

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE**

### **SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 5 NOVEMBER TO 9 DECEMBER 2012**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Committee on a range of initiatives being undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people.

#### **Information and Advice**

##### **LIBRARIES**

##### **Amazing Pop Ups: Family workshop at Mansfield and Newark Libraries**

2. Robert Crowther, author and creator of numerous pop-up book titles and a leading expert in paper engineering, joined families at Mansfield and Newark Libraries for a hands-on pop-up making workshop.
3. Robert talked briefly about his own books and then demonstrated the techniques he uses to create pop-ups before encouraging families to have a go. Everybody enthusiastically joined in and enjoyed making their own pop-up creations. Robert was always on hand to offer help and advice and able to demonstrate more advanced techniques. Lots of the finished pop-ups had a festive theme with a number creating beautiful pop-up Christmas cards to take home. Comments from children and adults were overwhelming positive.

*"We had a really enjoyable time making pop –ups. An excellent activity which we loved to continue at home"*

*"The pop up workshop was fantastic. My daughter really enjoyed the activities".*

##### **RaceOnline 2012**

4. Nottinghamshire Public library staff and volunteers have helped more than 40,000 people to get online in the past two years. Most of these people were completely new internet users, and some were tentative users who lacked confidence in their skills.
5. In September 2010 the Society of Chief Librarians pledged to get 500,000 people online by the end of 2012 as part of the Government's RaceOnline 2012. The national total now stands at over 2.5 million people helped to get online.

6. Nearly 30% of households in the UK do not have access to the internet at home and for many people the local library is an essential link for access to online resources.
7. Libraries continue to reach out to people without access to computers at home and play a key role in ensuring that individuals and communities are poised to make the most of the Government's super-fast broadband rollout across the UK, especially in isolated communities.
8. All Nottinghamshire libraries offer free computer training sessions called Try IT which introduce basic computer skills but also provide an introduction to job seeking online, health on the Web, Ancestry and family history and access to Government websites.

## **COUNTRY PARKS**

### **Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre**

9. During November, Discovery Attractions started their work to prepare for their planning application to Newark and Sherwood District Council. No submission date has yet been fixed.
10. Initial meetings have been held with Edwinstowe Parish Council, Edwinstowe Business Forum and with the County Council as part of the agreed liaison arrangements. Arising from this latter meeting, a temporary office and meeting base has been provided for the consortium at the Rufford Mill cottages.
11. On 29 November, Discovery Attractions also attended the Edwinstowe Christmas light switch on where they were able to show some of their current thinking to the community. This sparked a positive response from local people. On 17 December, Discovery Attractions made a presentation to the Sherwood staff.
12. A series of liaison meetings have now been established between the County Council and Discovery Attractions to plan and review progress to conclude the contractual arrangements which are now scheduled for sign off by the end of January 2013.

### **Aurora Christmas Illuminations**

13. The Aurora Winter Illuminations at Rufford Abbey, now in their sixth year, again proved a highlight of the park's events calendar, with double the number of visitors in comparison to when this was first organised.
14. The 2012 event ran over three weekends before Christmas and in total some 6,200 people attended. The lighting arrangements and accompanying music were new for this year and on the dry but cold evenings were spectacular.
15. Notwithstanding the success of Aurora, it is a demanding event to organise in terms of set up time and volunteer input. Park rangers laid over three miles of electrical cable, and have to cope with the vagaries of an outdoor night-time event in unpredictable winter weather. On one evening, the show had to be cancelled owing to very wet weather.

16. The small car park capacity at Rufford also proved a challenge, with the final day of the event attracting more than 2,000 people within two hours with overflow parking limited by the wet ground conditions.

## **CULTURAL AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES**

17. On Monday 10 December, the opening evening of the Talented Coaches Programme 2013 took place at County Hall with 30 coaches from around the County attending. The programme is in its fifth year and this year we have twice as many coaches compared to previous years, with new coaches all the way through to experienced ones. The aim of the scheme is to support the development of coaches through a variety of means including workshops, mentoring, seminars and funding over a twelve month period. This in turn will have a positive effect on the approx 1,000 participants the coaches work with and in turn hopefully attract more to their respective sessions.
18. The opening evening started off with Mick Newell, Director of Cricket at Nottinghamshire Cricket Club, talking to the coaches about his coaching philosophy and what he has put in place at Trent Bridge. The rest of the evening included the coaches getting to know each other through a couple of activities, former Talented Coaches speaking about their experiences and Pete Forster, the County Council Coaching lead and programme organiser, discussing what lay ahead for the coaches. The coaches represented 19 different sports and will meet up again in January for a session around coach mentoring.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That the report be noted.

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