

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE  
AND THE GROUP MANAGER, PLANNING****SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 16 NOVEMBER 2015 TO 3 JANUARY  
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****The Brilliant Book Award 2016**

2. The Education Library Service (ELS) has announced the six shortlisted titles of "The Brilliant Book Award" (BBA) 2016. This is an annual award, voted for by the students at Key Stage 3 in schools across Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City and Derbyshire. The award aims to promote reading to Key Stage 3 pupils. Pupils vote for their favourite book from the shortlist which gives them a voice, as well as promoting reading for pleasure. The students read the six shortlisted titles and vote for their favourite as well as writing reviews of the books, which can be posted on the website. The award criteria includes aiming to find a book which is so enjoyable that the reader is passionate about it as well as offering an emotional connection and has a satisfying ending. The winner will be announced in March 2016.
3. This is the ninth year of the award which is run by The Education Library Service, in partnership with "The Bookcase," an independent bookshop in Lowdham, and includes author visits to some of the participating schools. This year 40 secondary schools are participating in the award with up to 1,000 pupils involved. Schools taking part in the award, work together on various projects.

**COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES****Rufford Abbey and Sherwood Forest Country Parks**

4. Christmas proved a busy season for Country Parks with over 1,900 children enjoying Rufford Abbey's "Santa's Grotto." 9,000 visitors are estimated to have visited Rufford Abbey over the festive period.

5. Both Rufford Abbey and Sherwood Forest opened every day through the holiday period, except Christmas Day.
6. At Sherwood Forest Country Park the highlight (literally!) of the season's events programme was "Sparkling Sherwood" which attracted almost 2,000 paying visitors. The ancient oaks of Sherwood were the stars of the show, being gently illuminated to a background of ambient music.

## **CULTURAL AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES**

### **The Arts Service - The Big Draw**

7. The Arts Service leads on The Big Draw for Nottinghamshire and is the Drawing Action Associate for the Campaign for Drawing. It has won two Drawing Inspiration Awards; one for its programme of participation and one for developing a training programme that empowers non-arts professionals to use drawing to achieve their own goals and targets with the groups they work with. This builds capacity in the sector.
8. Established in 2000, arts education charity The Campaign for Drawing is the creator and driving force behind the world's biggest drawing festival, The Big Draw. The Big Draw charity works with cultural and educational organisations, policymakers and businesses to promote "visual literacy" and to demonstrate the social, economic and health benefits that the universal language of drawing can bring. In addition to The Big Draw festival and The Big Draw Awards, the charity runs The John Ruskin Prize, CPD events, conferences and more.
9. This year the Arts Service worked to extend The Big Draw into as many Nottinghamshire Libraries as possible. Over 3,100 people took part in workshops; 13 libraries plus Archives had artist led workshops. 49 people were trained at five sessions to use drawing and The Big Draw to meet targets for their groups/learners. 30 smaller libraries ran Big Draw events with support from the Arts Service, How To sheets and materials. Eight outreach projects were delivered with targeted groups including Mencap and Co Production who we will be working with in 2016. Mobile libraries distributed 56 starter packs to groups that use their service. All the fabulous drawn books produced at events are now hanging proudly in Mansfield Library and will tour until at least May 2016 as follows:

Mansfield	17 November 2015 - 7 January 2016
West Bridgford	13 January - 3 February 2016
Worksop	16 February - 23 March 2016
Archives	29 March - 10 May 2016

## **CONSERVATION**

### **Greenwood Community Forest**

10. In November, the Greenwood Community Forest team provided a site visit for the Forestry Commission's East Midlands Forests and Woodlands Advisory Committee. The visit provided local context to the Committee's discussion of a national paper about the importance of woodlands in urban and urban fringe areas. Ten members of the

Committee came to Eastwood to look at tree planting at Colliers Wood and Brinsley Headstocks. Discussion covered a range of topics including Greenwood's strategic encouragement of tree planting, the many benefits and uses of community woodlands, and the value of Friends groups in helping to care for such sites. Representatives from our partners Broxtowe Borough Council, the Friends of Colliers Wood and the Friends of Brinsley Headstocks, all joined us on the day to help in illustrating these messages.

## **Heritage Tourism**

11. Working in partnership with the Hucknall Tourism and Regeneration Group, the first Medieval Monasteries Bus Tour visited the historic sites of Beauvale Priory, Newstead Abbey and Rufford Abbey. The tour filled up with the first few days of advertising and was carefully timed to maximise secondary spend at Rufford Abbey.
12. In November 2015, the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism gave a presentation at the Nottinghamshire Youth Heritage Conference. This included a piece by our newly appointed Heritage and Conservation Apprentice who explained her role to the conference attendees. The Heritage Lottery Fund Officers attending were particularly interested and have asked the County Council to contribute to their national policy on working with young people.
13. Throughout November and December the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism worked in partnership with the County Council's Skills for Employment programme at Retford and Stapleford Youth Centres to plan and deliver a variety of activities. These included guided tours for the public at Rufford Abbey Country Park and a mini Victorian Christmas Fair at Bestwood Dynamo House and Winding Engine House. This not only enhanced the visitor offer but provided the participants aged 16-19 years with transferable skills, including accreditation in customer service, which will help them to engage in future employment.

## **Archaeology**

14. In 1983, Nottinghamshire County Council archaeologists were called out when human bones were discovered during building work for two houses at Windmill Hill, Cotgrave. This signified the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery and in that year, 32 burials were recorded in the area of one of the buildings. A further two seasons of excavation found more burials and features such as ring ditches, pits and post-holes. In total, 84 burials were excavated containing the remains of at least 106 individuals. The burials were dated to the 6th century AD through finds such as pottery, brooches, beads and knives buried as grave goods. The graves were not particularly rich or high status and so were considered likely to represent a rural farming community. Analysis was carried out at the time and a monograph prepared but not completed.
15. A recent re-assessment of the information from this important site concluded that, as osteological methods have changed over the last 25 years, a new assessment of the bones would be desirable. Without further resources, however, this could not be taken forward. Fortunately, the Community Archaeologists were recently approached by a PhD student from Sheffield University looking for a Researcher Employability Project involving hands-on work with human remains. A tripartite agreement was put in place between the student, the University of Sheffield and Nottinghamshire County Council, with funding

provided for one month by the White Rose College of the Arts & Humanities, to undertake a re-analysis of the skeletal material which has been borrowed back from the Castle Museum. Recordings have been made of age at death, sex, bone measurements, stature and pathology. With this information, the chapter on the human remains can be refreshed and the original monograph moved closer to publication.

## **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.

**Derek Higton**  
**Service Director**  
**Youth, Families & Culture**

**Sally Gill**  
**Group Manager, Planning**

### **For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Derek Higton  
Service Director  
Youth, Families & Culture  
T: 0115 9773498  
E: [derek.higton@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.higton@nottscc.gov.uk)

Sally Gill  
Group Manager, Planning  
T: 0115 9932608  
E: [sally.gill@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:sally.gill@nottscc.gov.uk)

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