

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURAL SERVICES****SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 10 NOVEMBER TO 14 DECEMBER 2014****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, INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY LEARNING****Library Access Points**

2. In consultation with remote rural local communities in the Collingham area, including Coddington, South Scarle, Harby, Besthorpe, Winthorpe and Thorney, we are developing a new concept of library provision, Library Access Points (LAP).
3. These are small deposit collections of books reflecting individual community needs and whilst supported by the library service, they are administered and made accessible by organisers within the local community.
4. The first LAP is due to open at South Scarle Community Centre within St Helena's Church on Saturday 10 January 2015 with a loan collection of 300 books, half of which will be exchanged at agreed times throughout the year. In addition volunteers within South Scarle are able to refresh a selection of the collection by using their local libraries at Collingham and Newark.
5. This development supports our 'Strategy for Nottinghamshire Libraries' and our key pledges to respond directly to local needs in developing libraries and also to increase community involvement in the shaping of libraries and delivery of library provision.
6. LAPs are in *addition* to the traditional library provision of branches and mobiles and are a positive step in increasing access to books and reading.
7. Depending on further demand and need in the Collingham area, it is possible that there will be additional LAPs in 2015.

## **An Evening with John McGovern**

8. On Wednesday 3 December West Bridgford library hosted 'An Evening with John McGovern' as part of its programme of events. The legendary former Nottingham Forest Captain and twice European Cup winner entertained an audience with anecdotes from his career and relationship with Brian Clough. The event tied in nicely with the announcement of the winner of the William Hill Sports Book of the year and saw John talk about his own book 'From Bo'ness to the Bernabeu'. Almost 90 people, mostly men, attended the session, including one lifelong Forest fan who came all the way from Birmingham.

## **CPLUS survey results**

9. "The library is awesome!" (Clipstone Library user, age 12)
10. During October/November, the library service held an online user survey for children and young people aged 0 to 16 years old. The survey asked a range of questions about what children and young people think of the library service as well as providing an opportunity for them to make comments about their local library. Over 1,100 responses were received with overwhelmingly positive feedback including:

Overall satisfaction with the library service	9.1 / 10
The helpfulness of library staff	9.2 / 10
The library being a safe place	9.1 / 10
11. In addition, 87% of 6 to 16 year olds say the library has helped them get better at reading while 77% say libraries have helped them with their homework.
12. For further information, please contact Peter Cribb ([peter.cribb@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:peter.cribb@nottscc.gov.uk))

## **Libraries Modernisation Programme**

13. The modernisation programme continues to improve library buildings and use of technology. Two library building closures commenced on 23 December in order for work to commence early in the New Year. Work at Sutton-in-Ashfield Library to improve the entrance, reception and staircase will improve the overall access to the library; it reopens on 17 January. Also a large scale refurbishment of Arnold Library will be undertaken upgrading the buildings systems and re-shelving the public areas. This will improve energy efficiency, lower running costs and modernise the overall service.
14. The Library Management System (LMS) is the core business system for the library service providing a catalogue of all items, circulation control (including self-service), online catalogue and the customer database. This system was upgraded and is not provided and supported by the supplier. This process went very smoothly and only resulted in a few hours of planned downtime for customers. This is a consortium project, led by Nottinghamshire County Council in partnership with Derby City, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottingham City and Rutland Councils.

15. Bingham Library opened to the public on 8 January following a complete refurbishment. The project also included the co-location of the Children's Centre utilising space vacated by the local surgery. Public response has been very positive with significant numbers of visits and new members being counted. The upgrade of the building systems and the replacement of the windows on the street scene have resulted in a more sustainable and modern facility for the Bingham community. A new re-designed and enlarged public area will help the service meet the needs of a growing community. A meeting room shared with the Children's Centre will be available for library events and community organisations to use.

## **Independent Library Report for England**

16. The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Local Government and Communities (DCLG) commissioned William Sieghart to undertake an independent report into the state and future of the public library service in England. The report was issued on 18 December 2014. The main recommendations are
  1. The provision of a national digital resource for libraries, to be delivered in partnership with local authorities
  2. The setting up of a task and finish force, led by local government, in partnership with other bodies involved in the library sector, to provide a strategic framework for England.
  3. The task force, to work with local authorities, to help them improve, revitalise and if necessary, change their local library service, while encouraging, appropriate to each library, increased community involvement.
17. The report highlights the role of libraries in communities, providing access to digital services and the use of arm's length operating models, all key aspects of the current Nottinghamshire's Libraries Strategy.
18. A full analysis of the report and the implications for Nottinghamshire will be reported to Culture Committee in March.

## **COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES**

### **Green Estates Update - Forestry**

19. Contracts for forestry operations have been let at Dob Park, Hucknall, and Daneshill Energy Forest between Lound and Ranskill. The plantations will be thinned out to promote the growth of the remaining trees. The 'heavy' and mechanised nature of the work will inevitably cause disturbance to the sites. However, the removal of the larch at Dob Park is overdue and is starting to have an adverse effect on the rest of the woodland, both in terms of the quality of the timber and its biodiversity. At Daneshill the removal of some of the pine will allow more light and air into the plantation benefitting the remaining trees and the ground flora. At both sites the tracks will be re-graded upon completion, and the woodland and forest rides will quickly recover once things start

growing again in the spring. Income from this sale will help us to continue manage the Green Estate for local communities to use and enjoy, and to benefit biodiversity.

### **Sparkling Sherwood**

20. Sparkling Sherwood proved to be a very popular addition to the Sherwood Christmas events programme and tickets sold out a week before the event.
21. The winter lighting event took place on three evenings, 5, 6 and 7 December, with 400 people attending two sessions per evening. Weather conditions were very favourable and with all the tickets pre-sold there was no problem with queuing traffic on the road and many visitors commented on how well organised their arrival was.
22. The ticket price was kept deliberately low as the event was mostly funded by an Awards for All grant obtained by event partner the Sherwood Forest Trust.
23. Feedback on the evening was very positive and the Communications and Marketing team have emailed attendees seeking further feedback. Events in the National Nature Reserve, particularly lighting events, are complex and require the support of Natural England which was granted this year. The Chairman of the County Council and consort seemed to thoroughly enjoy their visit on the last evening of the event and we were delighted that they were able to attend and support both Sparkling Sherwood and the Tree Dressing event.
24. The overall success of the event makes it a real possibility that the event will be repeated in 2015.

### **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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