

**REPORT OF THE ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES  
AND CULTURAL SERVICES****SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 18 MAY TO 28 JUNE 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****Ofsted inspection of Community Learning and Skills Service**

2. Ofsted inspected Nottinghamshire's Community Learning and Skills Service (CLASS) between 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and judged the Service to be 'Good' with outstanding features.
3. An experienced team of six inspectors, led by two HMIs, conducted over 30 detailed assessments of the Service's provision, including: employability courses for young people (aged 16 to 18 years); its community programmes; and its family learning. Ofsted judged that the following were all 'Good': Outcomes for Learners; Teaching, Learning and Assessment; and Leadership and Management. They also judged that the Community Learning and Skills for Employment provision were both 'Good'. In addition, the Ofsted inspectors judged the Service's Family Learning provision to be 'Outstanding'. The Service's Overall Effectiveness, was graded to be 'Good'.
4. The report was published by Ofsted on their website on 16<sup>th</sup> June and is available here: <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/53674>.
5. This is the tenth year that the Service's overall effectiveness has been judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted, and provides the foundation to support CLASS's transition to becoming an 'Outstanding' provider.

**National Bookstart Week 2015**

6. Nottinghamshire celebrated National Bookstart Week (9 - 4 June) with a series of special events in libraries. National Bookstart Week celebrates the Bookstart programme which gifts books to every child in England, at two key stages before they start school, to encourage the sharing and enjoyment of books from birth.

7. The theme for the week was Jungle Adventures. Over 40 special jungle themed sessions were held. The Bookstart Bear made appearances at Worksop, Carlton-in-Lindrick, Mansfield Central, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Retford, Southwell, Balderton and Mansfield Woodhouse libraries, meeting over 200 children. Every child who attended an event received a free booklet of the popular *Rumble in Jungle* picture book by Giles Andreae. Booklets were also taken to King's Mill hospital neonatal unit to be distributed to families.
8. National Bookstart Week celebrations are part the continued work of libraries, in partnership with health visitors, schools, nurseries and other early years settings to ensure that every child in Nottinghamshire receives their free Bookstart entitlement and develops a love of reading from an early age.

### **Inspiring reading for pleasure**

9. Bestselling author of over 100 children's books, Jeremy Strong, visited Mansfield Central Library in June. Over 160 year 3/4 children from four local primary schools were entertained by his tales of how he writes and his childhood as well as hearing him read from his latest book. Pupils explained what they liked best about the visit and Jeremy:

*"He is very interesting and he writes good stories".*

*"He is very silly and very entertaining and he is the best author!!"*

*"...it was very funny, interesting and inspiring."*

10. During May half term, Andy Seed, author of *The Silly Book of Side Splitting Stuff* and winner of 2015 Blue Peter Book Award for the Best Book with facts visited both Worksop Library and Mansfield Central Library. An enthusiastic family audience joined in with an interactive session full of facts, jokes and games.
11. Caryl Hart visited West Bridgford Library to deliver two participatory family workshops based on her books. Under 7s joined in with Caryl's popular picture book titled *How to Grow a Dinosaur* whilst older children found out about her chapter book, *Foxy Tales*.
12. Author visits, like these, for both family and invited school audiences are part of a continuing programme in libraries to encourage reading for pleasure. Children who regularly read for pleasure are more likely to do well at school.

### **Nottinghamshire Archives**

13. Following the successful reopening of Nottinghamshire Archives in April two open days have drawn new audiences into the extended and refurbished building.
14. The two open days held by the service comprised a general reopening on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and a Magna Carta themed event to coincide with the 800 year anniversary on 13<sup>th</sup> June. The events were attended by approximately 250 people, many of whom were making first contact with the Archives service.

15. The Magna Carta event celebrated the significance of archives to Nottinghamshire, including its impact on the English Civil War and outlaws within the Forest of Sherwood. The day saw talks and dramatic readings drawn from the four million documents within the care of Nottinghamshire Archives. The siege of Newark was re-enacted via table-top gaming and a variety of activities entertained our younger visitors.
16. The customer response has been positive with one visitor commenting that the public area is a “great improvement on the previous layout...colourful, interesting and welcoming. Staff are always helpful and friendly and it’s an absolute pleasure to use.” Another customer commented that he is “very impressed with the new Archives service”.

## **COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES**

17. May and June saw a strong start to the main visitor season at the country parks, and a number of events were organised to tempt visitors out into the fresh air.
18. Bestwood Country Park proved that the early bird gets the worm with a 6am ‘dawn chorus’ walk for bird watchers. The Park also continued its popular Saturday morning children’s event at the former colliery Winding House: “Mini Miners.”
19. At Sherwood, a living history encampment entertained Spring Bank Holiday visitors, with a number of smaller nature events ranging from a look at the archaeology of Sherwood Forest to nightjar and glow worm walks.
20. At Rufford Abbey, brass band concerts, a falconry demonstration and yoga in the park led up to one of the main events of the season – the Earth & Fire potters fair, organised by the County’s Arts Service.

## **CULTURAL AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES**

### **Special Schools**

21. The Arts service has worked with the County’s special schools for the last three years and places artists into schools on residency to create art work, dance and music. The works this year were themed on Carnival and brought together on a celebration day at Rufford in early June. Over 200 young people from the special schools were on site to share the work as a carnival parade which was an amazing spectacle of vibrant costume and sound. Artists, street performers, musicians and Architects of Air were also part of the day and its celebration of achievement for the young people involved.

### **Earth and Fire Ceramic Fair**

22. The annual Earth and Fire Ceramic Fair took place in the grounds of Rufford Abbey Country Park and Craft Centre on 26 - 28 June 2015. It marked 21 years of the event. Over 100 potters from the UK and Europe travelled to Rufford and set up stalls to sell the amazing array of ceramics all of which begin life as a lump of clay. A full programme of demonstrations sharing the potters’ skills with the visitors attracted the crowds and there was a fun programme of potters’ competitive games including blind fold throwing.

23. In the gallery the final exhibition before the Craft Centre closes at the end of July is Inspired by Godfrey. Richard Godfrey was a potter and educator who sadly passed away last year before he could complete his solo show for the Craft Centre. The Arts service worked with community groups and the public and artists to create a range of works inspired by Richard's work and showed this alongside examples of Richard's work. The exhibition runs until 26 July. A smaller sample of the exhibition moves to Arnold Library in August.

## **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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