

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE

ARTS IN LIBRARIES

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on the delivery of arts activity in libraries.

Information and Advice

Background

2. The options for change approved by Full Council in February 2015 outlined changes to the Arts service to meet the financial reductions required by the Council.
3. The residual arts function with a staff of 2.5 fte was embedded within the Libraries, Archives and Information service and will be included within the Council's contracting arrangements with Inspire due to go live in April 2016.
4. A key focus for the future service is supporting the integrated cultural and learning programme within Inspire.
5. Since September 2015 the Arts service has delivered a wide ranging programme of activities and exhibitions within libraries, engaging with a broad section of the community and enhancing the Library service's cultural offer.

Big Draw

6. The Big Draw is the world's biggest drawing festival involving over 20 countries. This international celebration of drawing is managed by an arts education charity, The Big Draw, which works with cultural and educational organisations, policymakers and businesses to promote 'visual literacy' and to demonstrate the social, economic and health benefits that the universal language of drawing can bring.
7. The festival provides thousands of enjoyable and free drawing activities run by galleries, museums, heritage and other cultural sites, schools, colleges, local authorities, libraries and other community agencies – individually or in collaboration. Based on the premise that everybody can draw given the opportunity, and that drawing can bring excitement and fresh thinking to any context, the festival aims to encourage people of all ages to explore ideas and express their creativity.

8. The Arts service leads on the Big Draw for Nottinghamshire. The theme for 2015 was ‘*Every drawing tells a story*’. A series of workshops was delivered in libraries either by artists or led by trained library staff with support from Arts service staff. Participants were encouraged to create drawings inspired by a story, place, memory or emotion. The common output was the creation of simple books which have now formed a touring exhibition. Currently on exhibit in Worksop Library gallery, and previously exhibited in Mansfield Central and West Bridgford libraries the exhibition will tour smaller library galleries later in 2016.
9. Key achievements include:
- 14 artist led workshops delivered in libraries and archives
 - 30 self led workshops delivered by library staff
 - distribution of Big Draw activity inspiration sheets and over 50 starter packs to groups around the County via the mobile library service to encourage wider participation
 - 11 artist led outreach sessions delivered in partner settings with targeted groups
 - 1,684 people took part in workshops with over 1,000 of these participating in library workshops
 - 49 people received Award Winning Notts Art Service Big Draw training at five locations across the County to enable them to lead their own Big Draw events
10. Feedback was very positive from training sessions and workshops:

“Loved the day, fantastic trainers! Would thoroughly recommend the training to anyone working in the community. I am so excited to get my Big Draw planned and underway.”

“Children loved having a focused activity and mixing with children of all abilities”.

Exhibitions

11. A series of exhibitions are touring library galleries which have been created either as an Arts service commission in partnership with other organisations and initiatives or in order to demonstrate the art produced through the service’s development work in libraries.
12. Exhibitions include:
- **Future Fields** – touring exhibition of 2D and 3D art works based on poppies to commemorate World War One following a series of artist led family workshops. Previously exhibited at the Archives and in West Bridgford, Worksop and Mansfield Central libraries, the exhibition will tour Arnold and Retford libraries later in the year.
 - **MatEaster** – the exuberant paper cut-outs of Henri Matisse were the inspiration for a month of activities in libraries last March. A series of both artist led and library staff led workshops encouraged participants to draw with scissors. Over 760 people had fun with colour and shape in 34 libraries creating lots of bright, bold collages which has formed an exhibition that has toured Mansfield Central, Worksop and Beeston libraries and will visit Retford library later this year.
 - **Inspired by Godfrey** – touring exhibition of work produced by artists in collaboration with community groups inspired by the work of artist Richard Godfrey shown in Arnold and Mansfield Central libraries and due to visit Retford library later this year.

13. In February 2016 artists took inspiration from Nottinghamshire Lace Heritage archives deposited with the County Archives service and working with both target groups and with families to produce two larger scale pieces of art work which will form the **Lovely Lace** exhibition to tour library galleries later this year. Fourteen workshops were held in libraries and at the Archives alongside a series of sessions with targeted groups including Mencap, Co-Production and five special Nottinghamshire schools.

Visual Literacy

14. Following training earlier in the year with artists, libraries and settings, three case study projects ran during the summer in Worksop, Hucknall and Newark libraries, exploring approaches to visual literacy with early years, schools and learning disabled groups. This project explored how a variety of creative approaches can help to develop individuals' ability to decipher the messages and the meanings behind the images we see. Work has been shared through social media and an exhibition of school children recreating old masters has been on display in Worksop library. The work will help to inform the education offer in development for Inspire.

Future Plans

15. An exciting range of events and exhibitions are planned for 2016-17 including a series of spring flower family art workshops in libraries which will create a touring exhibition – **The Inspire Garden** - to mark the launch of Inspire and a Roald Dahl themed exhibition and workshops to link in with this year's Dahl themed Summer Reading Challenge.
16. Research has shown that access to arts and culture supports local economic development, health and wellbeing, social development and education. Now with wider access to the communities within Nottinghamshire via the Library service's network of 60 libraries and the Archives, the experiences and opportunities provided by the Arts service has greater accessibility.

Other Options Considered

17. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

18. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

20. The Arts service is a County wide service available to all age groups.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the update on the delivery of arts activity in libraries be noted.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Youth, Families and Culture

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Carol Newman
Team Manager Library and Arts Service Development
T: 0115 982 9040
E: carol.newman@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

21. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 15/02/16)

22. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

C0784