My Open Library:

Good Practice in Accessible Services at Offaly Libraries

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Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
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My Open Library

Unlimited Access 8am-10pm

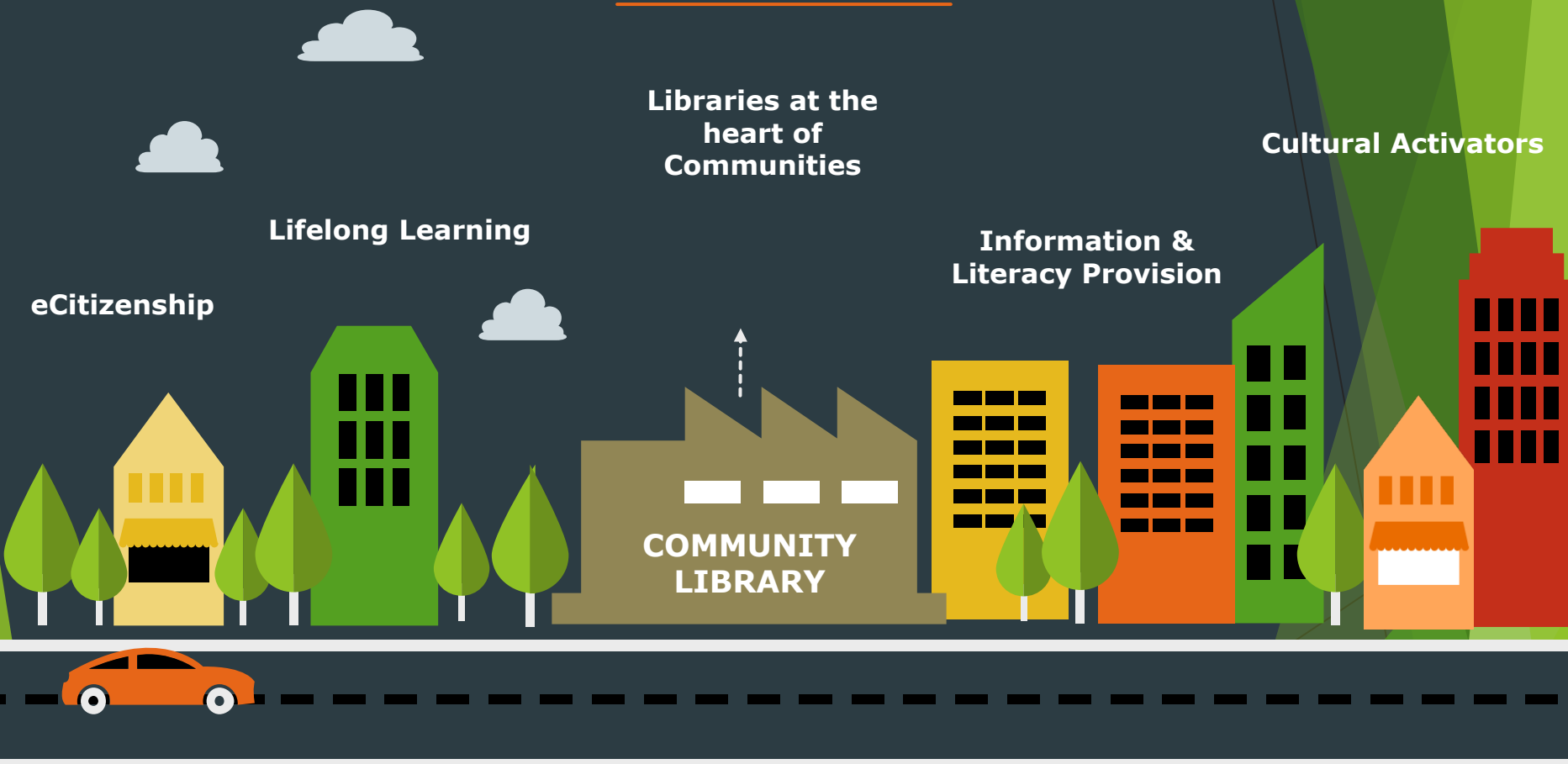**Tullamore Central Library County Town**

Banagher Library (Above) Ferbane Library (Below) Small Community Library Rural Town

LEABHARLANN
Tullamore Central Library

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What is "My Open Library"/MOL?

➤ A Library which has staffed hours and unstaffed hours open every day from 8.00am to 10.00pm

➤ Members (aged 16 and over) can sign up for the service

➤ Technology controls alarms,CCTV, lighting, door access, windows, printing and pc reservations

➤ Self-service access to services

➤ Offaly Libraries operate MOL as an additional service available to library members

My Open Library was launched in Banagher on the 27th March 2015

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Why is this such a popular service?

- ▶ Delivers the Library as a 'Third Place'

- ▶ Flexibility of hours that enable "access for all"

- ▶ Key civic space which facilitates community interaction and collaborative learning

- ▶ "Living room in the square"

- ▶ A welcome for all sections of the community

- ▶ Technology as an enabler and enhancer of quality of life services

My Open Library Tullamore

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Using the MOL Service

MOL is an additional service users must apply for via an application form. All applicants must take part in the MOL induction session

- ➢ Access with Library card and PIN
- ➢ Digital signage provides information on safety and security
- ➢ Self service technology
- ➢ Children under 16 (Parents/Guardian)
- ➢ Young people 16-18 (Written consent of parent or guardian)
- ➢ All members are required to carry their mobile phone

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Challenges Addressed

▶ Staff Concerns

▶ Anti social behaviour & vandalism

▶ Feeling of being safe

▶ Child Protection

▶ Tailgating

▶ Maintenance & Upgrade Costs

▶ Risk Assessment – CCTV, Security Service,

▶ User Education - inductions

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Who uses the service?

- Students
- Commuters
- Families
- Job Seekers
- 'Home' workers
- Wifi users
- Small business owner-hot desking to do admin
- Groups – Bookclubs, Study groups, Knitting Club, Dungeons & Dragons Group, etc.

The 1,000th My Open library member being presented with a small token by the then County Librarian, Mary Stuart

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Offaly Experience – Benefits

▶ Revitalises smaller communities

▶ Central Locations in Offaly

▶ Only indoor lighted non commercial place with public access

▶ Cultural centre of the communities

▶ Civic spaces with lots of opportunities

▶ Facilitates Life-long Learning for all

▶ Reduces the digital divide in rural Ireland

▶ Offers printing, scanning and photocopying services

▶ Community meeting spaces

Pre-Covid, students waiting to access the building for the MOL service

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Offaly Experience - Usage

- Operating very successfully for over 6 years

- Increase of almost 85% opening hours in Banagher & Ferbane

- Increase of 50% opening hours in Tullamore Library

- Significant increase in usage –
  - 4,162 users have signed up for My Open Library
  - Since Jan 2015 150,473 visits

- Successes led to a pivot of focus towards students and commuters

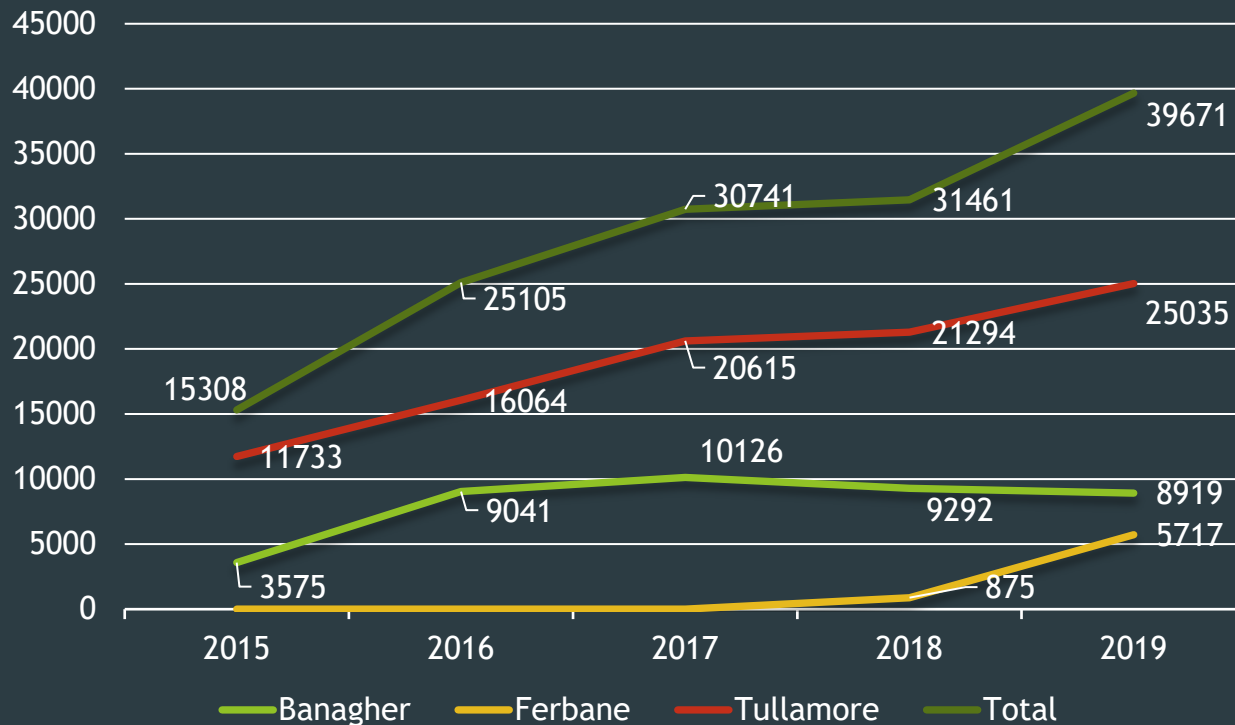Offaly County Council win Best Library Service Award 2016

CHAMBERS IRELAND
Local Government
AWARDS 2016
WINNER

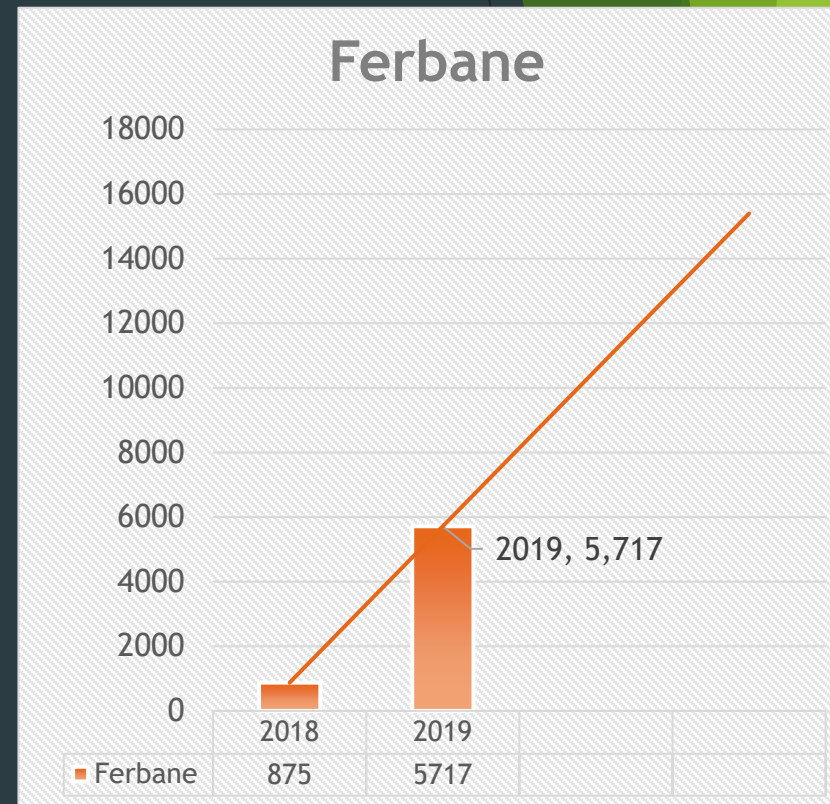*Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí*
Offaly County Council

Local Successes in MOL

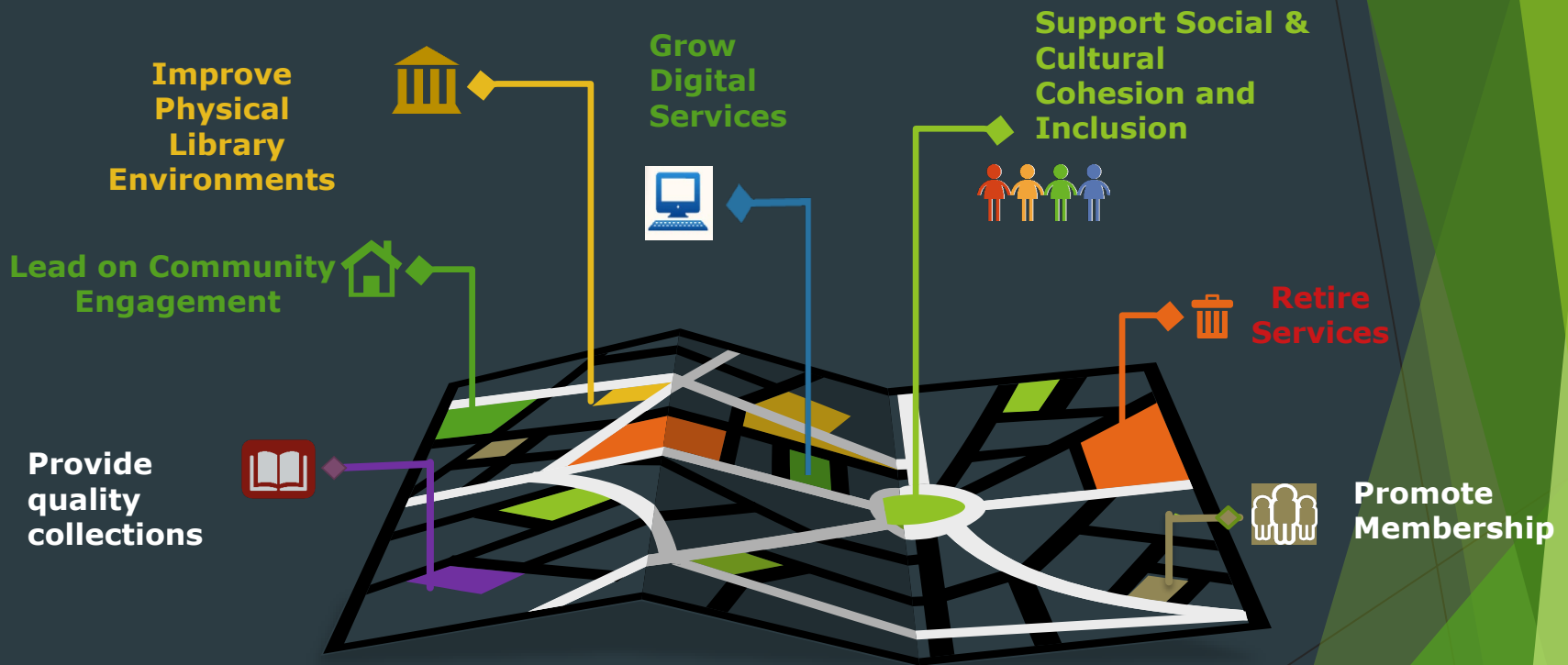**MOL Visits**

Banagher — Ferbane — Tullamore — Total

Ferbane Library: A MOL Success Story- Year 1

▶ The Ferbane MOL opened on 6th October 2018 and is a huge success

  ➢ **27% increase** in stock issues with 10,560 issues between October 2018-September 2019

  ➢ **23% increase** in library visits during staff times, as well as **5,448 MOL visits**

  ➢ Visitor numbers exceeded 10,000 over this period, averaging 27 visits per day

  ➢ Associated positive outcomes demonstrate great community engagement with 37% increase in adult members and a 14% increase in children's membership

Ferbane

	2018	2019
■ Ferbane	875	5717

2019, 5,717

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The Road Map to Growing MOL in Offaly

Improve Physical Library Environments

Grow Digital Services

Support Social & Cultural Cohesion and Inclusion

Lead on Community Engagement

Retire Services

Provide quality collections

Promote Membership

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My Open Library as a space for social inclusion

Offaly Libraries in the MOL iteration has proved itself more important than ever

- 5 Magic Tables (Tovertafels) are available in My Open Library buildings in Offaly

- Study spaces and supports

- Laptops, Public Access PCs, Tablets, FREE WiFi

- Meetings, Book Clubs, Family Visits, Hot-deskers and Work Matters Library Events

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MOL and COVID-19

▶ Post Covid-19, self-service library technologies will be more important

▶ MOL Users educated in technology and were quicker to adapt

▶ Transition to *Contact & Collect* and *Browse By Appointment* Services was easier

▶ Users have adapted to virtual living, but still crave human connections and familiar in-library experiences

▶ New responsive technology solutions will include:

   - Occupancy Software

   - Apps, Contactless Transactions

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Space is crowded.
Keep distance
Stay 6 feet apart. Help prevent the spread

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Thank you for your time!