



Bulwell Toy Library hopes Santa will bring much needed funding for 2009

Bulwell Toy Library may make providing toys for children child's play but now the organisation is having to turn its mind to the serious business of finding funding to remain open.

The toy library has been loaning children's toys to Bulwell families for the last 30 years, either free of charge or for a very small nominal charge of just a few pence.

Now, due to lack of funding the toy library is having to look at ways of raising extra money - so that it can continue to provide affordable toys for those children most in need.

Without extra funding the toy library could face closure.

In addition to loaning toys, the library provides a range of play activities and resources to families living in Bulwell.

Steve Parkinson, who runs the Bulwell Toy Library, is concerned:

"The fact that the toy library has been running for three decades shows just how much families rely on the library to provide their children with adequate toys.

When you consider that the cost of a single new toy is around £25 it's not surprising that many families simply can't afford to keep buying new toys, especially with the credit crunch in full swing. It would be awful if we had to close now, just when families really need access to services like ours."

Bulwell parent, Sam Keeton, a regular user of the toy library service agrees:

"I've been using the toy library for years now and it's brilliant. I couldn't afford to buy the toys new so it's great to be able to give my kids different toys to play with, without having to worry about the cost. It'll have a real impact on my family if the toy library closes."

In order to help boost its funds, the toy library is launching a new service in January 2009 aimed at childcare professionals - including schools, nurseries, registered childminders, community groups and organisations.



Bulwell Community toy library

The new service will be available to childcare professionals throughout the city and will offer individuals and groups the chance to hire toy packs from the library from just £5 per week. Each toy pack will contain 20 toys and will be delivered and collected by the toy library.

Childcare professionals will be able to tell the toy library what kind of toys they'd like, or what the individual needs of the children in their care are, and the toy library will provide them with a pack of toys designed to meet those needs. Childcare professionals will be able to swap their toy packs on a weekly basis if required.

The toy library has over 3,000 toys, carefully selected to suit all ages and developmental stages. Plus, the library aims to cater for children from all ethnic backgrounds and for children with special educational needs.

Steve is hopeful the new service will help to raise much needed cash for the toy library so it can continue to stay open, but he'd also like to hear from anyone who would be willing to help support the toy library financially.

"I'm hoping that Santa brings the toy library something special this year, in the form of funding for 2009. After all, toys aren't just for Christmas, they're needed all year round."

To find out more about Bulwell Toy Library contact - Steve on 0115 975 3898