

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE  
AND THE GROUP MANAGER, PLANNING**

**SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 29 MARCH TO 19 JUNE 2016**

**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**

**Inspire Garden**

2. Marking the launch of Inspire: Culture Learning and Libraries, local artists were commissioned to work with communities in the 14 largest libraries to create an Inspire flower artwork celebrating something about the location of each library. Inspire Garden Exhibition Tour launched in Arnold on 6 June 2016.
3. All 60 libraries were offered card flowers of the same shape as the artists' flowers to join in at a local level and display in their own libraries.
4. Mobile Libraries were supplied with an Inspire Garden bean growing activity to give away to groups and encourage attendance at library workshops.

14 Artist led sessions

26 library self-led sessions (figures reported on 9 sessions)

653 participants

432 Children and 221 Adults

100% Excellent or Very Good

Exhibition

Arnold: 7 June – 21 July

Worksop: 3 August – 4 September

**Open Studios Notts**

5. Working in partnership with Open Studios Nottinghamshire, Inspire: Culture Learning and Libraries hosted four group exhibitions in library galleries for groups who either wanted to

display art works together as part of Open Studios Notts or those who had no studio to open but an art practice to share.

Host Galleries

Southwell, Arnold, West Bridgford, Worksop: 24 April – 5 June 2016

30 Hosted Artists

106 participants in meet the artist sessions

79,910 library visitors during exhibition dates for opportunity to see the exhibitions.

## **COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES**

6. On 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April, Rufford Abbey Country Park held another very successful Living History event, the “Historical Bazaar.” This began as a traders’ market for historical re-enactors but expanded into a public event. Re-enactors from many historical periods - from Romans to Victorians - strolled the site in authentic period costume. A programme of free displays and activities engaged visitors. Roughly 4,600 people visited the event over the weekend, the sunny Saturday being the busier day. The event is largely self-funding, as traders pay to attend.
7. Visitor Numbers at Rufford Abbey have proved extremely variable this spring, emphasising the fact that weather remains the strongest influence on visitor numbers. Rain, hail and even some snow flurries deterred visitors on what is traditionally the start of the main tourism season. A cool showery May Bank Holiday saw only around 2,000 visitors, plummeting to around 600 per day for the remainder of the week. But by the weekend temperatures had soared to 22 degrees, attracting over 5,500 visitors to the park. Such unpredictable demand levels present some planning challenges in terms of staffing and stock levels.

## **CULTURAL AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES**

### **‘Lovely Lace’ - Arts**

8. Inspired by Nottinghamshire’s lace heritage and the original lace samples and drawings loaned by Nottinghamshire Archives, workshops have been taking place throughout libraries and archives with customers and with targeted groups. Artists led public workshops with print and bobbin making in strategic and level one venues and for Library staff in level 2 and 3 venues resources to run events as part of the project were provided.
9. The targeted groups involved are Mencap day centres service users, who expressed the delicate lace patterns in textiles, children from Yeoman Park, Redgate, Ashlea, St Giles and Bracken Hill special schools who developed lace textures in clay, and service users from Co-Production Mental Health project who worked to explore lace through print.
10. Over 450 people participated in the opportunities offered. The resulting art works have become an amazing exhibition now touring the galleries. Exhibition tour dates are as follows:

Mansfield; 28 April – 5 June 2016

West Bridgford: 9 June – 12 July 2016

Arnold: 23 July – 1 Sept 2016

## **Apprentice Training**

11. As part of the Lovely Lace project Arts had the absolute pleasure of working with all seven of the Library apprentices for a “How to Run an Arts Event” training day. Artist Sarah Manton and the Arts team shared knowledge and best practice and a wonderful title piece was created for the exhibition.

## **CONSERVATION**

### **State of Nature in Sherwood Report 2015**

12. The Conservation Team has recently authored a ‘State of Nature in Sherwood Report 2015’ on behalf of the Sherwood Habitats Strategy Group. The report sets out the extent (and where information is available, condition) of designated sites and habitats in Sherwood, and also provides information about a range of ‘special’ species which are particularly notable or otherwise characteristic of the area. The main purpose of the report is to provide a description of nature in Sherwood in the year 2015, against which the status and condition of its nature can be measured in future years. It is hoped that future updates of the report will demonstrate that conservation action has ensured that Sherwood not only remains a special place for nature, but that there is more characteristic habitat, in better condition, supporting healthy populations of Sherwood’s special species. The report can be found at:  
[http://www.nottsbag.org.uk/pdfs/SoNiS-publishedMay2016\\_000.pdf](http://www.nottsbag.org.uk/pdfs/SoNiS-publishedMay2016_000.pdf)

### **Historic Environment Record**

13. Following the recent work to move the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) on to an externally hosted system, and to make some of the information available online through the National Heritage Gateway, levels of support for the HER within the Conservation Team have also been reviewed. Two vacant posts within the team will be re-assigned to provide greater capacity for responding to customer enquiries, maintaining the HER and continuing to develop the online availability of information in order to provide a better service for all customers. The review has been managed within the existing staffing levels and budget.

## **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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