

## 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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 146,435 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 and 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 of the Summer Reading Challenge 'It was a great experience. My daughter literally wanted to sit, eat and sleep in the Library every day and what's better than getting a medal and certificate for it'.

Summer, aged 8, said 'I've done the reading challenge a few times before and completed it. I was determined to do it again. It was worth it. I liked the creative themes of all the years, this year has got to be the best one yet'



#### 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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 13,260 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>.

Many enquiries are straightforward such as 'Can I have a bus timetable for the bus to Southmead please?' or 'How can I get a Blue Badge?' Other times the enquiries are more involved and personal. With the help of genealogy websites available for free at the library we have helped several people find the missing link in their ancestry.

## Digital literacy

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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 14,179 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.



Mr H joined the library as he needed to go online to apply for jobs through Universal Jobmatch. Mr H was a complete beginner and over the course of several months and with the assistance of staff members on a weekly basis managed to set up an e-mail account for himself and learned how to use the Jobmatch site. He recently returned and told us that he had found employment.

## Health and wellbeing

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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 231 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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 466 adults and 7,264 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 include talks by authors such as Alex Bellos, Bicycle Maintenance Workshops and ID etching of bicycles carried out by local police constables. 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

**Bradley Stoke Library** 2,373 hours.

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 other libraries as a temporary office using the Wi-Fi and taking mobile phone calls. This means he has no office overheads. During exam time the library is usually full with students seeking a quiet space to work in and prepare for the tests. On some days all available seating is taken up and people queue to get a space.

## Community

**Vital statistic** 917,743 visits

**Bradley Stoke Library** 146,356 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 shy child whose confidence has grown exponentially with the mother attributing this to the half hour Rhymetime sessions, the first time I.T. user in tears during a 1:1 computer session now confidently accessing our computers.

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 Bradley Stoke we have a regular craft group and monthly visits by the Patchway Volunteering organisation.

In addition libraries can be hired by community groups to ensure use of the building is maximised – users of Bradley Stoke Library include Community Learning with their very popular ESOL courses as well as SGS College who use this venue to teach computer literacy and One of Bradley Stoke's eight reading groups.