

Torpoint Library and Community Hub update – May 2026 report for the Development and Localism Committee.

Community Hub Celebration and Collaboration Event

On May the 13th, the Library Manager, Town Clerk and a new volunteer, attended a fabulous conference organised by Volunteer Cornwall, which was held at Porthtowan Eco Park. The Town Clerk drove the Town Council work van to the event, and the weather was very cold, wet and windy! The Town Clerk also put the van on charge to ensure everyone made it home back to Torpoint!

The event hosted many speakers covering; Neighbourhood Health, Valuing Local, Community Gateway and Cornwall's community transport infrastructure, research and share local perspectives. There was also a Climate Ready Workshop, plus several opportunities to network throughout the day.

A joint presentation had been prepared by the Town Clerk and Community Hub and Library Development Manager, focusing on the history of the library with a focus on it being devolved to Torpoint Town Council. Along with it being transformed into a vibrant Library and Community Hub.

The presentation also covered, activities and events, that take place at the library and community hub, along with volunteers and their roles. A new café volunteer very bravely introduced herself and talked about how she had been made redundant and had struggled with having nothing to do, until becoming a volunteer.

The presentation was very warmly received.

Library Managers Improvement Forum

Following feedback from the last library training day, a new Library Managers Improvement Forum, has been created and will meet twice a year. The Community Hub and Library Development Manager car shared to the infamous Unit 17! A place that other long-standing librarians described to be like an airplane hangar.

On arriving it looked nothing like an airplane hangar, but was unique in being the 'brain of the library service', where all the books come to and leave from.

The library manager was asked to do a presentation on volunteering. The presentation covered, all of what takes place in the library and community hub, the number of volunteers and their roles, dealing with crisis.

There was a number of questions following the presentation, focusing on staffing numbers and volunteer recruitment.

Other library managers were surprised, in their opinion, at the low number of staff the Torpoint Library has. However, one of the take aways for the library

manager was that some libraries that are library services only, have a lot of staff and so the recruitment of volunteers, might mean, taking work away from a member of staff, in turn putting their job at risk.

Torpoint library has a good balance of staff and volunteers, and it works well. It was really great to meet other library managers, only a handful are libraries and community hubs.

Young People

Volunteers- A number of young volunteers have been recruited as mentioned in the last report. However, we are a month on from that report and they are still turning up at the library to volunteer! Our age range for volunteers is very diverse which its unique in itself!

Work experience- The library will host 4 work experience students in June, from Torpoint Community College. Students will get involved with all thing's library and community hub, as well as spending some time with the Friends of Thanckes Park group.

Young people's focus group- The project lead for Friends of Thanckes Park, will host 8 work experience students. The library will have 4 and with our young volunteers, they will all take part in a Youth Focus Group on the Friday. This will be an opportunity to collect ideas from young people, about how we could get more young people into the library and community hub.

Cornwall's Summer Reading Challenge

The Cornwall Reading Challenge is being delivered this year by Cornwall Council Library Service. The theme is, Extraordinary Explorers! The launch isn't until early July. Incentives for reading or undertaking any activities are; a leaflet for recording everything with a free swim voucher in it from the start. When children complete the challenge of reading 6 books, they will be able to access a free walking trail.

Garden Day at the front of the library and back of the library

May sees the start of the library garden, clean ups, starting with the front of the library. Volunteers, led by our lead garden volunteer, will tidy pots and plant up pots. Supported by a member of the TTC caretakers' team. The boat tidy up is a bigger job and will have its own tidy day, followed by a paint.

The Torpoint Scouts will help with tidying up the back children's area on the 18th of June, washing down the artwork ready for painting and doing some weeding. All will be rewarded with hot dogs!

Singing for Friendship and Memory

This group continues to grow, and some people have dementia and some people come for the social and friendship. The age range is diverse and our youngest person that attends is 13, in the school holidays.

We are attending Albion Court with volunteers and one member of staff, once a month for an hour of singing.

Case Studies

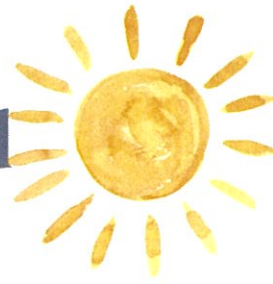
Young lady with learning disabilities was sent to the library by her support worker and was met by the library manager.

The issue was that the lady had been trying to get housing repairs done on their council property and found themselves being offered support by a third-party solicitor's company. Once realising this wasn't a free service, the ladies support worker sent emails to the solicitors explaining that this lady is a vulnerable adult and needs the solicitors to not proceed and to cancel the agreement. The response from the solicitors was that they would not be cancelling and will be proceeding. Once the library manager read all the paperwork and correspondence, the lady and her support worker were signposted to the Peninsula Trust Millbrook who have access to a solicitor, who offers free legal advice for half an hour. 1 hour support given.

Case Study

A lady came into the library who not only needed food but needed electricity. A food voucher and an emergency food box was organised. Normal access to National Energy Action and National Energy Foundation was not possible, as they had all closed down their phone lines due to the number of calls they had received. The only option left was to phone the ladies energy supplier. The lady involved was very agitated, but it was explained to her, that they will need to answer all of the questions that her energy supplier asked, in order to access their support. The energy supplier did credit electricity and gas to the meter for the lady. 2 hours of support given.

Torpoint Library and Community Hub



We welcomed 4,661 people through the door!

We have had lots of children in this month from our local schools!

We have had the pleasure of welcoming pupils from Carbeile Junior School this month, who attended the library over several days, completing an environmental survey with our customers. We were all asked if we recycle, how do we travel around the town and if we feel there are enough green spaces in the town. The results are used as part of a year group project.



Under the Sea

We also welcomed two classes of children from the Torpoint Nursery and Infant School, working along side the curriculum, we created a lovely session for everyone. Gwen read stories to the children, that had a sea theme. Followed by an amazing session delivered by Maz, from the Torpoint Environmental Action Team! Maz was supported by other members of the TEA group, and they firstly looked at what items are found under the sea, spent time looking at a real fish, lobster and scallop! Along with taking part in a beach litter pick in the play area of the library and community hub.



Mini Food Share

At the Torpoint Library and Community Hub, we aim to bring the community together. This month we held a mini food share, bringing people together to taste food from other parts of the globe. We have been asked to do this monthly, and everyone thinks it's a great idea!



Volunteer Cornwall Conference

This month the Torpoint Town Clerk, Milly, Tania the Library and Hub Manager and a new volunteer, attended a conference in Porthtown, organised by Volunteer Cornwall. We were asked to do a presentation on the history of our library and community hub, as it was devolved to the Town Council in 2019. Followed by a talk on our 35 volunteers that help us day to day. Our new volunteer, very nervously but courageously talked about why she started to volunteer with us. It was really great to hear all the good things that are happening in all the other community spaces. Grass roots community spaces are one of the first steps to creating strong and resilient communities.



Sensory Family Session

Beat 4 Autism ran a great sensory session for families where people could make their own sensory tools - including lava lamps!.



Teaching younger volunteers to cook!

Teaching our younger volunteers to cook is a project we hope to progress organically. We have a number of new younger volunteers who have expressed an interest in learning to cook. Luke has had a refresher on making scones, and will bake for us occasionally in the café.