

## 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

**Staple Hill Library** 11,453 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](http://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: 'The Summer Reading Challenge was a brilliant idea. As my son has just started reading at school this really encouraged him to want to continue during the holiday'. Children said 'It was ace; I found new authors and I got a gold medal at the end.'



#### 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

**Staple Hill Library** 9,659 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>.

A resident who needed to get to Southmead Hospital was confused by the bus timetables. Library staff confirmed the route and times and also gave her a printed map of the complex with directions to the relevant department.

## Digital literacy

**Vital statistic** 137,000 hours of usage of the computers

**Staple Hill Library** 8,094 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 lady was helping her mother to find and piece together her family history. With the help of library staff who introduced her to the Ancestry Site, she was able over the course of several weeks to trace the family back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Culture and creativity

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

**Staple Hill Library** 119 adults and 2,921 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 Staple Hill Library included Pilates taster session; Family History sessions; a talk on the Mangotsfield volunteer fire brigade; an author evening. 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.

## Health and wellbeing

**Vital statistic** 4,000 Books on Prescription titles borrowed

**Staple Hill Library** 203 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.



Staple Hill Library hosted the Re:Mapping Project for people with mental health problems and dementia. The first phase of the scheme was celebrated in December with a tea party and launch of the participants' art work. All those taking part found the project of immense value. Comments included "I wake up feeling more positive and look forward to what we're going to be doing"  
"It gave me different ways of remembering things – distant memories have become much clearer."

## Learning

**Vital statistic** 16,667 hours of formal learning

**Staple Hill Library** 244 hours

'Being able to use the meeting room is fantastic. I can study without being distracted and the free Wi-Fi is a real bonus'

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

**Staple Hill Library** 53,780 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 – *the elderly lady whose visits to the library are the highlight of her week. She reads the papers, collects her books and catches up with staff.*

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, DWP, and various voluntary sector groups enabling to work with local communities. At Staple Hill Library we work closely with Community Learning; Staple Hill Regeneration Partnership; Our Place Community Flat; Staple Hill Children's Centre. We also play a key role in the annual Christmas on the Hill. The librarian is a member of the organising group and on the day the library hosts activities and performances

In addition libraries can be hired by community groups to ensure use of the building is maximised – users of Staple Hill Library include Community Learning; local wind bands; Reading Group; Staple Hill Scribblers.