

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 individuals.

Reading and literacy

Vital statistic 1.1 million books issued

Patchway Library 26,322 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.

Parents said: 'I think the (summer) reading challenge helped my daughter to read faster and pushed her to read more. It gave us an incentive to enjoy reading during the summer holidays, great scheme, five stars'. Children said 'It was good fun and it made me a super reader'.



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.

Information service

Vital statistic 140,000 enquiries

Patchway Library 10,361 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

Patchway Library 14,975 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

Patchway Library 155 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

Patchway Library 450 adults and 3,650 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 Patchway Library included Rag Rugging and Book Art taster workshops 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

Patchway Library 2,346 hours

A student uses the library regularly often all day as she can plug in her laptop and use the Wi-Fi for free. She cannot afford to sit in a café and buy coffees all day. 'There is nowhere quiet to study at home with my whole family sharing three rooms, this is the only place I can come to really focus'

Another young person with a troubled background came into the library seeking help on writing a CV and applying for jobs. Having received help from a member of staff she had a CV she was happy with. She returned to inform us: 'Patchway Library helped me with my CV, I then got a job. I am currently learning my theory test, all thanks to my library'.

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

Patchway Library 38,033 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 – from the shy child whose confidence has grown exponentially with the mother attributing this to the half hour Rhymetime sessions, to the adult with learning difficulties who came accompanied with a carer. She was withdrawn, unable to communicate or make eye contact with staff or other users. After observing a successful book folding group she returned encouraged to give it a try. Now a regular craft group member she attends unaccompanied and engages with other members of the group.

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 Patchway Library we work closely with the Ethnic Minorities and Traveller Achievement Service, Southern Brooks Community Partnership, the Volunteer Centre for Filton, Patchway and the Stokes, Sports Pound, local primary and secondary schools and early year's settings including the Patchway Children's Centre

In addition libraries can be hired by community groups to ensure use of the building is maximised – users of Patchway Library include Community Learning and the Patchway Reading Group.