

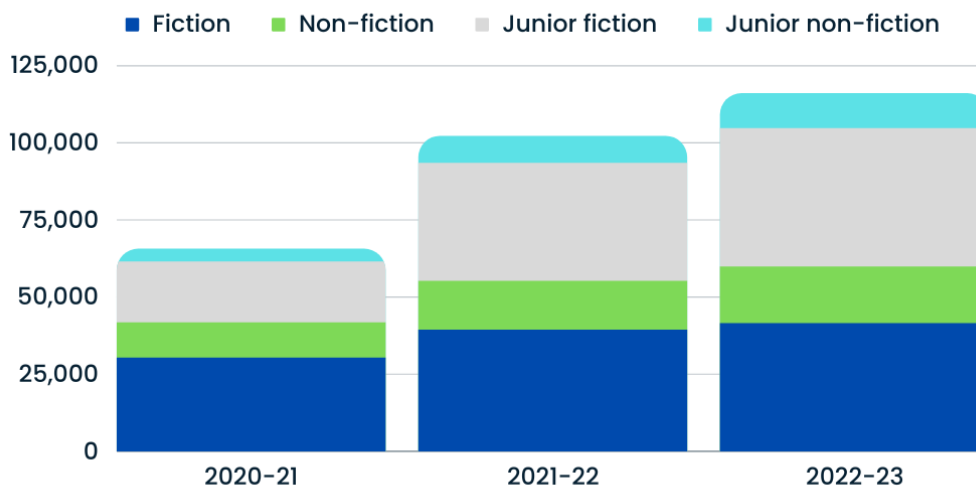


# Performance report

April 2022-March 2023

## BOOK LOANS ARE UP UP UP!

Lending is back to pre-lockdown levels



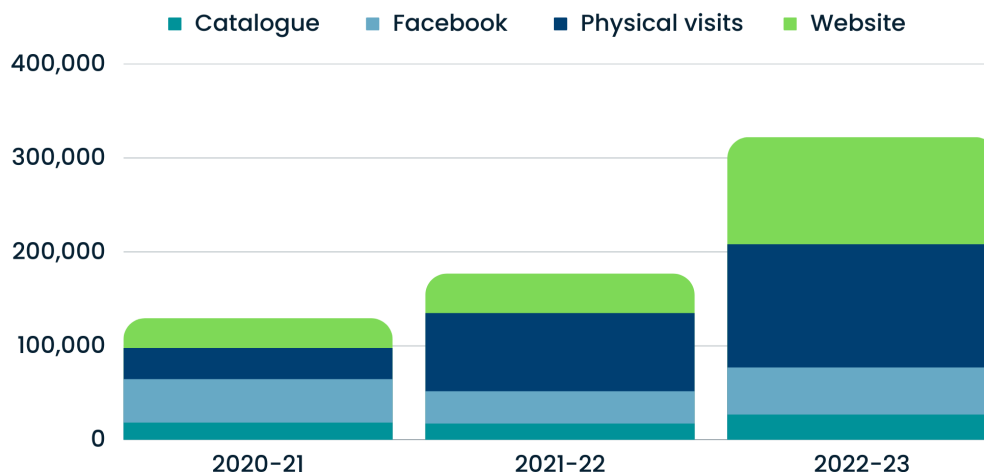
**721** new members joined - up **37%** from last year.

Members who borrowed books was up **16%** on last year.

**37%** of the population - **8,574** people - are library members.

## VISITS ARE UP - ONLINE AND IN PERSON

The new public library has boosted visits



In the first full year of our new public library:

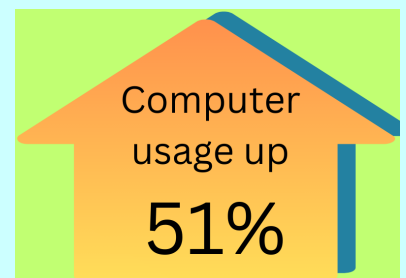
**Visits up 65%**



**Book loans up 39%**



**Computer use up 51%**



**70,484** visitors at the public library.

**130,764** at all our libraries combined.

We ran **295** events.

*"I think your book collection is wonderful. I love the poetry section and the Shetland room in particular."*

## Bookbug and children's events

Early literacy for children and families continues to be perhaps the most important thing we do.

Borrowers aged 0-3 went up **27%** from last year, and **69%** since 2021!

We introduced extra afternoon Bookbug sessions to cope with demand and attendance has more than doubled to **3,964**. We also did Bookbug outreach sessions all over Shetland.



We invited authors **Morag Hood** and **Tamsin Mori** to work with us and set up lots of school events for them. We have welcomed many school and nursery groups to the library, and our staff go out to visit them too. We also took the mobile library out and about to **Play in the Park**, all over Shetland.



Young Shetland Writer attracted **414** entries - a great standard, and lots of photocopying needed for the judging!



## School libraries

When children join one of our seven school libraries they are also a member of the public library, and that helps a lot in our aim of making [Every Child a Library Member](#). Right from Bookbug to nursery and on through school our libraries work to improve literacy and instil the value of reading in young people.

This year our Anderson High School Library has been running a Reading Strategy with the English department to assess reading ability in all Secondary 1, 2 and 3 pupils and give them extra support. AHS and Baltasound are also working with teaching staff towards Reading School Accreditation, putting reading at the heart of their schools.

School library staff support equality and diversity plus all areas of the curriculum with 'STEAM' activities, projects, research skills, creative writing, book clubs, poetry and much more. At lunchtimes and intervals the library is a safe and inclusive space for study or fun. Below is Library Jenga!



**44%** of our members are under 25s

That is over **61%** of young Shetlanders

We have **54,114** children and young people's books in stock

**96%** of customers surveyed thought our book selection was **Good or Excellent**.

Can't visit in person? 3D [virtual library tour](#)





## A new look for the library van

The mobile library got back on the road, with a [new regular schedule](#) and a smart new look. Customers



receiving a mobile or home delivery service rose by **23%**. Under-65 year olds receiving the service went up **72%**! Our staff work hard to make sure folk realise this is not just a service for older people. Young families in rural areas can be quite isolated with limited transport, so it is a great option to have.

Snow caused some disruption last winter, with poor Jamie stuck in the Kames for five hours! There were a few postponements but our team soon caught up.



*"Your cheery delivery driver was the highlight of my Dad's week during lockdown. The service meant so much to him."*

## Shetland books and local history

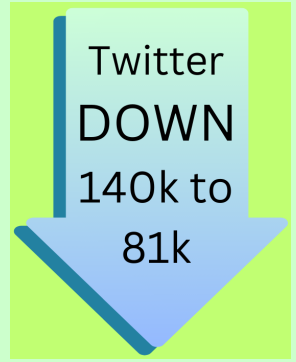
We introduced a great new [digital Microfilm reader](#) for browsing our old newspapers. The Shetland Room has been popular, with more stock easily available.



Shetland  
book  
loans  
**UP**  
**41%**

## What didn't go so well?

**Twitter** engagements went down faster than Elon Musk's rocket. But we can't blame it all on him. We did struggle to think of amusing things to post! Despite that, our number of Twitter followers rose by over 4% to **22,447**.



We struggled to promote our new public computer and printer services in Unst, Yell and Brae because community library opening hours are very limited and were hit by extra closures for various reasons.

Loans and visits fell in our school and community libraries. It was a tough year in schools because of snow closures, strikes days and staff absence. Our schools staff will be working to boost borrowing, but although we love a good statistic, we know that the service is about more than numbers. The support that users get from our staff in public, school, mobile and community libraries is hard to sum up in numbers, but it can sometimes make someone's day, even improve their life.

*"I took a client who I support to the library this afternoon. He had not been there in years. I just want to say thank you to the young ladies who helped him to renew his membership and welcome him back. You are very welcoming and helpful."*

*"Just a peerie thank you for your help and care shown to my mam. The audio books made such a difference to her life."*

*"You wanted to see my face when I listened to the Shetland Times the first time! I've not been able to read the paper for years." - Talking newspaper customer*

*"My son took his first steps in the library today!"*

*"Amazed at this service. I had no idea. Libraries scared me, but this is great."*

*"So happy you are open between Christmas and New Year. I love the service and would be lost without it."*

*"We found a bit in the old Shetland News for my Grandad's 80th birthday! Love the microfilm reader."*

## Health and wellbeing

**Health information:** All our staff completed [Health Literacy training](#) to help you to find what you need. We created a new [children's health](#) section too.

**Socialising:** We launched [Memories Shetland](#), a reminiscence project, and this will become a regular library group event. We ran a huge variety of free events and book launches, from war history to comedy improv, and started a Saturday Mak and Yak. The library has become a busy place in the evenings.

**Warm welcome:** In a winter full of cost of living anxiety, the library as ever was a [free and welcoming space](#), with more users spending more time with us.

**Money worries:** Our Adult Learning colleagues have begun to run a regular [Thursday lunchtime drop-in](#) at the library, to give benefit checks and other advice.

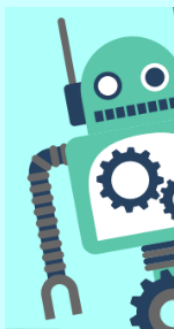


**Dementia:** Staff did [Dementia Friends training](#) and we partnered with Alzheimer Scotland to run advice sessions and promote [Playlist for Life](#) music resources.

**Vision:** we reinstated a [desktop magnifier](#) and our [talking newspaper](#) team worked with local groups and partners to promote all our vision services.

**Help with ICT:** our staff help people with computers every day, but we also do regular extended sessions, one to one appointments and group visits.

**Digital Learning:** for young people, our Code Clubs have been so popular we have been holding extra events and Digital Drop-ins.



## Next year's budget challenge

In the last few months of the year we have had to plan for our biggest budget cuts in over a decade. We will manage this mainly through restructuring staff and replacing the computer systems we use. We will also have to trim services and resources, but we are doing this very carefully. In March 2023 we did a survey to tell you more about it and get some feedback. [The results are on our website](#). We got some very useful comments on how people value our newer services, particularly e-audiobooks.

"Given the scale of your resources I find the selection first rate. There are times I can't get what I want but I understand your constraints."

"I like that newly published books are bought - I could not afford to buy them myself."

"I am disabled and audiobooks have really helped me get back into reading. I use both providers frequently due to the variation in the ranges. I feel audiobooks are essential and would not like to lose either app."



"Libby employs good readers which makes the audiobooks very entertaining. A sight problem is my reason for using audiobooks."

"Love them! As someone who struggles to focus on reading since developing anxiety I love that I can listen to them instead. It enables me to access books in a way which I wouldn't otherwise be able to do."



We were runner up in the [SLIC Library of the Year Awards](#). Judges praised the 'stamina' of our staff!

For more information see our website, or call us on 01595 743868

[www.shetland.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/libraries)