

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

14th November 2018

**STATEMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER -
LIBRARY, CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR GREG WHITE

Library and Information Service

Cook 250

Members will remember from a previous statement the innovative library project as part of the Cook 250 festival. I am pleased to announce that over 11,000 people visited the exhibition at Whitby Library prior to its closure at the end of August. The project has also been showcased nationally by the DCMS Libraries Taskforce.

The exhibition included a section created by library volunteers using material from the County record Office is currently on display at the Great Ayton Discovery Centre.

Well-being bags

I am pleased to say that I am attending the launch of the pilot scheme 'Wellbeing Bags' on 15 November at Skipton Library. Six bags are to be produced initially and trialled in Craven – to be available for use by local health partners for use with their groups, the others available to members of the public for loan. All bags have a record on Soprano and will be "reservable".

Many people suffer from common mental health conditions such as low-mood, depression, or anxiety. There is strong evidence that books can help, either used on their own or together with other resources. Research shows that reading, colouring and doing puzzles helps to improve mental health and wellbeing, and we all know that there's nothing better than a good book to make you laugh out loud, or sitting and doing some colouring to quietly reflect.

Wellbeing Bags are an easily portable collection of items, books and activities for individuals or groups to share at home, in the library, or out in the community, to promote and encourage people to practice self-care and enhance mental wellbeing. The bags will include resources and information such as colouring, recipes, puzzles, books from the Reading Well collections, and health information and advice from local services.

Well-being bags have been developed in discussion with local health and wellbeing organisations who will play a key role in promoting the bags in the Craven area initially (Dyneley House Surgery (SK), Pioneer Projects (BM), and AgeUK North Craven). Customer feedback forms are included in all of the bags and any feedback received will be used to evaluate the impact and develop the use of the bags, including adding to the contents.

The Wellbeing Bags are confidential and easy to use. Anyone can borrow a Wellbeing Bag from North Yorkshire Libraries free of charge for three weeks using their library card. Bags can be issued through the self-service machines and customers are welcome to renew if they would like to keep the bag for longer or simply return the bag to the library.

Interest is already being shown in the scheme, so if proves successful once in operation then we will look to expand county-wide – and are actively seeking additional funding to do so.

Reading Pictures: Seeing Stories in North Yorkshire Libraries

During November libraries across North Yorkshire will be celebrating children's book illustration, comic and digital art in a series of events and workshops as part of a regional festival called Reading Pictures: Seeing Stories.

Working with visual and creative digital artists and book illustrators Reading Pictures: Seeing Stories will give children and young people the opportunity to meet and learn from illustrators and artists, to explore the connection between literacy and the visual arts and to discover the power of pictures.

The festival has been organised by ASCEL (The Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians) Yorkshire and the Humber branch and is supported by Arts Council funding. Events range from workshop on animation and children's art illustration as well as cartooning and photobooks.

North Yorkshire will host several events with local school groups: comic art masterclasses in Knaresborough and Ripon led by artist Kev F Sutherland, illustration workshops with author Stephen Waterhouse in Skipton and photobook workshops with artist and photographer Jonny Bark in Thirsk.

A number of GCSE students from Caedmon College in Whitby are keen to show off their artistic skills and join in the fun. They will be adding a splash of colour to Whitby Library with their very own mural. Pop along to the library from mid-November to view their work.

Throughout the month many libraries will also be running a Picture Book Quiz, featuring some of the nation's favourite picture books, and there will be classic works of children's illustration on display in Harrogate and Scarborough Libraries.

Summer reading challenge

Members may have seen the annual report for the Summer Reading Challenge 2018, so just to provide a summary and publicly thank all volunteers and staff for their enthusiasm to ensure another successful Summer Reading Challenge for North Yorkshire Libraries.

There was certainly mischief afoot as Mischief Makers, inspired by the much-loved children's comic the Beano, became the theme for the Challenge. 9,650 children took part, with 7,866 completing the challenge of reading six books. A record number of events – a total of 151 across the county – with 3,460 children attending!! Many of these events were organised at our community libraries ranging from cartoon creation to T-shirt trashing as well as many digital based code and robotics sessions – even cookery!! In total 807 young people joined the library to take part, 130 young volunteers provided 2,667 hours of support.

Hambleton and Richmondshire Adult Learners Awards Ceremony

I am pleased to inform members that one of our community libraries The Globe@Stokesley scooped two awards at the Ham/Rich Adult Learners Award Ceremony in October. The award ceremony, hosted by Adult Learning Services and Northallerton Library was attended by over 70 people. The Globe volunteers won the "Informal Learning Group" award and the Library Service Supervisor at The Globe, Jackie Nithakorn, won the award for work-related learning.

Community Awards 2018

It was great to see two libraries featured amongst the many (66 in total) inspiring entrants for this year's Community Awards – and a few tears were shed watching the videos!!

Great Ayton Discovery Centre were awarded 'Community Project of the Year' – watch for Dorothy as the star in the video!!

Helen Sykes was a runner up in the category of Volunteer of the Year – Helen volunteers at Easingwold Library as well as being an active promoter/organiser for the Galtres Fun Run.

Archives

The Record Office outreach Programme continued over the summer months with a further six pop-up archives held in conjunction with local heritage groups. The pop-ups give local people an opportunity to view documents relating to their locality and to access advice from archive staff. The events were held throughout the county, with venues ranging from Grassington to Kirkbymoorside and Stokesley, reaching an audience of over 400 people.

The office also held a number of more formal learning events for adults including study days on family history, maps for local history and sources for village history. A successful series of art & heritage workshops for young people were held in partnership with Thirsk Rural Arts with young people learning about, and taking inspiration from historic seal making, ink making and book binding techniques.