

Galw a Chasglu / Call and Collect library services

As a cautious first step to restarting library loan services in Powys, Cabinet has agreed to trial Galw a Chasglu / Call and Collect non-contact book loans. Residents who are unable to use the Borrowbox e-books or e-audio downloads will be able to fill in a webform on the Powys County Council website, or contact the library service on 01597 827460 or library@powys.gov.uk to request a selection of physical books within broad interest areas. Library staff will select books to order, using 6 bases across the county as distribution centres, and the packages of books will be collected and delivered to readers, with quarantine periods, social distancing and hygiene measures in place. The order lines will open on 15th June, with the first collections ready for distribution from 22nd June 2020.

The safety of residents and our staff is paramount in this development, and 72 hour quarantine periods for the books are built into the system, following advice from Public Health Wales and guidelines from the Culture and Sport division of Welsh Government. Similar schemes are being introduced in all library authorities across Wales during June. Library buildings will not be open to the public in any way in this first phase of easing lockdown in Wales.

The library service will be working with Library Friends groups, PAVO and the fantastic community response teams to deliver books to residents, particularly those shielding. We hope that you will also be actively involved in making sure that people in your wards are able to use the service, either personally or by putting the library service in contact with delivery support groups in your areas. Books will be issued for 1 month, then automatically renewed if not returned, so no fines will be charged.

Use of the e-book and e-audio download platform (Borrowbox) remains the best option for new library reading materials, and the library service staff will help with online membership and any set-up issues, through library@powys.gov.uk Welsh Government has made significant investment in extending the range and number of titles available for residents at any time of day or night.

We will be closely monitoring the impact of the Call and Collect service, and if there is any suggestion that it may be contributing to community infection, it will be withdrawn. However, a thorough risk assessment has been carried out, and we believe that the system proposed is safe, and that fresh reading materials will be of great benefit to the health and wellbeing of many of our residents. Priority will be given to the most vulnerable, particularly those clinically shielding.

For further information, please contact kay.thomas@powys.gov.uk

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