

South Gloucestershire Library Service Annual Report 2015-2016

This report summarises the work of South Gloucestershire Libraries in 2015/16, it highlights the impact we have had on communities and individual

Reading and literacy

Vital statistic 1.1 million books issued

Filton Library 51,344 books issued

Time4Reading

This year the service has been working across South Gloucestershire on the Time4Reading project involving schools (primary and secondary) and the wider community. Schools have developed an award scheme to reward schools who achieve certain criteria, see www.southglos.gov.uk/time4reading

Children reading

The work with children and the encouragement of children to read makes South Gloucestershire one of the leading authorities – more children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge per capita than any other library in the South West. The service does work with all ages from pre-school children to teenagers, 44% of books issued are children's books. The Concorde book Award is becoming a highly prestigious award and this year's ceremony was an exciting affair. A parent said about their son attending pre-school storytimes: 'Thank you for nurturing his love of reading and his thirst for knowledge. I know this will set him up for the rest of his life. Without your hard work and the library he would never have been exposed to the variety of literature and quality of books he has been.'



Adult reading

To mark the Rugby World Cup libraries supported the regional reading passport, this opened doors to working with Bristol Sport through a longer term relationship both in schools and libraries.

The high profile events and activities are complimented by work within all the communities in engaging people with reading both within the library and in community settings.

In June the LibrariesWest consortium expanded to include Dorset and Poole, providing users with a range of 2 million books to choose from.

A reader who is unable to regularly visit the library due to disability told us how important the Home Library Service is "I can't go out or do much but reading is something I can still enjoy. Without the library service delivery I would be really stuck as I am lost without a book".

Information service

Vital statistic 140,000 enquiries

Filton Library 9,971 enquiries

Libraries provide access to information, they are often the first place people will go to for help and staff are able to either provide the answer or refer to another agency or resource. For details of the information service see <http://bit.ly/1rCICEJ>. One young woman visited the library for the first time, seeking advice on a refuge. She was upset and needed someone to listen to her. The member of staff involved gave details of useful contacts and offered as much help as possible. The young woman later returned to thank staff and join the library with her child and is now living nearby.

Digital literacy

Vital statistic 137,000 hours of usage of the computers

Filton Library 13,655 hours of usage

Digital inclusion is a priority both at local and national level and the service working with Community Learning has trained staff and volunteers to deliver a consistent offer to people wanting support with IT. With the increasing channel shift in all organisations access to IT and staff to support is becoming critical for the success of the digital inclusion plans.

The service was successful in receiving a grant to promote online access and worked with the other community groups in South Gloucestershire to promote access to IT.



A woman wanted to email her son who was working abroad. She had an initial 1:1 session with an IT volunteer who helped her set up the account. She was very nervous and shaking with fear. Over the year and with subsequent help from staff, this lady has become so confident with IT that she now owns her own laptop and uses the free Wi-Fi in the library.

Health and wellbeing

Vital statistic 4,000 Books on Prescription titles borrowed

Filton Library 282 borrowed

Reading is healthy in its own right but libraries have continued to develop a series of books for specific conditions under the Reading Well Books on Prescription project – this year the dementia collection was launched which included stock for carers, and people experiencing dementia. In addition staff were trained to become health champions in each library. This complements the dementia and mental health arts project and memory cafes hosted in libraries.



Culture and creativity

Vital statistic 9,600 adults and 65,000 children attended events in libraries

Filton Library 857 adults and 4,189 children attended events

Libraries enrich the lives of individual and communities through the provision of events, activities and exhibitions helping people gain a sense of place and take pride in their neighbourhoods and communities. The Discover Festival is a major part of our promotion, festival highlights at Filton Library included a charity coffee morning to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Research, a talk by about anxiety and the importance of sleep, entitled 'Polar Bears and Cavemen', a Ukulele Jam and choir performance by Northavon Singers preformed songs from popular shows and Family History introductory sessions. The service also supports national weeks to raise the profile of specific issues such as British Science Week, World Mental Health Day and World Book Night.

Learning

Vital statistic 16,667 hours of formal learning

Filton Library 642 hours

An individual who was looking for work told us about how the library was important to them 'Filton Library has been a valuable resource towards helping me with my job search and to find sustainable employment. I am happy to say that on account of its provision I have been successful with finding employment. Filton Library is not just a place where you can read books and utilise its computers, it's also a precious commodity and environment where you can meet people and feel safe. The staff are always friendly, supportive, and professional'.

Libraries promote lifelong learning, self-improvement and social mobility and play an important role supporting the educational curriculum with reading for enjoyment. They provide both formal learning programmes working closely with Community Learning and local colleges and informal learning opportunities with people developing their own skills and knowledge through use of IT and books. The service works closely with UWE where users can use their library card to access high level stock. The library workforce provides users with essential support to get the most from available learning opportunities.

They also support the economic growth of the area through providing volunteer opportunities and providing a touch down base for local workers. One gentleman regularly uses this (and other libraries) as a temporary office using the Wi-Fi and taking mobile phone calls. This means he has no office overheads.

Community

Vital statistic 917,743 visits

Filton Library 72,940 visits

Libraries are valued safe and neutral spaces where people of all ages are welcomed and participate in a range of activities. The stories behind the visits are powerful testimonies to the value of libraries – a shy child has grown in confidence and now when she walks past the library she points and says she wants to come in as it is somewhere she feels safe, the mother attributes this change to the weekly half hour storytime sessions. An adult who was feeling lonely and has told us that coming along to craft club has helped them meet people and inspired them to try new things.

Being based in most main communities enables the service to host the delivery of other services, we work in partnership with Community Learning, Public Health, Department of Work and Pensions, and various voluntary sector groups enabling to work with local communities. At Filton Library we work closely with Victim Support, Debt Advice, the Alzheimer's Society, Southern Brooks Community Partnership, Sports Pound, the Volunteer Centre for Patchway, Filton and the Stokes, local primary and secondary schools and early year's settings.

In addition libraries can be hired by community groups to ensure use of the building is maximised – users of Filton Library include Community Learning, Filton Bookworms reading group and a wind band.