

Q2 by numbers

24

Primary schools and organisations supported

12,650

Books donated

9,600

Children given access to books

ABC’s reach has grown this quarter with donations of books to schools all over the country and a library build on the Kent coast.

St Mary’s in Deal



There are many schools outside our usual stomping ground in SE London that need our help. We are often contacted by schools from all over the country, but when two very motivated English leads from a school in Deal, Kent got in touch they managed to persuade us to come and visit. It was clear to see that the existing library was bland, unwelcoming and not really used. But we could see the potential to make a real difference. With the support of the school team, ABC delivered an assembly to the children asking them what they wanted from their library and they voted for a magical woodland theme - a new one to the charity and an exciting choice! Our design team got to work and the result is a completely immersive Woodland of Wonders with artwork containing magical toadstools, fireflies, fairy houses and mystical castles. We echoed the artwork with zoned carpet areas and a raised structure for the children to sit on under an ivy covered arch. It really is unrecognisable from the room it was before and is one of the biggest immersive transformations we have completed. The children love their new room, and we hope they enjoy reading and stories in there for many years to come.

Boxgrove Primary

Boxgrove Primary school wanted a brand new library for their children, to inspire them to read for pleasure. As soon as the ABC team saw the space, complete with a side room with a kitchen, we knew we could transform it into something really special. The children had requested a nature theme, featuring trees and comfortable reading spaces. Together with our partner Dave from Olivbells we were able to go even better than that. We built an entire reading and relaxation pod inside the former kitchen with different levels for the children to lounge on which looks out onto a beautiful zoned library area with rugs, cushions and teacher reading chair. Dave designed and built the reading pod to look like a cottage in the woods, anchoring it to the woodland theme and creating an immersive experience for the children while they read. The brand new Mayor of Greenwich cut the ribbon and was impressed with what he saw. The library at Boxgrove is ABC’s 12th library in a primary school in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.



Bickley Primary

ABC loves a whole school community project, and none has had more contributors than this library build at Bickley Primary school. From a committed and enthusiastic member of staff who single-handedly raised all the money through a year long campaign of events to a fantastically talented artist parent Laura Mann, who designed and painted the wall murals we were honoured to be working with such fabulous people. When combined with the skills of ABC’s resident set designer Dave Blacker of Olivbells and with the ABC team putting the finishing touches (and all the books!) this library really became something quite special. The children created some detailed mood boards for us to work from, to show us exactly what they wanted from their London themed library. I think we ticked nearly every box on their wish list, and popped in some extra bits as a surprise!



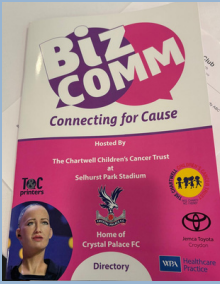
Inigo Volunteer Days

ABC’s volunteer programme has begun brilliantly with two teams from corporate insurance company Inigo, long term supporters of ABC, taking a day out of the office to come and help us sort books and build bookcases. Using a warehouse facility donated for our use by James Removals, we are looking forward to welcoming more corporate volunteers as we expand our programme, each team making a valuable contribution to ABC, as well as providing a team building exercise for the groups taking part.



BizComm Fundraiser

ABC was invited to be part of a brilliant networking fundraising event held by the Chartwell Children’s Cancer Trust. Held at the iconic Crystal Palace Football Club, over 100 people joined the event to meet people, talk business, learn about AI and raise some money for 4 local charities - including ABC. The generosity in the room means that ABC received a donation of £900 and the support of many more. Highlight of the event was surely Sophia, the world’s first AI robot who joined us live by satellite link from Italy. She was quite the star!



Hot weather stops play!

Our annual Book Festival run by a group of Duke of Edinburgh students from local secondary school Eltham College had to be postponed due to the heatwave. Over 90 local children were due to descend on the College for a Book Festival hosted by the DoE students for the third year running. Local authors and illustrators were booked to deliver workshops and there were plenty of book themed activities to keep the children busy. We are hoping to reschedule when the new school year begins in September.

Books in the Park festival

A sunny Saturday in April saw the 4th Books in the Park festival, where ABC held a ‘bring a book, donate and book, swap and book, take a book’ stall. Dozens of children came along with books they had outgrown to swap them for new ones, along with a promise to donate them back to us when they have outgrown them.



Thanks also this quarter to Assured Guarantee, Arts in the Park, Farnborough Park residents, Acorn Group and Judge and Priestly for their funding support of ABC.