverse venues for the events would allow us to reach the intended audience.

### **Budget Breakdown**

The festival budget was set at £750 and the funds were acquired from the 'marketing budget'. The majority of costs were allocated to professional storytellers but the budget was kept low as several craft tutors did not charge for their time and the marketing group produced all the promotional material.

Event	Price
Cake Decorating at Skewen	40.00
Spinning demonstration at Resolven	20.00
Silk Paper making at Briton Ferry	10.00
'The Crowman' story sessions at Baglan and Port Talbot	200.00
Story and Jamba Sessions at Neath and Port Talbot	50.00
Storyteller at Baglan, Taibach and Pontardawe	150.00
Photographer (for publicity photos at two events)	128.00
Bus stop advert	90.00
Refreshments	25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£713.00</b>
Author Events	570.00

The festival came in under budget as the author events were paid for out of the 'reader development budget' and partially funded by specific grants.

### Promotional Activities

We used a variety of tactics to promote the library festival:

- *In-house posters and leaflets*: these were distributed throughout all our branches one month before the festival. Posters were also posted out to local organisations, schools and other local authority buildings (theatres, leisure centres and museums).
- *Online advertising*: events were advertised on the NPT councils 'What's On' website and on the library's website.
- *Press coverage*: specific events featured in the local press on community pages and community newsletters.

- *Promotional Displays:* a promotional display was set up in a *local shopping centre* from mid-September to the end of October to promote the festival (every branch created their own promotional book displays to promote reader development).
- *Bookmarks:* these were produced to help promote the festival while incorporating reader development promotion.
- *Outreach:* staff from a variety of libraries visited schools, local community organisations etc to promote events.
- *Bus stop advertising:* a professional advert was placed at a central location in Port Talbot for the author events at the beginning of October and was co-ordinated via the councils marketing office.

The majority of promotional material was produced by the marketing group to reduce costs and to allow us to distribute the materials quickly.

[See: Supporting Material 2 for examples of promotional material]

### **Effective Use of Resources**

- *Staff time:* the diversity of events and locations for these events reduced the pressure on staff. Even though the festival included a significant amount of events each branch was only responsible for 3-4 events and at times staff members were required to attend evening events. The goodwill and enthusiasm of all staff members ensured all events were a success. The overall organisation of the festival was carried out by the marketing group which includes five members of staff.
- *Equipment:* specialised equipment was not required. The main equipment needed throughout the festival included extra tables/chairs and refreshments.

### **Evaluation**

'Octoberfest' did achieve its desired objectives:

- *Outreach:* outside advertising and continued promotion attracted non-members to events. This attendance allowed libraries to show what they have to offer.
- *Reward:* there was a high level of attendance by borrowers to events. The feedback from borrowers included 'When will there be another festival?'
- *Broad appeal:* the varied selection of events organised for the festival allowed us to reach our target audience. Free craft events attracted specific groups who enjoy crafting, it was observed that people would attend events in several libraries. Author events provided opportunities to host events in the evenings which allowed people to attend who may work during the day. The activities for school classes allowed us to introduce large groups of children to their local library and family events promoted libraries as venues for 'family time'.

- **Feedback:** initially the aim was to distribute surveys to the visitors attending events however it is the belief of our senior management that anecdotal evidence provides more realistic feedback. Members of the marketing team attended events and by speaking to those who attended allowed them to acquire a feel for whether or not an event was a success.

[See: Supporting Material 3 for some examples of anecdotal evidence]

- **Outside Organisations:** the interaction with outside organisations was more successful than initially predicted. We worked with other departments in the council (e.g. Play Works & Community Arts), local businesses (e.g. Bizzy Fingers, Sian's Florist), authors, tutors and local schools. These links have allowed us to build up a network of reliable contacts who would like to come back to do more events.
- **Reader Development:** this was promoted through the use of bookmarks and displays. When people attended events they had access to promotional displays that corresponded (e.g. the books of the author/corresponding craft books) plus the free bookmarks promoting less well known authors.
- **Visitor Figures:** the door figures for October 2009 showed an improvement from 2008 [See: Supporting Material 4].

### Press Coverage

- **Print:** press coverage included adverts for events and coverage of events in the local press. The festival also received coverage in local newsletters.
- **Online:** the main coverage for the festival was concentrated on our website. The front page of the NPT libraries website is displayed every time a borrower logs onto to a library PC and can be accessed via the NPT council website.

[See: Supporting Material 5 for examples]

### Conclusion

The 'Octoberfest' festival was a success and it did help raise the profile of NPT libraries in the surrounding communities. There was a significant amount of events and the visitor figures have shown that the events were popular and well attended.

Library staff have been very positive about the festival and are committed to another festival in 2010. The popularity of craft events have encouraged several libraries to organise their own craft activities during November/December. Also, the inclusion of school classes in the festival has allowed several libraries to re-build links with local schools and two branches have now re-established class visits.

Working with a significant amount of outside agencies and different departments has shown us the importance of partnership work and this will continue (throughout the year) as it does help raise the profile of the library.

A specific outcome has been the request by a visitor to a craft event for an informative talk about NPT libraries for another group in Neath Port Talbot (Women's Guild). Two members of the marketing group carried out this talk in November and have organised two more talks for 2010. This again is another step towards strengthening links within the local community.

The positive feedback has been very encouraging and NPT libraries hope to improve on this next year by increasing outside advertising and continuing to work with outside agencies.

[See: Supporting Material 6 for photographs from the festival]

## Supporting Material

### 1. Timetable of events

Date	Event	Library	Time
<b>WEEK 1</b>			
Thurs 1/10	Owen Staton (story telling session with schools)	Baglan	9:30-10:30
	Owen Staton (story telling session with schools)	Taibach	11:00-12:30
	Owen Staton (story telling session with schools)	Pontardawe	14:00-15:00
	Tea & Coffee with Learn Direct	GCG	pm

Fri 2/10	'Role Play' session with Play Works (Primary school class)	Glynneath	10:30
Sat 3/10	Meet the author: Phil Rickman	Glynneath	11:00
<b>WEEK 2</b>			
Mon 5/10	'Silk Paper Making' for textiles or paper craft.	Briton Ferry	14:00
	'The Crowman' workshop (with schools)	Port Talbot/ Baglan	Am Pm
	Tea & Coffee for Learn Direct	Glynneath	
Tue 6/10			
Wed 7/10	'Welsh quilt & patchwork' demonstration	Taibach	10:30
	'English Tea' with reading group	Port Talbot	14:15
	'Book Crawl Party' (10yrs of book crawl at NPT)	Port Talbot	14:00
Thurs 8/10	Meet the author: Carole Matthews	Sandfields	6:30
	Floristry Demonstration	Neath	14:00
	Card Making session	Glynneath	14:30
Fri 9/10	Puppet Making session with Play works (Primary School class)	Briton Ferry	10:30
Sat 10/10			
<b>WEEK 3</b>			
Mon 12/10	'Bizzy Fingers' craft demonstration	Baglan	14:30-15:30
	Meet the author: Mari Stratham	Skewen	6:30
	Reading Group Quiz	Glynneath	19:00
Tue 13/10			
Wed 14/10	'Spinning Demonstration' (with school classes)	Resolven	TBC
	Local History Talk	Pontardawe	pm
Thurs 15/10	Meet the author: Bernard Knight	Neath	18:30

	Big Draw workshops (primary schools)	Port Talbot	Am/pm sessions
Fri 16/10			
Sat 17/10	Big Draw finale	Aberavon Shopping Centre	
WEEK 4			
Mon 19/10			
Tue 20/10	Tea & Coffee Morning for Learn Direct	Cymmer	am
Wed 21/10			
Thurs 22/10	Soft Play session (0-4 yr olds)	Pontardawe	10:00am
	Parchment Craft	Cymmer	11:00am
	Tea & Coffee Morning	Baglan	11:00am
	Sally Jones-local history talk	Port Talbot	14:15pm
	Jewellery Demonstration	Sandfields	14:15pm
Fri 23/10			
Sat 24/10			
WEEK 5			
Mon 26/10	Michelle McTernan Storytelling (3-6 yr olds)	Neath	11:00-12:00
Tues 27/10	Halloween Story time (Lys)	Cymmer	11:00am
	'Jamba' workshop with Michelle McTernan (3-6 yr olds)	Port Talbot	14:30-15:30
Wed 28/10	Halloween Craft	Pontardawe	10:30am
	Halloween Story time (Lys)	Ystalfera	11:00am
	Halloween Cake Decorating	Skewen	14:00-15:00
	Halloween Craft for Kids (& Wii competition-TBC)	Sandfields	
	Meet the author: Catrin Collier	Resolven	12:30
Thurs 29/10	Halloween Story time (Lys)	Blaengwynfi	11:15
Fri 30/10	Cookery Demonstration	Pontardawe	10:30am
	Halloween Story time (Lys)	Resolven	11:00am



Sat 31/10			
Week 6			
Mon 2/11	Meet the author: Martin Bell	Neath	19:00pm

## 2. Promotional Material

Bus Stop Advert: the prominent position of the advert had a noticeable effect as several people found out about the author events by seeing this advert.

A Mrs Lewis commented:

“ I drove back around the round about twice so that I could drive passed the advert again- I wouldn't have ever known about the event otherwise- I'm not a regular to a library and I don't live in Sandfields...I love Carole Matthews books and I loved the evening”.

Example: template for poster for individual events.

Event	Library	Date	Time	Price
Meet the author Phil Rodman	Glyneath 01639 720776	Sat 3rd Oct	11:00	£1.50 per ticket
'Silk Paper Making' demonstration	Strith Ferry 01639 833244	Mon 5th Oct	14:00	FREE
'Welsh quilt & patchwork' demonstration	Talbach 01639 883831	Wed 7th Oct	10:30	FREE
Book Club 'Song & Rhyme' Party (babes & toddlers)	Point Talbot 01639 783990	Wed 7th Oct	14:00	FREE
Floristry Demonstration	Neath 01639 844604	Thurs 8th Oct	14:00	FREE
Meet the author: Carole Matthews	Sandfields 01639 883616	Thurs 8th Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Card Making Session	Glyneath 01639 720776	Thurs 8th Oct	14:30	FREE
Busy Fingers craft demonstration	Baglan 01639 823477	Mon 12th Oct	14:30	FREE
Meet the author: Neil Strain	Stevwen 01792 823488	Mon 12th Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Meet the author: Bernard Knight	Neath 01639 844604	Thurs 15th Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Big Draw Raffle (4-11 y olds)	Alawen Skeena Centre	Sat 17th Oct	All Day	FREE
Patchwork Craft Demonstration	Cymmer 01639 820505	Thurs 22nd Oct	11:00	FREE
Jewellery Demonstration	Sandfields 01639 883616	Thurs 22nd Oct	14:15	FREE
Soft Play Session (2-4 yr olds)	Pontardawe 01792 882851	Thurs 22nd Oct	10:00	FREE
Meet the author Cath Collier	Resolven 01639 710412	Wed 28th Oct	12:30	£1.50 per ticket
Halloween Quiz Decorating	Stevwen 01792 823488	Wed 28th Oct	14:00	FREE
Cooking Demonstration (with local cooker/teacher)	Pontardawe 01792 882851	Fri 30th Oct	10:30	FREE
Meet the author Martin Bell	Neath 01639 844604	Mon 4th Nov	19:00	£1.50 per ticket

Example: template for poster for festival.

Example: template for leaflet (printed on coloured paper)

<b>'Octoberfest'</b>		<b>at NPT libraries</b>		
<b>Event</b>	<b>Library</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Price</b>
Meet the author: Phil Rickman	Glyneath 01639 720776	Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	11:00	£1.50 per ticket
'Silk Paper Making' demonstration	Briton Ferry 01639 813244	Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14:00	FREE
'Welsh quilt & patchwork' demonstration	Talbach 01639 883831	Wed 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	10:30	FREE
Floristry Demonstration	Neath 01639 644604	Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14:00	FREE
Meet the author: Carole Matthews	Sandfields 01639 883616	Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Card Making Session	Glyneath 01639 720776	Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14:30	FREE
'Bizzy Fingers' craft demonstration	Beglan 01639 813477	Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14:30	FREE
Meet the author: Mari Stratnam	Skewen 01792 813488	Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Meet the author: Bernard Knight	Neath 01639 644604	Thurs 15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	18:30	£1.50 per ticket
Parchment Craft Demonstration	Cymmer 01639 850505	Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	11:00	FREE
Jewellery Demonstration	Sandfields 01639 883616	Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	14:15	FREE
Meet the author: Cairin Collier	Resolven 01639 710412	Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	12:30	£1.50 per ticket
Halloween Cake Decorating	Skewen 01792 813488	Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14:00	FREE
Cookery Demonstration	Pontardawe 01792 862261	Thurs 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	10:30	FREE
Meet the author: Martin Bell	Neath 01639 644604	Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	19:00	£1.50 per ticket

Example: header sign for promotional displays.



Example: reader development bookmarks.



3. Anecdotal Evidence (a selection of quotes from visitors to events)

“I am amazed at the variety of events during the festival and I’ve thoroughly enjoyed visiting all the craft events” (K. Evans)

“I have loved it...the tutor was so friendly and I will definitely be taking this [flower arranging] up as a hobby” (Viv Davies)

“You wouldn’t expect this in a library. It’s really nice to see something different” (Lynne Phillips)

“Carole Matthews was so funny and really approachable- it’s nice to see some modern authors coming to the library” (C. Greenway)

“I’ve come from Camarthen to see Martin Bell and it was a great evening” (David Richards)

“Me and my friends always enjoy the author events and we will travel to different libraries- it’s nice to see these authors in different venues and it’s really good value” (Mary Griffiths)

“I love card making at home- so it’s really great being able to come to me library to do my hobby and meet other people who enjoy it” (Lesley Davies)

#### 4. Visitor Figures (selection of libraries)

Library	2008	2009
Baglan	1995	2728
Briton Ferry	2364	3005
Cymmer	306	369
Neath	14328	14425
Pontardawe	6124	7992
Port Talbot	14170	15157
Skewen	2975	3029

#### 5. Press Coverage

Example: review on library website.

The screenshot shows a webpage with the following content:

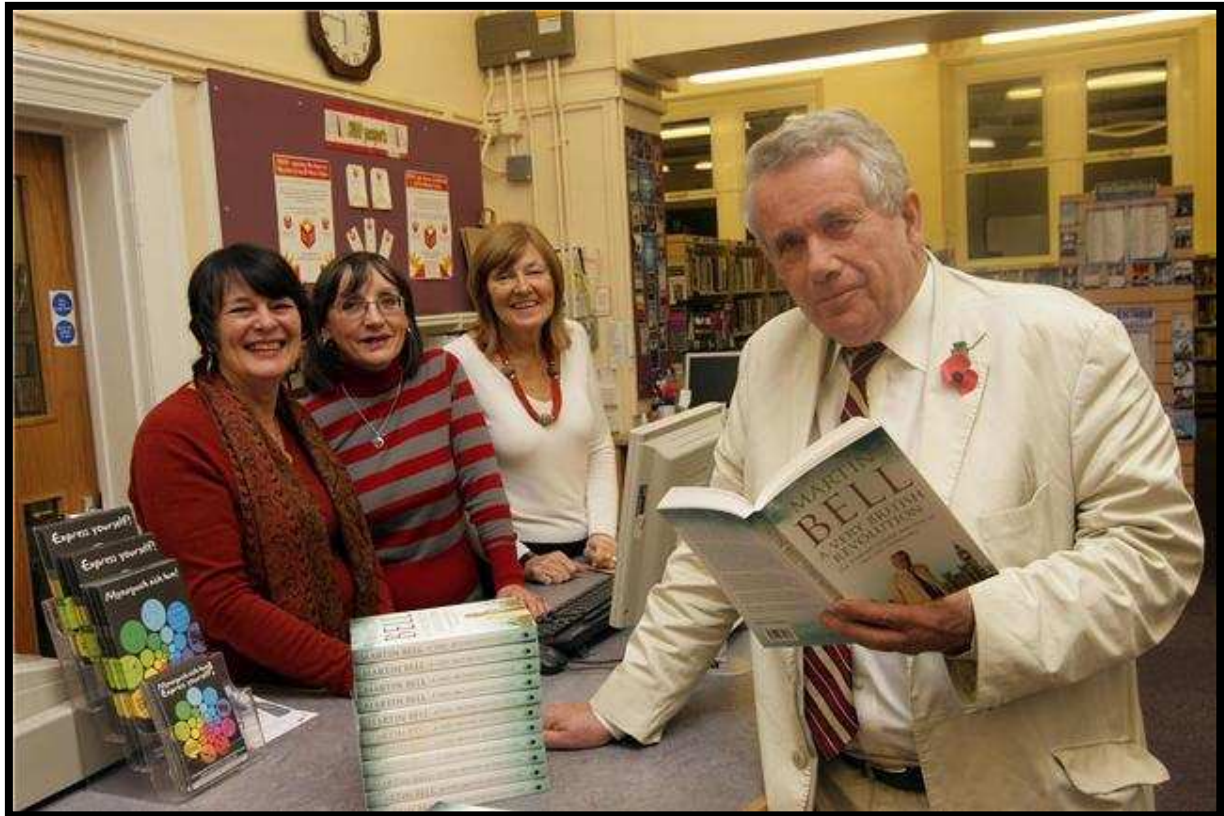
- Header:** 'Octoberfest'
- Text:** "Our library festival was a big success this October. The aim of the festival was to reward our loyal borrowers by organising events/activities that could be enjoyed by all."
- Section:** "Something for the kids!"
- Text:** "The festival got off to a great start with guest storyteller Owen Staton travelling around several libraries in one day to mesmerise school children with an assortment of traditional Welsh folktales. Michelle McTernan (the voice of Nibs from 'Bobinogs') also helped entertain our youngest borrowers with story and jamba sessions."
- Text:** "The Crowman" came to Port Talbot and Baglan library to enlighten school children
- Images:** Two photographs are included. The top one shows a group of people seated at tables in a library setting. The bottom one shows a woman in a red top and a black witch hat sitting in front of a display board.

6. Photographs from the festival.



**Cake Decorating at Skewen Library**

**Martin Bell at Neath Library**



Parchment Craft at Cymmer Library



**Local History Talk at Pontardawe Library**

**'English Tea' with Port Talbot reading group**



**Local History Talk at Port Talbot Library**



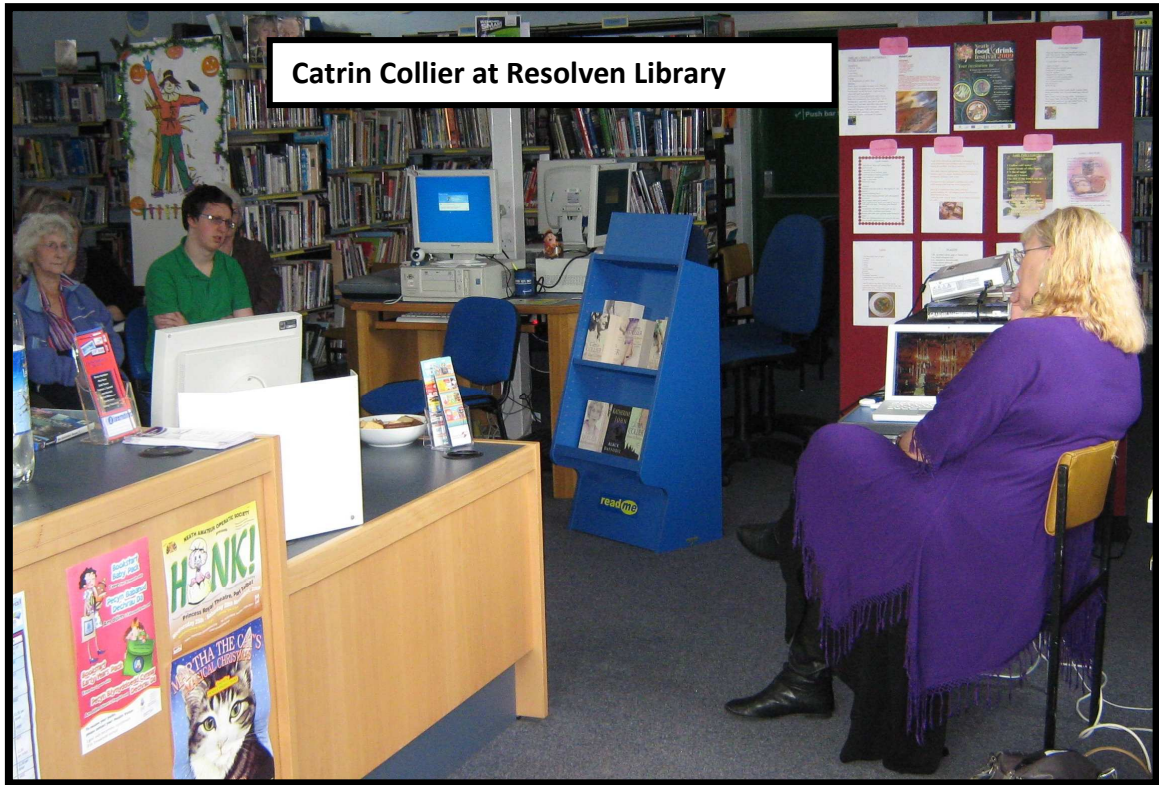


Carol Matthews at Sandfields Library



Halloween Pumpkin Competition at Resolven Library





Catrin Collier at Resolven Library



Catrin Collier at Blaengwynfi Library