

**REPORT OF THE ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES
AND CULTURAL SERVICES AND THE GROUP MANAGER, PLANNING****REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 9 FEBRUARY TO 5 APRIL 2015****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, ARCHIVES, ARTS, INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY LEARNING****Sensational Science**

2. Fizzix from Mad Science East Midlands visited Mansfield, West Bridgford and Worksop libraries during February to deliver unique, hands-on science experiences for children that were both entertaining and educational. Through a series of experiments he introduced the children to a world of exciting chemistry.
3. Also during the week library staff ran activities at Bingham, Stapleford, Mansfield, Newark, Retford, Sutton-in-Ashfield, West Bridgford and Worksop libraries where children conducted several simple science experiments including chromatography and making a Non-Newtonian fluid. Children were interested too in the science themed books which were available to borrow at all of the events
4. Over 600 children participated in the week's events.

Bingham Library

5. Since re-opening after major refurbishment on 9th January 2015, Bingham Library has experienced a significant increase in business. There have been 39,683 visits made to the library between January and the end of March, an increase of 51% on the same period in 2014. Loans have increased by 28% and there has been a notable increase in borrowing by under 14s of 41%. There has been a big increase in new members of 71%, especially amongst under 12s and over 60s.

COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES

6. Nottinghamshire County Council's country parks proved a popular destination with visitors once again over the Easter weekend.

7. With two Bank Holidays, and warm weather during Easter Monday, thousands of people took time out to enjoy the glorious surroundings of Sherwood Forest, Rufford Abbey and Bestwood country parks.
8. Around 8,500 visits were made to Rufford Abbey over the four days of the Easter break, with the gardens, Abbey ruins and the lakeside areas particularly well enjoyed, and the children's Easter trail helping to swell numbers.
9. Meanwhile approximately 7,000 people visited Sherwood Forest country park through Easter Saturday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday with the medieval re-enactment group Dogs of War providing a living history encampment and displays.
10. Both parks have recently changed their car park charging period, with the £3 charge now applying every day between Easter and the end of October.

CONSERVATION

Sherwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme (minor to Major)

11. This partnership initiative, which is being led by Notts County Council, has been offered a grant of £119,700 towards a total of £149,700 to carry out bid development work for a more detailed second stage application. The partnership board has begun to meet formally to confirm details of its work programme and its funding agreement with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The partnership has also advertised for a temporary Project Development Manager (PDM) who will be responsible for co-ordinating effort over the next 18 months. The PDM will be employed by Notts County Council on behalf of the Sherwood LPS Board; interviews will take place at the end of April.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the update on a range of initiatives being undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people be noted.

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