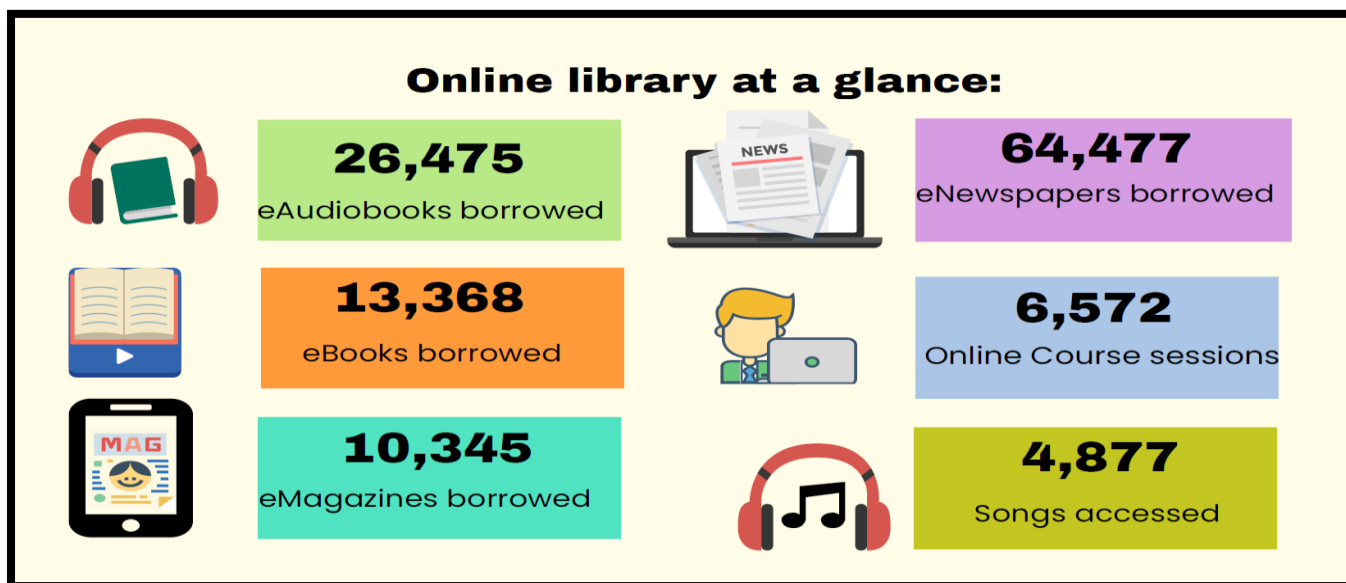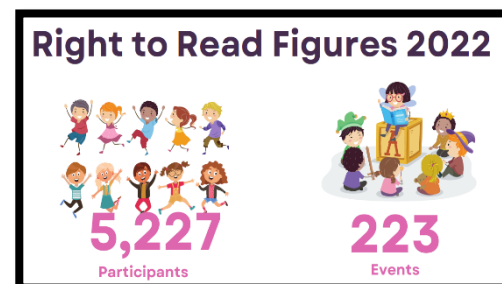## Notable Achievements

- We had **15,170** memberships this year, and increase of **136% on 2021**
- **278,560** books, eBooks and eAudiobooks were borrowed throughout the year, an increase of **57%.**
- **144,566** library users came through our doors
- **13,000** Bookville Activity Books distributed to all 88 primary schools across Kilkenny as part of our annual Bookville Kilkenny Festival.
- We had **46,425** video views across our social media and YouTube platforms.

Online library at a glance:

26,475 eAudiobooks borrowed	**64,477** eNewspapers borrowed
13,368 eBooks borrowed	**6,572** Online Course sessions
10,345 eMagazines borrowed	**4,877** Songs accessed

National Initiatives

Right to Read Literacy Programme: All strands of Right to Read proved extremely popular again this year – we ran a host of storytimes, online workshops and events for Spring into Storytime, Summer Stars, Children's Book Festival and Family Time at Your Library.

Right to Read Figures 2022

5,227 Participants   **223** Events

Little Library Bag: We engaged with 90 Early Learning Centres and childminders as part of this project, giving out 1,161 book bags to pre-school children and school starters to encourage a love of reading and books from an early age.

TTRS literacy licences: This year, Castlecomer Library ran a pilot project, providing Touch Type Read & Spell licences for FREE to local schools. The Touch Type Read & Spell programme is a multi-sensory online typing course that is beneficial for pupils who have reading, spelling and writing difficulties. To date 80 pupils have benefited from using these licences.

Ireland Reads: Our national day of reading was held on 25th February, and we ran a series of talks and workshops for all ages, with 2,187 views of our online events.

Work Matters: Library branches provided introductory tours to Kilkenny Carlow ETB (KCETB) learners. Career guidance outreach sessions were hosted by library branches in conjunction with KCETB guidance counsellors. Universal class and other relevant online services were promoted through our social media channels.

Healthy Ireland At Your Library:

In 2022 Healthy Ireland resumed events in branches. We ran a series of walking groups both in Loughboy and Castlecomer library, where people came together to exercise, socialise and learn about a healthy lifestyle. We also held talks on decluttering and anxiety in children with psychotherapist and counsellor, Fiona Hall. We worked with Mental Health Ireland to facilitate 3 on line webinars on five ways to health and wellbeing. We showcased healthy eating with advice from Safe Food Ireland and held yoga and mindfulness sessions for children.

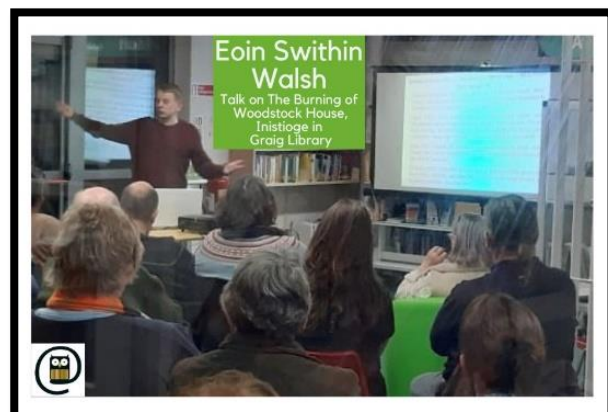### Age Friendly Library Service

In 2022 our libraries provided a wide-ranging programme of age friendly events, including flower arranging, sewing classes, author visits, history talks, and a series of workshops for Bealtaine. We ran intergenerational projects in the City Library, where TY students provided drop-in sessions for older people to help with navigating mobiles phone and other devices, and Castlecomer Library knitting circle shared their knitting skills with the 5th & 6th class Presentation Girls N.S.

Kilkenny Library Service rounded off 2022 doing the ground work towards obtaining an Age Friendly Status for all 8 library branches by Bealtaine 2023. To date library staff have received Age Friendly awareness training and have identified recommendations that will be implemented to make our service more Age Friendly. Our library members can already enjoy some of these changes including a new Age Friendly parking space outside our Castlecomer and Urlingford branches.

Decade of Centenaries and Local Studies: As part of Kilkenny County Council Library's ongoing programme to raise awareness of the events of the Decade of Centenaries locally, the following programme was delivered to the public.

Podcasts: 13 podcasts were developed, covering the events of 1923, researched and narrated by historian Eoin Swithin Walsh, which are available on our library website.

Lecture Series: The Library was pleased to welcome back the public to inhouse lectures, the first since 2019. Lectures covering subjects as diverse as the burning of the big houses to censorship during the Decade, and on topics ranging from the life of life of Tom Treacy to the burning of Woodstock House proved extremely popular.
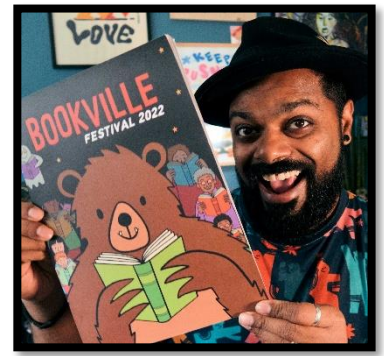
Digitisation: The Library commissioned the digitisation of minute books of Kilkenny County Council covering the period 1910 - 1926, the period from Home Rule, the War of Independence, the Civil War and the development of local government in Kilkenny, available on the Kilkenny Digital Archive.

Heritage Week: 2022 was the first year since Covid 19 that the library welcomed back the public to our branches. Among events were genealogy classes, the unveiling of a unique artwork by Common Thread project, reflecting the lives of Kilkenny women of 100 years ago and the launch of a book on James Hoban, Architect of the White House in Callan.

Creative Ireland

Bookville Kilkenny: Our 6th consecutive festival was a huge success, with 13,000 specially developed activity books delivered to all primary school pupils in Kilkenny, 6 online videos, a Bookville exhibition and 50 live events. We introduced children across the county to 38 authors, illustrators and entertainers, with 7 authors from County Kilkenny.

Christmas at the Carnegie: On December 13th over 430 people enjoyed a day of events to mark *Christmas at the Carnegie* in anticipation of the move to the new Mayfair Library. Storyteller Liz Weir, local musician Mark Anthony McGrath, local actor Jimmy Rhatigan, Historian Dr Mary, local writer Gerry Moran and special guest Pauline McLynn entertained people of all ages on the day.

Programming and Events

- **Slí na Scéalta**: Our outdoor Story trail was launched in 2022 in Woodstock, Inistioge, providing families and children an opportunity to enjoy an outdoor, free and self-guided family reading experience that combines creativity, reading and exercise in a fun and interactive way.
- **Virtual Book club:** Our Virtual Book continued to thrive this year, offering a 24/7 space to discuss and recommend books with over 151 members.
- **OWL 2022:** We hosted a literacy programme in Winter, focusing on dyslexia. Dr.Mary Roche,hosted 3 workshops on developing oral language and we held workshops for teenagers, children and adults incorporating literacy into interactive events from wreath making to lego.
- **Climate/GIY:** Our 2022 programme included events on the themes of sustainability, upcycling and recycling. The Grow It Yourself initiative built on the successes of 2021 with the distribution of an additional seeds, through the Men's Sheds network, local early childhood centres and schools. The theme of sustainable living promoted through various workshops such as soap-making and Grow it Yourself activities. Sewing workshops were held in Ferrybank and Urlingford, encouraging upcycling of clothes and re-use of materials. Energy saving kits were also available from each library and proved to be in high demand with the general public.
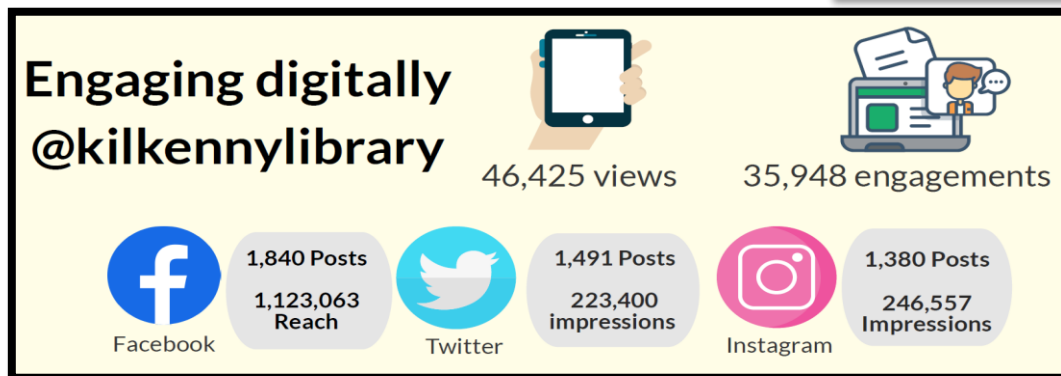- **Ukrainian Supports:** We invested in a selection of Ukrainian books and worked with Kilkenny Volunteer Centre to translate instructions for using the library and our services. Storytimes and events were held to welcome new users into the library.
- **Ferrybank 10th Birthday:** We celebrated Ferrybank Library's 10th birthday in December with a musical coffee morning.
- **Partnerships:** We actively collaborated and partnered with a range of organisations, agencies and community groups such as Kilkenny Carlow ETB. Kilkenny Education Centre, Kilkenny Childcare Committee, Healthy Kilkenny, Music Generation,Kilkenny Volunteer Centre and Calmast. We participated in national and local festivals such as Seachtain Na Gaeilge, National Poetry Day, Culture night, Sustainable Development week, Reuse Month, Decade of Centenaries, Yulefest Bealtaine, Heritage week and Science week.

Information and Communication

- A Lapsafe unit was purchased for Urlingford Library, in partnership with Urlingford Town Team and Urlingford on the Move, offering 8 laptops for borrowing for use in the library.
- We engaged in various platforms and media to engage people with our services, facilities and events.
- We purchased additional Reader pens (C-Pens) for each library to assist people with dyslexia, people with difficulty reading or pronunciation, English language learners and those with vision problems.

Engaging digitally @kilkennylibrary

46,425 views   35,948 engagements

Facebook — 1,840 Posts — 1,123,063 Reach
Twitter — 1,491 Posts — 223,400 impressions
Instagram — 1,380 Posts — 246,557 Impressions

Reading Supports

- **Schools Services:** We engaged with all primary and post-primary schools in Kilkenny, held class visits, gave presentations, and offered our Aistear Resource boxes to all infant classes. Teacher resource packs were distributed in 2022 with brochures for our class novel collection, sensory book collection, sensory book and toy collections, and Aistear collection.
- **Sensory Resources:** We continued to build and promote our collection of sensory toys and books, offering free access to specialist equipment and toys focusing on developing motor, play and life skills for families and children that need it most.
- **Mobile Library Service**: Our mobile service routes were adapted to best serve the needs of users, Additional nursing homes, schools and early learning centres were added due to demand, and we now have 32 schools, 19 Childcare Centres and 5 nursing homes included in our mobile route across the communities in Kilkenny.

Income

We successfully applied and were awarded €**146,356** from a range of funding sources including Dormant Accounts Fund, Decade of Centenaries, ETB, Creative Ireland, Ireland and Healthy Ireland.

Service Development and Infrastructure

- Mayfair Library progressed significantly, with roof completed in December 2022. Purchasing and processing of books and stock continued throughout the year in preparation for opening in 2023.
- Progressed capital project in Thomastown to stage 2
- Replacement of windows and in Graiguenamanagh Library
- Revamp of internal space in Urlingford

Workforce

Kilkenny Library Service continues to proactively upskill and train staff in relevant areas to enhance the service we provide to our diverse community. Specialised library training courses were completed by a large number of staff, with 2 staff currently training for a professional qualification in Librarianship. Progress also continued on our workforce plan.