

Authority:

Caerphilly Library Service

1. The impact which the library has had on an individual, or on a group of individuals, during the year. Describe the use made of the service, and the difference that use made to the individual or group concerned. Indicative length 300 words

Please indicate if permission for the Welsh Government to re-use and/or publish the impact statement has been obtained or not: Yes – obtained.

- a) **Royal Voluntary Service Memory Lane Café at Newbridge Memo Library - written by the RVS Memory Lane Café Facilitator and Newbridge Library staff.**

‘It’s time for Toddler Time, so let’s go to the library now...’

We set off down the stairs to take our seats in the comfortable, bright space provided in the library. We are not a group of young parents or carers bringing our own toddlers to join in the Toddler Time. On the contrary, most of us are in our latter years and are either living with or are dementia carers.

We settle down quickly alongside the circle of toddler and babies and heartedly join in to the nursery rhymes and children’s songs. Hearing these songs, we immediately recall our own childhood musical memories as well as those of raising our own children. We especially love the action songs like *Wheels on the Bus* or *Incy Wincy Spider* and relish the challenge of singing new songs or joining in an activity-based story.

During the sessions we love to interact with some of the young participants – smiling and encouraging them in their efforts. We love coming downstairs to the library. It helps us feel part of daily local life and definitely puts a smile on our faces and a spring in our step before we return to the Memory Lane Group. It’s lovely to see that many of the parents /carers seem appreciative and accepting of our contribution to their sing-song time too.

We’ve written down how we feel:

- ‘It’s special when a baby makes smiles at you’

- ‘Fantastic experience, so inclusive and welcoming for all ages’

From a library service perspective these intergenerational sessions are very significant for our clients. We offer a safe and inclusive space delivering creative and stimulating activities. The role of musical activities in supporting people with dementia is well-documented. One of the main challenges our customers may face is disengagement from social and communal life and by increasing the pleasure they receive from our activities, we can hope to reduce the depression and isolation they often experience. The intergenerational aspect of these sessions goes straight to the heart of our library– it draws on the warmth and kindness of the Toddler’s Group and library staff, and has the benefit of ‘immediacy’ and new experiences, encouraging a sense of optimism in our clients.