Norton Canes Library and Community Hub

Big Lottery Community Libraries Project

Independent Evaluation

What next. . .?
Money Saved. Quality Assured.

Norton Canes Library and Community Hub
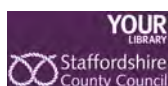
Big Lottery Community Libraries Project

Independent Evaluation

Report Commissioned by
Staffordshire County Council's Culture and Libraries Division

Funded by
Big Lottery Fund

Delivered by
Wider Impact Consultancy
www.widerimpact.com

Wider Impact Consultancy, June 2012

Contents

1.0   Executive Summary

1.1   Introduction

Funded principally by the Big Lottery, the key aims of the Project have been to re-build the Norton Canes Library as a multi-functional community resource, which meets the learning, training, recreational, cultural, advice and information needs of the local community.

1.2   Aims and Objectives

The aim of this evaluation is to gain an in-depth understanding of the process, impact and outcomes of the Project, The main objectives of the study are to:

o   verify if outcomes agreed with the principal funder have been achieved

o   examine project uses and partner agency members' perceptions of the Project

o   uncover the main strengths of the Project

o   explore lessons learnt

o   determine the impact the Project has made on the lives of local people

o   identify how the Project has supported the roles and functions of local organisations and groups

o   support the sustainability and future strategic direction of the Staffordshire Library Service and other stakeholders

1.3   Our Approach

We have used a number of research approaches, which have included detailed desk research, comparative studies and intensive field research to gain an in-depth understanding of the Project.

1.4   Our Findings

Based on research terms of reference, our findings are presented under a number of key headings:

Outcomes / Milestones

The Project has successfully delivered the majority of outcomes agreed with the funder, within budget and within agreed milestones.

The Library has been built to a high specification, and the quality of the multi-functional layout of the building and resources are clearly playing a key role in enabling staff and stakeholders; who significantly include local volunteers, to support the learning, training, recreational, cultural, advice and information needs of the local community.

We have noted areas that require further attention. These include:

o improving young peoples' access to the Library, with particular emphasis on those between the ages of 16 to 19 years

o agreeing a Service Level Agreement between the County Council and stakeholders, which include the Norton Canes Community Partnership

Management of the Project

The successful development and delivery of the Project, has been enabled by a robust Business Plan, which has been delivered by talented and committed managers, support staff and stakeholders. We have noted positive examples of partnership working, which have been supported by the formation of the multi-agency Joint Management Group.

Good Practice

We have identified examples of good practice, which includes:

o close partnership working with key stakeholders

o extensive community consultation

o involvement of the local community in the development and delivery of local services / initiatives, which includes the role of the Library Advocates

o targeted support for the most vulnerable members of the local community, which includes older people and students from local schools

Lessons Learnt

Whilst the Project has consulted widely, and extensively involved young people in activities and targeted initiatives, it is apparent that attracting young people between the ages of 16 to 19 years to fully utilise libraries is a challenge for the Library Service as a whole. Lessons have been learnt by those delivering this Project; with particular regard to seeking the support of young people in this age group. We note that managers of the Project and the Big Lottery agreed to extend the life of the Project, to take time to pilot an initiative to work with a representative group of young volunteers to address such challenges. The results of this pilot will be delivered in a separate report, presented as an Addendum to this report during the last quarter of 2012.

Value for Money

We have noted tangible examples of how the Project has delivered value for money. These include:

o   the role provided by the Library Advocates, who provide many hours of valued support to the Library and wider Norton Canes community

o   the District Council achieving 28.5% (£61,813) reductions in local authority rent arrears

o   financial savings to vulnerable local community members who do not have to meet travel costs when meeting agency representatives

o   agencies such as the Cannock Chase Children Centre and Social Care Teams reducing overheads, and enhancing front-end services to the most vulnerable members of the local community

o   local community groups having affordable access to a high quality community based meeting place and support facilities

o   reduced energy consumption and CO_2 emissions

o   wider impacts, such as anticipated long-term reductions in NHS mental health costs

1.5   Recommendations

We have made a number of recommendations, which are based on research findings, and our experience of supporting similar partnerships:

1. The Library Service / Libraries should as far as feasible continue to be based with local communities, and should take note of good practice successfully delivered by this Project, which includes:

a) Close partnership working with key stakeholders.

b) Extensive community consultation.

c) Involvement of the local community in the development and delivery of local services / initiatives.

d) Targeted support for the most vulnerable members of local communities.

2. The Norton Canes Project should continue to support and respond to the findings of the on-going peer-led research into the needs and aspirations of young people; specifically targeting the 16 to 19 year old age group.

3. As the Project draws to a close in relation to Big Lottery funding, the Joint Management Group should re-focus priorities towards the creation of a new group that supports sustainable partnership working with locally based organisations and key stakeholders / partner agency members.

4. Within 8 weeks of the group highlighted at Recommendation 3 becoming established, the County Council should lead on the signing of a formal Service Level Agreement that relates to the use of the Library / Information Hub building by all stakeholders, including the Norton Canes Community Partnership (NCCP).

5. Key strategic priorities of locally based organisations and key stakeholders should be to support tackling issues such as:

a) Health – with particular regard to:

i. Prevalence of obesity

ii. Teenage pregnancies

b) Youth educational attainment

c) Youth unemployment

d) General unemployment / Benefit claimants

6. Key local priorities should be to enable the on-going development and delivery of good practice initiatives developed by the Project, such as:

o wide ranging consultation, involving local community members

o supporting local groups / societies, such as that provided to the Knit & Natter, Fun & Chatter Group

o supporting innovative partnership working with local schools, with particular emphasis on initiatives such as the Literacy Project developed and delivered in partnership with Norton Canes High School

7. Key stakeholders / partner agency members should urgently collaborate and offer / provide appropriate support to the Norton Canes Community Partnership (NCCP) that assists / enables to Partnership to develop / move forward, and achieve current and future aims and objectives.

8. This report should be circulated to the widest possible audience, in order to enable other libraries, stakeholders and partner agency members to benefit from report findings, with particular emphasis on 'lessons learnt' and 'good practice'.

1.6   Sustainability

The Norton Canes community has been provided with a high quality, multi-purpose building that will play a key role in sustaining the on-going regeneration of the area.

The Library / Community Hub is well placed to support / add value to the locally based infrastructure:

o   the Library / Information Hub (rather than Community Hub) acts as a centre of knowledge, information and referral

o   the Community Centre acts as a Community Hub and place for community meetings / activities

o   the NCCP acts as an over-arching, umbrella organisation, supporting and advising the numerous voluntary groups and organisations based in and about the Norton Canes area

We have presented a number of recommendations, which if acted on by the Library Service and other key stakeholders, will assist in supporting the long-term needs and aspirations of the Norton Canes Community.

2.0   Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the many individuals, who include members of public and voluntary, sector organisations, who have kindly given up their time to share their views and experiences to contribute to this report.

Most significantly, at the request of the commissioner, we have consulted a significant number of members of the Norton Canes community, which has included young and older representatives. We are extremely grateful for their honesty and directness in responding to our questions, surveys and enquiries.

3.0   Terms of Reference

3.1   Introduction

The key objective of this commission has been to produce a report to independently evaluate the effectiveness of the Big Lottery funded Norton Canes Library and Community Hub Project (The Project), in relation to:

o   Outcomes
o   Milestones
o   Wider Impacts
o   Project delivery
o   Management of the Project
o   Good practice
o   Value for money
o   Strategic Influences
o   Sustainability

4.0   Methodology

4.1   Introduction

As highlighted at Figure 1, we have taken a systematic approach to this commission.

Figure 1

```
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Stage 1        │
│  Inception Meeting  │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Stage 2        │
│ Desk Based Research │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Stage 3        │
│   Field Research    │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Stage 4        │
│   Consolidation     │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Stage 5        │
│     Reporting       │
└─────────────────────┘
```
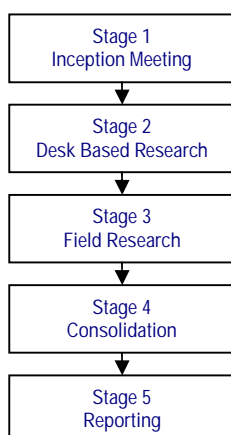
4.2   Comparative Research

We have taken the opportunity to carry out comparisons of performance, outputs and perceptions of Norton Canes Library with similar libraries that have not been in receipt of additional Big Lottery funding to re-build and work in partnership with other agencies to achieve outcomes highlighted at Section 6.5. Such comparisons include:

o   Norton Canes Library's outputs / performance in comparison with the following Staffordshire libraries:

   o   Audley Library

   o   Silverdale Library

o   local peoples' perceptions of Norton Canes Library, in comparison with users of Rising Brook (Stafford) Library

o   Norton Canes High School students who have attended a literacy initiative organised by Norton Canes Library in partnership with the High School, in comparison with Norton Canes High School students who have not attended the literacy initiative

4.3   Desk Research

We have accessed, analysed, and taken due note of a number of documents, which includes:

o   the Project's Big Lottery Community Libraries Project Application

o   end of Year end reports submitted to the Big Lottery (Years 1, 2 and 3)

o   Norton Canes Community Library and Information Hub Business Plan, 2008

o   Cannock Chase District Profile: August 2011 Update, Staffordshire Observatory

o   Norton Canes Community Partnership, Building Community Independence Project, Independent Evaluation, Wider Impact Consultancy, 2012

o   Community Engagement in Public Libraries Report on Current Practice and Future Development, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), CSV Consulting, 2006

o   Promote and Inspire, A Toolkit for Community Learning Champions, Niace, 2010

o   Your Ideas, Community Engagement Workshops, Big Lottery Fund, 2010

o   data and information supplied by key library staff, which includes performance and outputs Norton Canes Library and libraries outlined at Section 4.2

o   questionnaires received from local community members, users of Stafford Library and Norton Canes High School students

It should be noted that we have not replicated data and information previously supplied to the Big Lottery contained in the above End of Year reports. We have no reason to doubt their authenticity, or accuracy; and feel that listing such data will unnecessarily duplicate already supplied information.

4.4   Field Research

Field research has been detailed and varied, and has included:
o   questionnaires:

In total 219 questionnaires have been received and analysed:

o   152 Norton Canes community members / beneficiaries of the project

- o comparative study – 53 users of Rising Brook (Stafford) Library

- o 14 Norton Canes High School students

- o 2 workshops involving:

  - o partner agency members / stakeholders representing, Chase CVS, Cannock Chase District Council, Norton Canes Primary School, Mid Staffs MIND and Norton Canes Library

  - o Library Advocates

- o 3 case studies to gain an in-depth understanding of contributions made to the Partnership, and how the Partnership is affecting the lives of local people:

  - o Library Advocate - adult

  - o Library Advocate – young person

  - o student - Norton Canes High School

- o stakeholder meetings seeking the views and opinions of a variety of partner agency representatives

- o observations / attendance at Committee / Partners meetings, where we aimed to gain a 'coal-face' / front-line view and understanding about the Project and partnership working

4.5   Community Members / Beneficiaries / Comparative Study Questionnaires

Questionnaires highlighted at Appendices A, B and C have been distributed widely in order to access a heterogeneous sample of respondents and thus gain a representative and comparative views of the Project. The recruitment strategy involved:

- o community members / beneficiaries questionnaires were distributed by Library staff based at Norton Canes and Rising Brook Libraries. Others were distributed by representatives of the NCCP and left in prominent public / community places

- o Norton Canes High School questionnaires were distributed to students by the teacher responsible for the school library

o   questionnaires were returned to Wider Impact in sealed envelopes

o   questionnaires were independently analysed by Wider Impact, with data and information presented in graphs, charts and tables

4.6   Workshops

Both workshops involved delegates individually responding to a series of set questions by completing 'Post-It' notes, which were attached to flip charts for later analysis by Wider Impact Consultancy.

4.7   Final Report

We have accessed the document, Cannock Chase District Profile: August 2011 Update, Staffordshire Observatory, from which a number of tables have been reproduced with permission at Section 8 of this report.

5.0   Project History

5.1   Introduction

Norton Canes is a village on the southern periphery of Cannock Chase District, situated 3 miles from the centre of Cannock.

At the time of the submission of the funding application to the Big Lottery Community Libraries fund the Ward Super Output Area (SOA) was within the:

o   most 10% to 20% deprived SOA areas in England

o   worst 15% in England for employment

o   worst 2% in England in terms of skills deprivation

o   worst 3% for adults with education and skills deprivation

o   worst 7% for children and young people with education and skills deprivation

In addition:

o   18% of the population suffered employment deprivation

o   23.8% of young people were unemployed

o   47% of residents had no qualifications

Other significant factors included:

o   the population of Norton Canes was predicted to grow significantly over coming years, as the District Council Plan proposed the development of several thousand homes

o   there was a poor range of community services, with a lack of a base for the NCCP, drop in / outreach clinics for CAB, CVS, Health Workers, pensions services, Police, adult learning services, council services and general information / advice and guidance

o   there was a lack of community space for events, exhibitions (e.g. heritage and archives, arts / crafts), meetings / meeting rooms / interview rooms
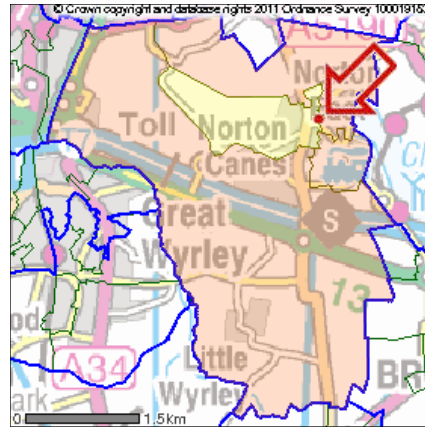
- o a lack of community access to internet services, study / homework space
- o the library was identified as underperforming, and housed in an unattractive dysfunctional 1961 building

5.2   Community Consultation

A number of surveys and consultations were carried out, which aimed to shape the development and delivery of the Project. These included:

- o 2001 NCCP Household Survey to identify community needs, which identified need for:
    - o enhanced ICT provision
    - o extended range of resources for research, study and lifelong learning
    - o informal and comfortable meeting space
    - o creation of a multi-agency one stop shop to include services such as CAB, health and housing, education and employment advice and guidance
- o 2003 NCCP Return to Work Forum, when local residents identified priorities that included:
    - o information and advice services
    - o access to a confidential venue that could cater for one to one interviews
- o 2003 NCCP Feasibility Study to explore the way forward to develop a Library and Community Hub to meet the above needs. Results highlighted:
    - o a high demand from young people asking for somewhere to:
        - o socialise
        - o use computers
        - o access advice and guidance
        - o carry out homework in a non-school environment
    - o adults cited:
        - o a need to improve book stock
        - o a need for more computers, with access to the internet for research and recreation
        - o learning opportunities in areas such as life skills
        - o space for one to one interviews
        - o a large flexible space, which could be used for meetings, training, exhibitions and talks (e.g. local history, art etc)

- both young people and adults expressed a desire for a less formal social space to use for reading, chat and enjoy a coffee in a relaxed safe environment

5.3 Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Culture and Library Division (CLD) Review

In parallel to the work of the NCCP, in 2005 / 06 the SCC CLD carried out a Service Review. A part of the exercise was to identify the under-performing libraries across the County. An option appraisal process gauged impact, efficiency and made recommendations for the future. Outcomes of this review included:

- replacement of mobile libraries, relocation into local schools, or into local partnership one stop facilities
- Norton Canes Library to be re-developed into an integrated community facility, with joint management arrangements between the CLD and the NCCP

6.0   Project Description

6.1   Introduction

Following the period of extensive consultation and review outlined at Section 5, key aims of the Project have been to re-build the Norton Canes Library as a multi-functional community resource, which meets the learning, training, recreational, cultural, advice and information needs of the local community.

Building on these aims, the old library was demolished and re-built in 2009 as the Norton Canes Library and Community Hub, which was funded by a Big Lottery Community Libraries grant of £1,140,817.

FROM THIS

TO THIS

6.2   Key Inputs

Key inputs included:

o   a welcoming and attractive building

o   improving access through improved opening hours

o   a range of services to meet modern needs

o   on-line additional services

o   books for reading and learning

o   ICT and training facilities

o   meeting room / spaces

o   exhibition space

o   drop-in / outreach services from agencies such as the Children's Information Service, Connexions, CAB, CVS, Health, Pensions Service, Police and District Council

o development, planning and implementation on the basis of community consultation, participation and partnership

6.3 Key Partners

A Joint Management Committee was formed, which comprised of representatives of the following main partners and stakeholders:

o NCCP

o CLD

o key stakeholders, including the Health Service, Connexions, CVS, CAB, Pension Service, FE Colleges / schools, Family Learning Services

o Norton Canes Community and Learning Partnership

o elected County Council Members

Plans included:

o a formal agreement between the CLD and the NCCP

o a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Staffordshire County Council and the NCCP, which was to set out arrangements / operation and day to day running of services for the local community at the Norton Canes Community Hub

6.4 Project Beneficiaries

The Project aimed to benefit 4,000 beneficiaries that included:

o local residents, who may be users, low users, or non-users:

  o life skills or other learning and training needs

  o need for information, advice and guidance

  o need for health, housing, pensions, Police etc. advice and support

  o need for an informal, comfortable and welcome meeting space

o voluntary and community groups in need of training, meetings space, and space to promote and deliver their services

o specific organisations such as:

  o NCCP, whose office / Development Worker will be based at the new facility

  o other stakeholder organisations, such as CVS, CAB, Police, Pensions, Health etc. who will have a raised profile and become more accessible to the public

- o Interest groups, such as:
  - o Heritage and Arts
  - o parents and carers of children under 5 years
  - o parents and carers who need support with learning and parenting needs
  - o local school age pupils
- o specific target groups:
  - o young people aged 16 to 29 years
  - o males, who under use the library, who are either unaware of, or not attracted to the library as a cultural, learning and community venue in its past form

6.5 Project Outcomes

The Project has aimed to achieve the following project outcomes:

1. Communities are actively engaged in the development, delivery and management of library services.
2. By September 2010, 22 community learning champions will have improved their skills levels to support the delivery of programmes in two subject areas.
3. By the end of September 2010, 950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new service and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels.
4. By September 2010, through positive engagement and advocacy, 4,000 people within Norton Canes will be aware of the positive economic and environmental benefits of constructing a building which meets the Building Regulations Part L2.

6.6 Outcome Tables

Tables 1 to 4 list outcomes and milestones.

Table 1 Outcomes & Milestones

Outcomes 1: Communities actively engaged in the development, delivery and management of library services.	
Milestones	**Timescales**
Formalise Joint Steering Group with a wide membership to include the Head of CLD (Assistant Director), 8 members of the NCCP, 1 Library Service representative, 1 young person's user representative, and 1 Community Learning and Learning Partnership representative.	Nov 07
Plan and develop a programme of community consultation and engagement events. Distribute / contact 6,500. Response via events, website etc. 2,000	Nov 07 – Dec 07
Deliver a series of community engagement events with specific activities targeted at lower user groups (i.e. focus groups, outreach work etc.), which will inform community service needs, barriers to access and design parameters etc.	Jan 08 – Feb 08
Steering Group agrees and signs off Joint Management Protocol. SCC Cabinet approval granted	Nov 07 – Apr 08
Joint management staff in place, recruit and induct community advocates	Apr 08 – Jun 08
Planning with partners re programme of learning opportunities, additional services (FLI, Early Years, Arts & Museums, Health, CVS etc.)	Sept 08 – Mar 09

Table 2 Outcomes & Milestones

Outcome 2: By September 2010, 22 Community Learning Champions will have improved their skill levels to support the delivery of programmes in two subject areas.	
Milestones	**Timescales**
Identify key learning and additional service providers to engage with the community consultation and the development of the project plans to ensure the programmes are tailored to community needs.	Nov 07 – Apr 08
Recruit 22 Community Learning Champions to support the delivery of learning programmes	Jan 08 – Apr 08
Identify and deliver induction and training programme, which will enable Steering Group members to have relevant skills and a positive and supportive attitude when working with partners and the community. Target: 12 people.	Jan 09 – May 09
Identity and deliver induction and training programmes, which will enable staff, Community Champions, volunteers and partners in service delivery to have relevant skills for effective joint planning and working. Target: 30 people.	Jan 09 – May 09
Produce an agreed delivery plan of learning opportunities, additional services and volunteering opportunities for Year 1. Programme endorsed and supported by the Steering Group.	Jan 08 – May 09
Deliver new programme of learning opportunities and additional services, and promote using a variety of outreach events and publicity to inform the community. Target: 3,000 library members and 1,000 additional users of additional services	Sept 09 – Sep 10

Table 3 Outcomes & Milestones

Outcome 3:	
By September 2010, 950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new services and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels.	
Milestones	**Timescales**
Detailed research of who and where disadvantaged and low user groups are to inform the community engagement and consultation plans.	Nov 07 – Dec 07
Work with architects and designers to ensure that internal environment meets the aspirations of the community consultation and the needs of the service providers.	Nov 07 – Apr 08
Recruit volunteers and Advocates to target low user groups, which include 16 – 19 year olds, particularly males who currently under use the library.	Jan 09 – May 09
Engage volunteers and Advocates to promote the new Centre to low user and disadvantaged groups through a series of outreach events and publicity. Target: 1,000.	May 09 – Sept 09
Steering Group to receive quarterly monitoring reports; ay Q2 conduct interim evaluation and take action as appropriate to ensure Y1 targets on track. At end of Y1, full evaluation report and delivery plan for Y2 approved.	Sept 09 – Aug 10

Table 4 Outcomes & Milestones

Outcome 4:	
By September 2010, through positive engagement and advocacy, 4,000 people within Norton Canes will be aware of the positive and environmental benefits of constructing a building which meets the Building Regulations Part 2.	
Milestones	**Timescales**
Research and identify best practice regarding library and community sustainable builds.	Nov 07 – Dec 07
Incorporate best practice research, outcomes of community consultation, stakeholder requirements and NCCP aspirations within the Capital Delivery Plan.	Nov 07 – Feb 08
Achieve planning application	Apr 08 – May 08
Submission of community engagement, business and capital plans	Apr 08
Contract documentation drawn up, tenders evaluated, contract mobilised. Start on site. Completion of build / handover. Project launch.	Jul 08 – Sept 09
Project Steering Group will measure the environmental impact of the building against the following measures: 10% reduction in running costs, and 80% increase in natural ventilation.	Sept 10

6.7   Project Management

The Project has been managed according the PRINCE 2 methodology.

o   The Project Champion has been the support Cabinet Members (Culture and Heritage)

o   During the bid development and build phase the Principal Librarian acted as Project Manager, who reported directly to the Project Steering Group

o   Post build, the Project was managed jointly by the CDO and District Manager; both of whom reported directly to the Steering Group

o   The Steering Group comprised of the Project Champion and sponsor, along with several members of the NCCP, user representatives.   The group received technical advice and support from the Directorate's External Funding Unit (EFU) and the County Council's Corporate Change Team

7.0 Strategic 'Fit'

7.1 Introduction

The Project has been delivered within the strategic context of national, county and local plans that include the Children Act 2005, Framework for the Future, SCC Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement, the Directorate Improvement Plan and the Culture and Library Service's Divisional Plan 2007 to 2010.

The Project also aimed to support Staffordshire County Council's vision of making Staffordshire a 'Great place to live, work, visit and invest'.

Aims reflected national policy (the five outcomes from the Children Act 2005), the Staffordshire Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, and relevant sections of the Local Area Agreement:

o   children and young people

o   healthier communities and older people

o   safer and stronger communities

o   economic development

o   enterprise and sustainable development

The vision and objectives of the CLD demonstrated the contribution which the service was making to achieve the County Council's aims, and also reflected the three core purposes of a modern library service, as described in the 'Framework for the Future' – the Government's 10 year plan for libraries.

It is apparent that priorities outlined within the above shaped Project aims and objectives to:

o   improve services delivered locally, with a focus on deprived and / or poorly served neighbourhoods

o   improve standards of achievement, with a particular focus on vulnerable children and young people to increase opportunities available for children and young people to make a positive contribution

o   improve the quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods by enabling service providers to be more responsive to neighbourhood needs and improve service delivery

The Project aimed to deliver against the following priority within the Directorate Improvement Plan:

o   promoting access to culture, lifelong learning and providing learning centres within local communities

In terms of CLD key objectives, the Project aimed to deliver against the following:

o   to engage communities and individuals in accessible cultural activities, which promote and encourage participation

o   to improve standards of enjoyment and achievement with a particular focus on vulnerable children and young people

o   to develop opportunities for lifelong learning through engagement with individuals, communities and learning providers

o   to provide a programme of activity which celebrates the richness and diversity of Staffordshire's cultural identity, and promotes a sense of belonging and place

8.0 Strategic Influences

8.1 Introduction

The Indices of Deprivation 2010 provides a relative measure of deprivation in small areas across England. It helps to identify those areas that experience multiple aspects of deprivation. Overall Cannock Chase, of which Norton Canes is a village on the southern periphery, has the highest levels of deprivation in Staffordshire with a rank of 128th out of the 326 districts in England. This means Cannock Chase falls within the 30-40% most deprived districts in England.

Cannock Chase contains eight areas that are in the top 20% most deprived nationally for overall deprivation. Cannock Chase experiences high levels of deprivation concerning both education and employment. Some 21 areas are in the top 20% most deprived nationally for education with 15 areas in the top 20% for employment.

Figure 2 The Top 5 MOSAIC Groups in Cannock Chase

MOSAIC Public Sector is a segmentation tool that provides understanding of each citizen's location, their demographics, lifestyles and behaviours. Figure 2 illustrates the top five MOSAIC groups in Cannock Chase.
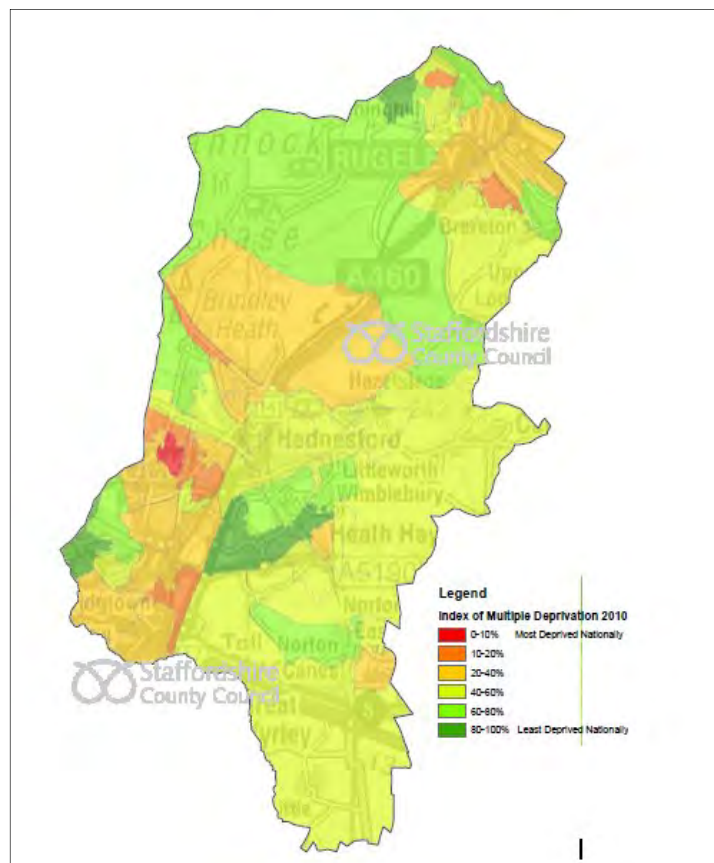
Source: Department for Communities & Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2010

Figure 3 highlights, total deprivation in Norton Canes. All 32,482 neighbourhoods in England have been ranked on a range of topics, together with a 'Total Deprivation' ranking. The most deprived neighbourhood in England has a rank of 1. The further to the right a marker is for a particular topic, the more deprived the area. Further information / graphs, linked to issues connected with education, income, crime and barriers to housing and services can be found at Appendix E (Figures 4 to 8).

Figure 3: Total Deprivation - Norton Canes

Source: 2010 Indices of Deprivation / Communities and Local Government; Office for National Statistics; Valuation Office Agency

8.2   Health

Life expectancy has long been used as an indicator of a population's health. Life expectancy for males in Cannock Chase has increased to 77.2 years, whereas for females it has increased to 80.9 years. Male and female life expectancies are lower than the county wide and national life expectancies. Healthy life expectancy measures the period of time that an individual might expect to remain in good or fairly good health. Both males and females in Cannock Chase are expected to live for significantly more time in ill or poor health compared to the national average.

Childhood obesity is a priority in Staffordshire. Children who are obese are more likely to have other health related issues and are more likely to be obese in adulthood increasing their risk of other health problems, including Type 2 diabetes.

Across Staffordshire, efforts continue to tackle obesity among adults and children, with the recognition that there is an important link between the two, particularly within families, as children with obese parents are more likely to become obese themselves.

Figure 4 highlights the expected prevalence of obesity, and expected prevalence of fruit and vegetable consumption in Cannock Chase. It will be noted that Norton Canes has the highest premature mortality rates in Cannock Chase.

Figure 4: Expected prevalence of obesity, and expected prevalence of fruit and vegetable consumption

8.3

Source: Healthy Lifestyles Behaviours in England 2003-05, National Centre for Social Research and the Information Centre for Health and Social Care
NB: Whilst there are 13 MSOAs in Cannock Chase District, they are census counting areas, and not co-terminus with the 13 administrative wards of the District (See figures above)

Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright and/or database right 2011. Licence Number 100019422.

Teenage Pregnancies

It is noted that the rate of teenage pregnancy in Cannock Chase has increased in recent years. Between 1998 and 2009, across Staffordshire, under 18 conception rates have reduced by 8% compared with 18% across England. In 2007-09, Cannock Chase has a higher teenage pregnancy rate than both Staffordshire and England, and it records the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Staffordshire – 56.2 per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years old Cannock Chase has witnessed a reduction of 2% in rates of teenage pregnancy between the three year rolling averages of 1998-2000 and 2006-2008. Figure 10 highlights teenage pregnancies across Cannock Chase.

Figure 5: Teenage Pregnancies Across Cannock Chase
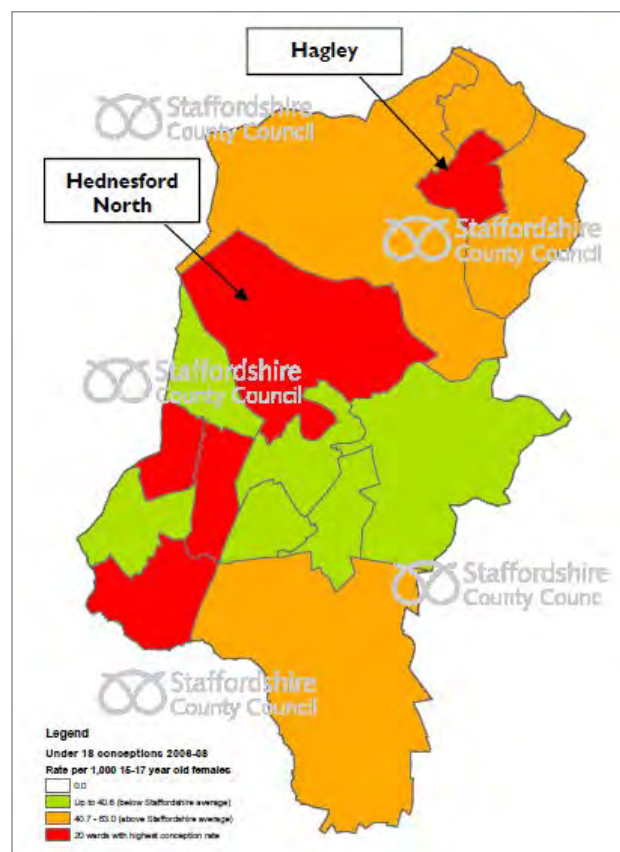
Source: Office for National Statistics and Department for Education

8.4   Education

Historically, children and young people in Cannock Chase have recorded lower attainment when compared to the county and national figures. However attainment is improving. In 2010, 70.7% of children in Cannock Chase at Key Stage 2 achieved Level 4 English and Maths. This represents an increase of 1.8 percentage points on the previous year, although this was lower than the county figure of 74.0%.

Attainment at Key Stage 4 has also witnessed an improvement. In 2010, 47.0% of children in Cannock Chase at Key Stage 4 achieved at least five GCSE's grade A*-C including English and Maths, an increase of 4.3 percentage points on 2009, although this was lower than the county figure of 53.9%.

The Connexions School Leavers Survey tracks the activities of young people during November, who left school in June. In Cannock Chase 5.1% of young people did not continue with full time structured learning in 2010, the same proportion as in 2009 and a similar proportion to the county figure (5.0%).

Progression into higher education is a significant issue in Staffordshire and something which must be improved if a greater proportion of the population are to achieve higher level skills. The proportion of young people participating in higher education 2 years after leaving school has decreased in Cannock Chase, from 21.4% amongst 2007 school leavers, to 17.9% for 2008 school leavers. This decrease mirrors the trend of all Districts in Staffordshire; however Cannock Chase has registered the lowest rate in the county for the past two years.

Table 5 provides an insight to poor educational attainment in Norton Canes (highlighted by the Norton Canes High School Head Teacher (see Section 7.15)), compared to Cannock Chase and England.

Table 5: Norton Canes Educational Attainment

Subject	Norton Canes %	Cannock %	England %
Key Stage 1 Assessments – Pupils achieving Level 2 or above (2009 – 2010)	76	85	81
Pupils Achieving 5 or more A* - C grade passes, including English and Maths (2009 – 2010)	43	47	55

Source: Office for National Statistics

8.5   Labour Supply

In Cannock Chase in November 2010, 16% of the working age population was claiming out of work benefits. This represents a decrease from 17% in 2009 but is higher than the county (12.5%) and national rates (14.5%). The rate of Employment Support Allowance / Incapacity Benefit claimants is 7.2%, which is higher than the County, Regional and National rates. In June 2011, the Jobseeker's Allowance claimant rate was 3.8%, compared to the county rate of 2.7% and national of 3.6%. The rate peaked in April 2009 at 5.5% and has been falling slowly since, with some fluctuations.

Figure 6:   Out of Work Benefit Claimants

Super Output Areas (LSOAs) highlighted in Orange or Red are above the Staffordshire average. Figure 6 profiles the number of claimants of out of work benefits in Cannock Chase.

Youth unemployment has historically been an issue in Staffordshire, and the recent economic recession has exacerbated the problem. In Cannock Chase, in June 2011, 7% of 16-24 year olds were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, the highest of all Staffordshire districts, and the same as the West Midlands rate. However, this represents a decrease from 8.8% in June 2009.
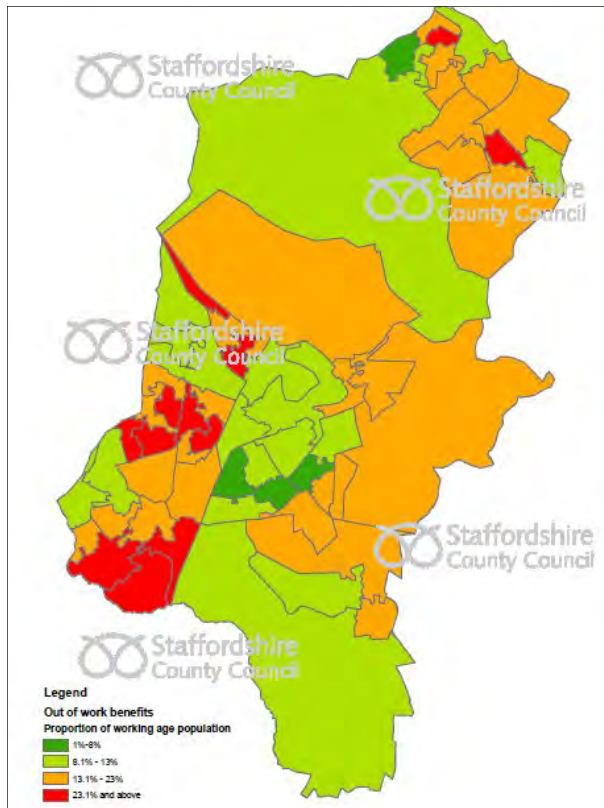
Source: Department for Work & Pensions, NOMIS

9.0   Research Findings

9.1   Introduction

It is our objective to independently establish if delivery of the Project has been in accordance with agreements with the key funder, The Big Lottery. We have utilised a number of research tools:

o   data and information supplied by the commissioner and key partners

o   questionnaire analysis

o   workshops

o   case studies

o   stakeholder meetings

o   observational visits / attendance at key meetings / training events

9.2   Desk Research

Based on data and information provided by the commissioner to the Big Lottery and ourselves, Tables 6 to 9 summarise our findings regarding the Project's delivery of outcomes / milestones.

Table 6 Outcomes & Achievements

Outcomes 1: Communities actively engaged in the development, delivery and management of library services.	
Milestones	**Findings**
Formalise Joint Steering Group with a wide membership to include the Head of CLD (Assistant Director), 8 members of the NCCP, 1 Library Service representative, 1 young person's user representative, and 1 Community Learning and Learning Partnership representative.	Achieved within timescale
Plan and develop a programme of community consultation and engagement events. Distribute / contact 6,500. Response via events, website etc. 2,000	Achieved within timescale
Deliver a series of community engagement events with specific activities targeted at lower user groups (i.e. focus groups, outreach work etc.), which will inform community service needs, barriers to access and design parameters etc.	Achieved within timescale
Steering Group agrees and signs off Joint Management Protocol. SCC Cabinet approval granted	Interim agreement in place – still to agree formal Partnership Agreement
Joint management staff in place, recruit and induct community advocates.	Achieved within timescale
Planning with partners re programme of learning opportunities, additional services (FLI, Early Years, Arts & Museums, Health, CVS etc.)	Achieved within timescale

Table 7 Outcomes & Achievements

Outcome 2: By September 2010, 22 Community Learning Champions will have improved their skill levels to support the delivery of programmes in two subject areas.	
Milestones	**Findings**
Identify key learning and additional service providers to engage with the community consultation and the development of the project plans to ensure the programmes are tailored to community needs.	Achieved within timescale
Recruit 22 Community Learning Champions to support the delivery of learning programmes	Achieved within timescale – numbers of 'Champions' vary
Identify and deliver induction and training programme, which will enable Steering Group members to have relevant skills and a positive and supportive attitude when working with partners and the community. Target: 12 people.	Achieved within timescale
Identity and deliver induction and training programmes, which will enable staff, Community Champions, volunteers and partners in service delivery to have relevant skills for effective joint planning and working. Target: 30 people.	Achieved within timescale
Produce an agreed delivery plan of learning opportunities, additional services and volunteering opportunities for Year 1. Programme endorsed and supported by the Steering Group.	Achieved within timescale
Deliver new programme of learning opportunities and additional services, and promote using a variety of outreach events and publicity to inform the community. Target: 3,000 library members and 1,000 additional users of additional services	Achieved within timescale

Table 8 Outcomes & Achievements

Outcome 3: By September 2010, 950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new services and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels.	
Milestones	Findings
Detailed research of who and where disadvantaged and low user groups are to inform the community engagement and consultation plans.	Achieved within timescale
Work with architects and designers to ensure that internal environment meets the aspirations of the community consultation and the needs of the service providers.	Achieved within timescale
Recruit volunteers and Advocates to target low user groups, which include 16 – 19 year olds, particularly males who currently under use the library.	Achieved within timescale – work required to include 16 to 19 yr olds
Engage volunteers and Advocates to promote the new Centre to low user and disadvantaged groups through a series of outreach events and publicity. Target: 1,000.	Achieved within timescale
Steering Group to receive quarterly monitoring reports; a Q2 conduct interim evaluation and take action as appropriate to ensure Y1 targets on track. At end of Y1, full evaluation report and delivery plan for Y2 approved.	Achieved within timescale

Table 9 Outcomes & Achievements

Outcome 4: By September 2010, through positive engagement and advocacy, 4,000 people within Norton Canes will be aware of the positive and environmental benefits of constructing a building which meets the Building Regulations Part 2.	
Milestones	Findings
Research and identify best practice regarding library and community sustainable builds.	Achieved within timescale
Incorporate best practice research, outcomes of community consultation, stakeholder requirements and NCCP aspirations within the Capital Delivery Plan.	Achieved within timescale
Achieve planning application	Achieved within timescale
Submission of community engagement, business and capital plans	Achieved within timescale
Contract documentation drawn up, tenders evaluated, contract mobilised. Start on site. Completion of build / handover. Project launch.	Achieved within timescale. Official launch 20 October 2009
Project Steering Group will measure the environmental impact of the building against the following measures: 10% reduction in running costs, and 80% increase in natural ventilation.	Surveys to be carried out by County Council

Comments

The commissioner has submitted regular end of year / update reports to the funder, which have included additional information regarding specific initiatives and achievements. As far as we are aware, all reports have received favourable consideration from the funder. From our findings, we have no reason to doubt the validity of the information and data supplied.

In relation to Outcomes 3 and 4 – '950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new services and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels; 4,000 people within Norton Canes will be aware of the positive and environmental benefits of constructing a building which meets the Building Regulations Part 2, it has proved impractical to obtain precise information in relation to so many individuals. As will be outlined at Section 4.3, in an effort to assess as accurate responses as feasible, we have taken opportunity to survey what we feel is a representative sample of local people / library users.

Outcome 3

In relation to the Outcome 3 target that '950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new services and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels'; we note that 65% of questionnaire respondents reported that they have been able to access the support and training they require (see Section 9.14 / Graph 5). It could therefore be reasoned that 1,775 members of Norton Canes Library, which represents 65% of Library membership (see Table 4 / Section 9.3) will report the positive impacts outlined at Outcome 3.

Outcome 4

Based on the assumption that the population of Norton Canes is 6,394 (2001 Census), and analysis of the 152 questionnaires submitted by the Norton Canes respondents, which highlighted that 81% of Norton Canes respondents scored 3 or above in relation to awareness of what is going on at the library (see Section 9.14 / Graph 5), it could be reasoned that 5,956 Norton Canes residents may be aware of the benefits of the Project.

9.3   Useage Trends

As outlined at Section 4.2 it has been our objective to research outcomes achieved by Norton Canes Library in comparison with similar libraries that have not been in receipt of the additional Big Lottery funding to re-build and work in partnership with other agencies, and to achieve outcomes highlighted at Section 6.5.

Tables 10 to 12 highlight changes in useage trends of Norton Canes Library, Audley Library and Silverdale Library during 2010 / 11 compared with 2007 / 08.

Table 10 Norton Canes Library Useage 2010 / 11 compared with 2007 / 08

Subject	2007 / 08	2010 / 11	% Change
Active Borrowers	1,135	1,283	+ 13%
Annual Issues	37,149	39,929	+ 7.5%
Annual Visits	24,911	44,334	+ 78%
New Members	304	393	+ 29.3%
Total Membership	2,598	2,730	+ 5.1%

Table 11 Audley Library Useage 2010 / 11 compared with 2007 / 08

Subject	2007 / 08	2010 / 11	% Change
Active Borrowers	1,019	923	- 9.4%
Annual Issues	32,652	32,807	+ 0.5%
Annual Visits	19,308	18,019	- 6.7%
New Members	245	218	- 11%
Total Membership	2,305	2,128	-7.7%

Table 12 Silverdale Library Useage 2010 / 11 compared with 2007 / 08

Subject	2007 / 08	2010 / 11	% Change
Active Borrowers	1,013	861	- 15%
Annual Issues	27,405	23,157	- 15.5%
Annual Visits	29,584	28,087	- 5.1%
New Members	322	248	- 23%
Total Membership	2,337	2,414	+ 3.3%

Comments

Based on the above statistics, it is apparent that since 2007 / 08:

o Norton Canes Library has:

   o considerably increased useage of library facilities

   o out performed similar libraries

o other library's performance has generally fallen during the same time period

9.4   Active Borrowers

Tables 13 to 15 highlight changes in active borrower trends of Norton Canes Library, Audley Library and Silverdale Library during 2011 compared with 2004.

Table 13 Norton Canes Active Borrowers 2011 compared with 2004

Age Group	2004	2011	% Change
Under 5	81	154	+ 9.1%
5 to 15	361	456	+ 26.3%
16 to 19	51	41	- 19.6%
20 – 29	77	86	+ 11.7%
30 to 34	225	197	- 12.4%
45 to 59	222	233	+5%
60 to 74	237	250	+5.5%
Over 75	72	102	+41.7%
Totals	1,326	1,519	+ 14.6%

Table 14 Audley Active Borrowers 2011 compared with 2004

Age Group	2004	2011	% Change
Under 5	64	89	+ 39.1%
5 to 15	328	294	- 10.4%
16 to 19	26	23	- 11.5%
20 – 29	52	50	- 3.8%
30 to 34	185	134	- 27.6%
45 to 59	198	157	- 20.7%
60 to 74	204	215	+ 5.4%
Over 75	105	104	- 1%
Totals	1,162	1,066	- 8.3%

Table 15 Silverdale Active Borrowers 2011 compared with 2004

Age Group	2004	2011	% Change
Under 5	52	67	+ 28.8%
5 to 15	282	243	- 13.8%
16 to 19	37	24	- 35.1%
20 – 29	82	65	- 20.7%
30 to 34	137	112	- 18.2%
45 to 59	161	137	- 14.9%
60 to 74	187	174	- 7%
Over 75	68	115	+ 69.1%
Totals	1,006	937	- 6.9%

Comments

Totals are slight undercounts of the real total, as not all records have the age detail in, and as a result, are not all included in the figures.

Based on the above statistics, it is apparent that since 2004:

o   whilst the other libraries have reduced active borrowers, Norton Canes Library has noticeably increased such numbers

o   all libraries have shown increases in under 5 borrowers

o   all libraries have shown significant decreases of borrowers between the ages of 16 and 19 years

o   in general, Norton Canes Library has shown increases in borrowers, whilst the other libraries have generally shown decreases

9.5   Gender of Library Members

Table 16 highlights total 2012 membership by gender of Norton Canes, Audley and Silverdale libraries.

Table 16 Gender of 2012 Membership of Norton Canes, Audley and Silverdale Libraries

Gender	Norton Canes		Audley		Silverdale	
	Total	% Members	Total	% Members	Total	% Members
Male	1,117	41.4	819	40.5	973	40.5
Female	1,581	58.6	1,202	59.9	1,257	56.4
Not Stated	17		29		102	
Totals	2,715		2,050		2,332	

9.6   Gender Increases (Norton Canes)

Table 17 highlights increases of membership by gender of Norton Canes Library during 2012, compared with 2008 (data relative to Audley and Silverdale Libraries not available).

Table 17 Increases in Membership by Gender, Norton Canes Library During 2012 Compared with 2008

Gender	2008		2012	
	Total	% Members	Total	% Members
Male	1,074	42.3	1,117	41.4
Female	1,468	57.7	1,581	58.6

9.7   Borrowing by Gender

In relation to borrowing by gender at Norton Canes Library since 2008, available data indicates the following changes:

o   adult male has increased by 13.5%

o   adult female has increased by 11.25%

o   males aged 16 to 18 years has increased by 26.3%

o   females aged 16 to 18 years has increased by 6.9%

o   males aged 8 to 11 years has decreased by 29.1%

o   females aged 8 to 11 years has increased by 7.8%

Available data indicates that borrowing by gender / age is broadly similar at Audley and Silverdale libraries

Comments

o   it is apparent that male / female ratios of membership is broadly similar at all three libraries

o   whilst male membership numbers at Norton Canes Library has increased since 2008, the ratio of male / female membership has not significantly changed

o   borrowing by males 16 to 18 years and adult males has significantly increased

o   borrowing by young males (8 to 11 years) has noticeably decreased

9.8   Activities

Table 18 highlights training courses delivered within the Library / Community Hub by the Norton Canes Community Partnership.

Table 18 Details of Training Course Delivered by the Partnership

Delivery Date	Title / Description	Accredited Yes / No	Level	Duration	Numbers Attending	Males	Females	Age Range
Feb 2009	Flower Arranging	No	N/A	5 weeks	11	10	1	20+
April 2009	Model Making	No	N/A	5 Weeks	5	4	1	11+
May 2009	Digital Camera	No	N/A	10 Weeks	8	3	5	30+
May 2009	Computer Course	No	N/A	10 Weeks	15	5	10	50+
June 2010	Sign Language	Yes	1	32 Weeks	13	1	12	8+
July 2010	First Aid	Yes	BFA	12 Hours	14	1	13	17 to 61
2010	Digital Camera	No	N/A	5 Weeks	12	3	9	49 to 79
August 2010	Card Making	No	N/A	Ongoing	4	-	4	50+
Sept 2010	Card Class	No	N/A	Ongoing	5	-	5	40+
Sept 2010	Card Making Demo	No	N/A	1 Week	15	-	15	40+
Oct 2010	Card Class	No	N/A	Ongoing	19	-	19	40+
Oct2010	Card Class	No	N/A	Ongoing	13	-	13	40+

Oct 2010	Spanish	No	N/A	10 Weeks	13	2	11	27 to 77
Nov 2010	Flower Arranging	No	N/A	5 Weeks	8	-	8	30+
Nov 2010	Flower Arranging	No	N/A	5 Weeks	4	-	4	30+
Dec 2010	Flower Arranging	No	N/A	5 Weeks	6	-	6	3+
Dec 2010	Flower Arranging	No	N/A	5 Weeks	10	-	10	30+
Oct 2011	Paediatric First Aid	Yes	BFA	12 Hours	10	-	10	27 to 58
Oct 2011	Sign Language	Yes	1	32 Weeks	11	2	9	8+
Oct 2011	Sign Language	Yes	2	36 Weeks	11	10	1	8+
Oct 2011	Family History	No	NA	Ongoing	3	1	2	50+
Oct 2011	Family History	No	N/A	Ongoing	8	3	5	50+
Oct 2011	Flower Course	No	N/A	5 Weeks	8	-	8	50+
Oct 2011	Jewellery Making	No	N/A	5 Weeks	12	-	12	30+
Nov 2011	Family History	No	N/A	Ongoing	4	2	2	30+

The following are examples of other community base activities delivered within Library / Community Hub:

- o Kimbles – music and movement
- o Krafty Creations – creative arts
- o Childs Play – aimed at families / children would not normally access such facilities
- o K'Nex – young peoples' construction workshops
- o Stop Motion – 8 week weekly work shop for local people
- o Robot Wars – workshops aimed at young people
- o Cartoon workshops
- o Krafty Creations
- o Flip & Dippy Circus workshop
- o Baby Bounce & Rhyme

- o Flower arranging
- o Card making
- o Reading groups
- o Summer Reading Challenge launch
- o Early Years Cluster training
- o Pop workshop
- o Culture Cubes workshop
- o Fit, Fun & Food event
- o Norton Canes Primary School Story Time sessions
- o World Book Day
- o Healthy Eating Awareness
- o Smoking Cessation Information
- o Basic I.T Training
- o Workshops

- o Children's Play
- o Folk workshops
- o Ancestry workshops
- o Pirate Days
- o IT Taster sessions / Computer courses
- o Job Clubs
- o Coffee mornings / Afternoon teas
- o Open days / Fun days
- o Fun Days / Sherlock Holmes Mystery evening

- o Community Project
- o Tai Chi
- o Face Painting
- o Complimentary Therapy
- o Community information Sessions – e.g. fund raising / how to run a successful community project
- o Family Learning
- o Low Carbon workshop
- o Salsa & Bollywood workshops

The following are examples of community based groups that meet at the Community Hub:

- o Norton Canes Community Partnership – based within the premises
- o Historical Society – providing a venue / meeting place for a local group
- o Norton Canes Family History Group
- o Knit & Natter, Fun & Chatter – community group, with aims that include encouraging older people to mix and meet other people
- o Craft Group
- o Community Advocates

We have noted examples of specific initiatives that are being, and have been developed from the Library. These include:

- o the issue of bus passes for the elderly, disabled and young people
- o the Library being an Advanced Information Hub, linked to 'Staffordshire Cares', with signposting for adapted housing and facilities for the disabled (see Section 9.18)
- o in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, the delivery of a new initiative, Start 2, aimed at job seekers and new business start ups (see Section 9.18)

The following are examples of service providers that privately meet and support members of the local community within the [confidential] interview room situated with the building:

o   Staffordshire Police

o   Youth Offending Team

o   Cannock District Council Housing Services

o   Staffordshire Young Peoples' Services

o   Norton Canes Community Partnership

o   Citizens Advice

o   Sure Start

o   Norton Canes Work Club

9.9   Field Research

As highlighted at Section 4.3 we have utilised a range of research tools:

o   questionnaires

o   one to one meetings

o   case studies

o   workshops

o   observations

9.10   Questionnaire Methodology

As outlined at Section 4.2 we have utilised questionnaires to carry out comparisons of peoples' views and opinions of Norton Canes Library:

o   users of Norton Canes Library in comparison with Rising Brook (Stafford) Library (selected due to it being of similar size to Norton Canes Library and serving a similar number of local residents)

o   students of Norton Canes High School who have benefited from a literacy initiative in comparison with students who have not benefited from the initiative

9.11   Questionnaire Findings (Service Users)

Norton Canes Library service users:

o   152 questionnaires were received and analysed

o   39% male

o   60% female

- o   1% not stated
- o   2% disabled users

Comparison Library (Rising Brook) service users:
- o   53 questionnaires were received and analysed
- o   32% male
- o   68% female

Graph 1 highlights the age range of responders from Norton Canes Library and the comparison library.

Graph 1 Age Range of Responders (Both Libraries)
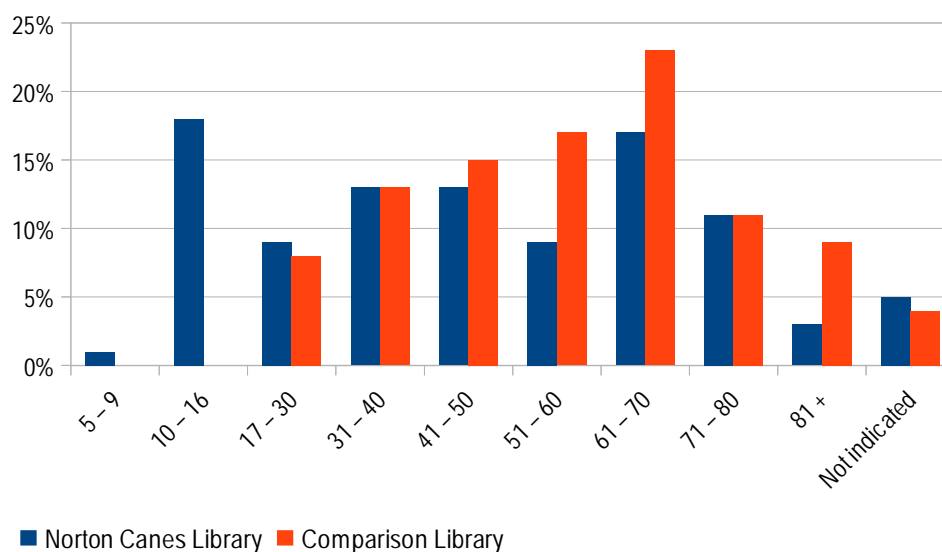
Graph 2 highlights the employment status of all respondents.

Comments

- o   considerably more Norton Canes respondents (20%) are employed full time than responders from the comparison library (6%)
- o   considerably more Norton Canes respondents (18%) are students than responders from the comparison library (2%)
- o   there were no respondents from the comparison library who were unemployed or self-employed

Graph 2 Respondents Employment Status
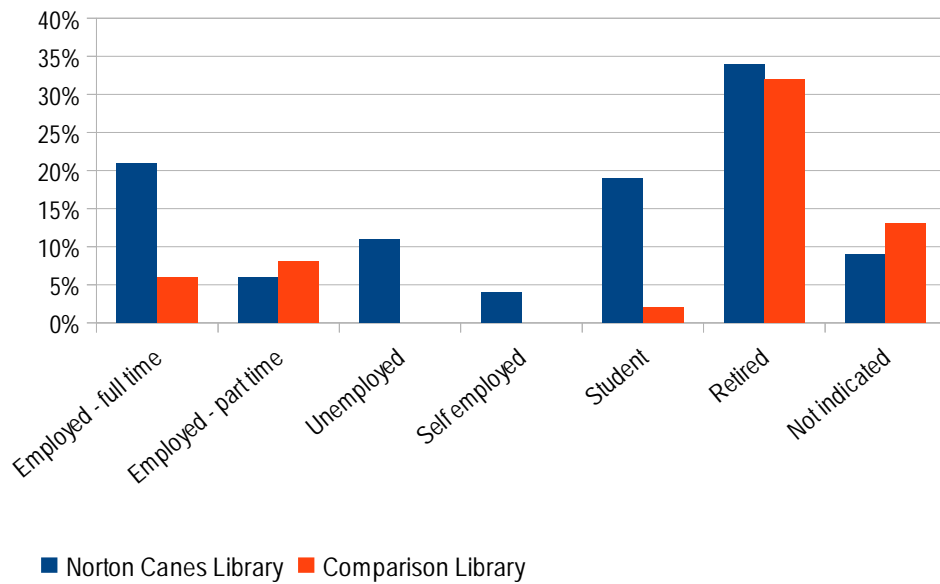
Graph 3 highlights all respondents' key reasons for visiting the libraries.

Graph 3 Key Reasons for Visiting the Library
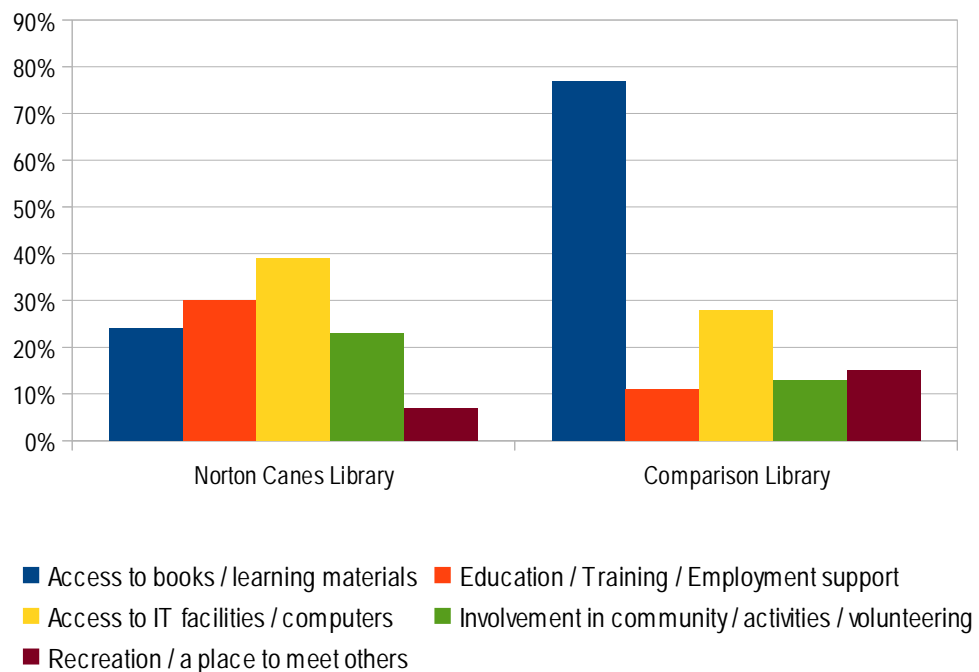
Comments

o   it is apparent that Norton Canes Library is used for a wider variety of activities than the comparison library

o   considerably more respondents (30%) use the Norton Canes Library for education / employment support than the comparison library (11%)

o   more respondents (39%) use the Norton Canes Library for access to IT facilities / computers the comparison library (28%)

o   more respondents (23%) use the Norton Canes Library for involvement in community / activities / volunteering than the comparison library (13%)

o   it is noted that less respondents (7%) use the Norton Canes Library as a place of recreation / a place to meet others than the comparison library (15%)

Norton Canes Library respondents also included the following as reasons why they use the library:

o   card class

o   ancestry

o   being with my children

o   meetings / partnership networking

o   historical / family history

o   Library Advocate

o   encourage children to enjoy reading

o   sign language course

o   K-nex Club

o   Housing benefit appointments (Cannock Chase Council)

The following are responses received from respondents from the comparison library:

o   writing group (x3)

o   CD / DVD collection point

Graph 4 highlights how often all respondents access the libraries.

Graph 4 Library Useage

■ Comparison Library ■ Norton Canes Library
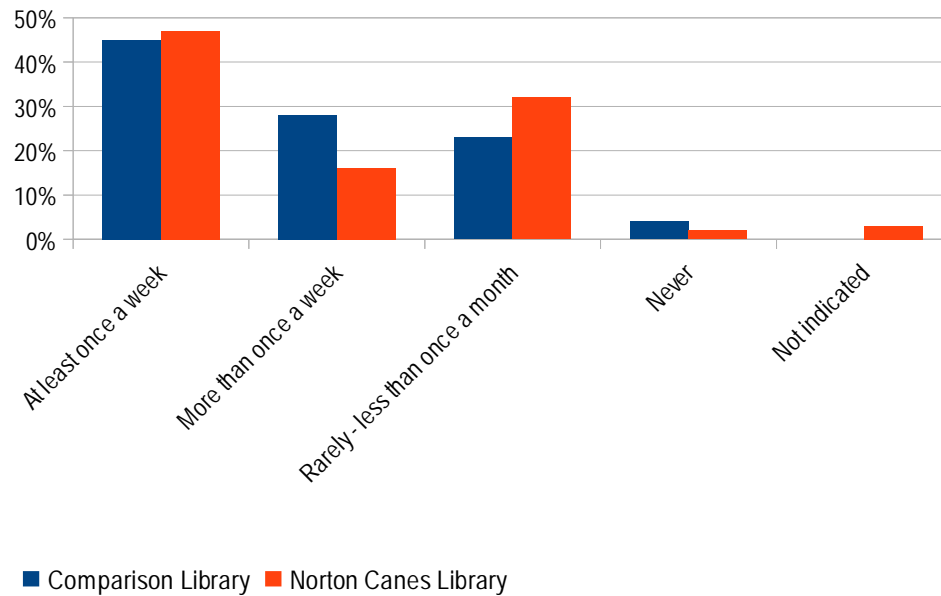
Comment

o   it is apparent that responders' library useage is similar for both libraries

Graph 5 highlights respondents' responses to questions that related to their views on both libraries.

Graph 5 Respondents' Views (Norton Canes Library / Comparison Library)
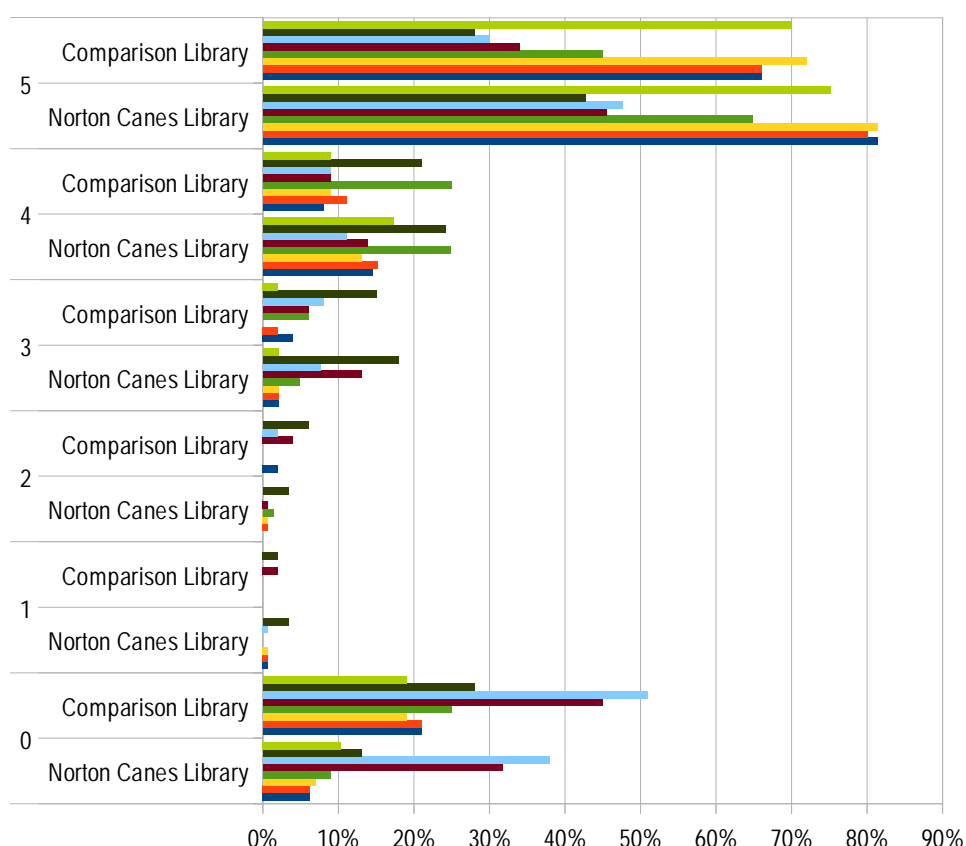
Ratings: 0 – No Views; 1 low; 5 high

- ■ The building is in an ideal location at the Village
- ■ It is a pleasant place to visit and I enjoy being there
- ■ Staff are helpful and accessible
- ■ I am able to access the books and learning materials I require
- ■ I am able to access the support and / or training I require
- ■ IT facilities / computers meet my needs
- ■ I am aware of what is going on at the Library and Community Hub
- ■ I would recommend the Library / Community Hub to others

Comments

o   both libraries have received positive ratings in most areas

o   neither library receive particularly low ratings in any areas

o   the majority of Norton Canes respondents rate the Norton Canes Library noticeably higher in terms of location, being a pleasant place to visit, staff being helpful, access to books / learning materials and awareness what is going on at the library

o   81% of Norton Canes respondents scored 3 or above in relation to awareness of what is going on at the library

9.12   Questionnaire Findings (Norton Canes High School Students)

As outlined at Section 4.2 we have taken the opportunity to research the views of a total of 20 students from Norton Canes High School aged 11 and 12 years:

o   10 Norton students who have attended the literacy initiative (Group 1)

o   10 students who did not attend the initiative (Group 2)

In relation to use of the Library at the time of completing the questionnaire:

o   the majority of students only visit the Library 'rarely' – 13 (Group 1 – 7 / Group 2 – 6)

o   3 students from Group 1 visit the Library at least once a week

o   2 students from Group 2 visit the Library at least once a week

o   No students from Group 1 never visit the Library

o   1 student from Group 2 never visits the Library

Graph 6 highlights the reasons why the students visit the Library at the time of completing the questionnaire.

Graph 6 Why Students Visit the Library

- Access to books / learning materials
- Education / Training / Employment Support
- Access to IT facilities / computers
- Involvement in community / activities / volunteering
- Recreation / a place to meet others
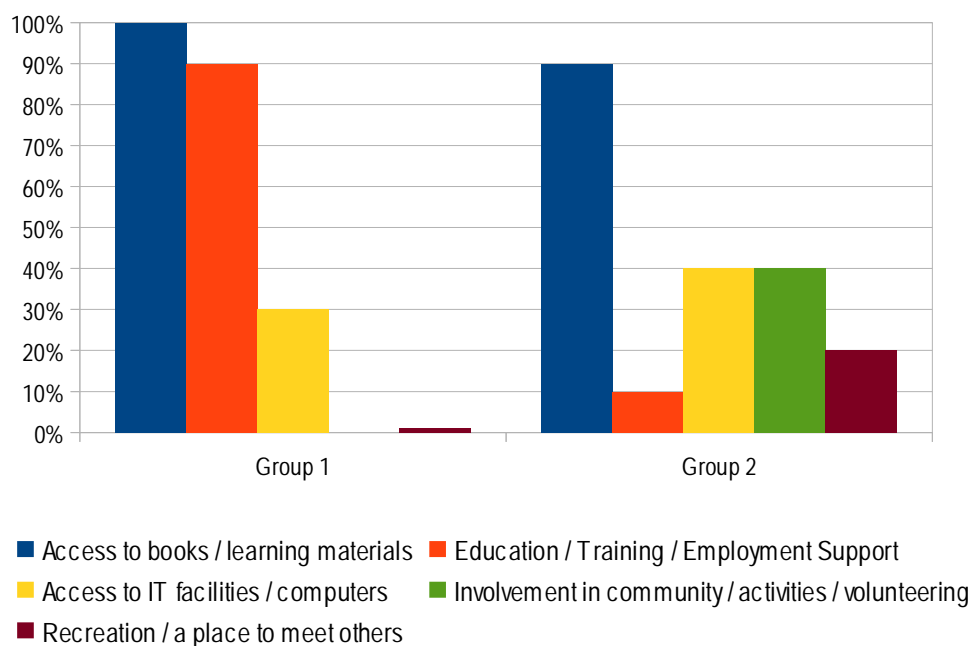
In relation to general questions about the Library, Group 1 scored higher than Group 2 in relation to:

o   the Library being a pleasant place to visit / and I enjoy being there

o   staff being helpful and accessible

o   accessibility of books and other learning materials

o   accessibility to support and training

o   IT / computers meeting their needs

o   recommending the Library to others

Both groups scored about the same in relation to:

o   the Library being in an ideal location in the Village

o   awareness of what is going on at the Library and Community Hub

Comments

Whilst the numbers surveyed are relatively small, it seems that students from Group 1 have benefited from their contact from the Library in terms of:

o   ongoing use of the Library

o   why the Library appeals to them (e.g. access to education, training and general support)

Section 9.23 (Good Practice) outlines further details about the literacy initiative and benefits to individual students.

9.13   Workshops

As outlined at Section 4.3, we have carried out 2 workshops involving:

o   7 partner agency members / stakeholders representing, Chase CVS, Cannock Chase District Council, Norton Canes Primary School, Mid Staffs MIND and Norton Canes Library

o   7 Library Advocates

9.14   Partner Agency Workshop

Graph 7 summarises responses to the question, 'What have been the key successes the 'partnership' has achieved?'

Graph 7 Key Successes the 'Partnership' Has Achieved
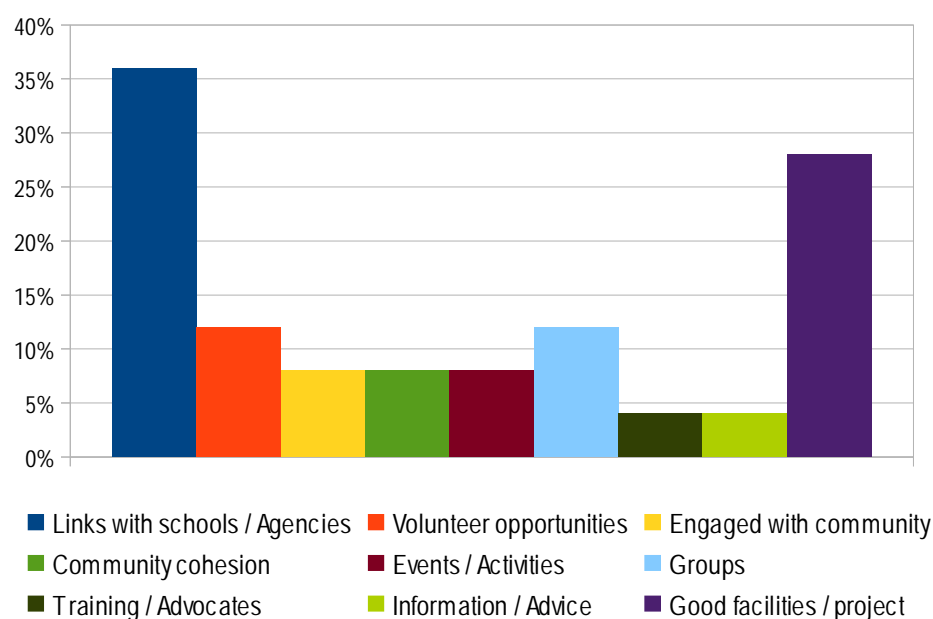
Graph 8 summarises responses to the question, 'Why has the 'partnership been so successful in achieving such successes?'

Graph 8 Reasons Why the 'Partnership' Been so Successful in Achieving Successes
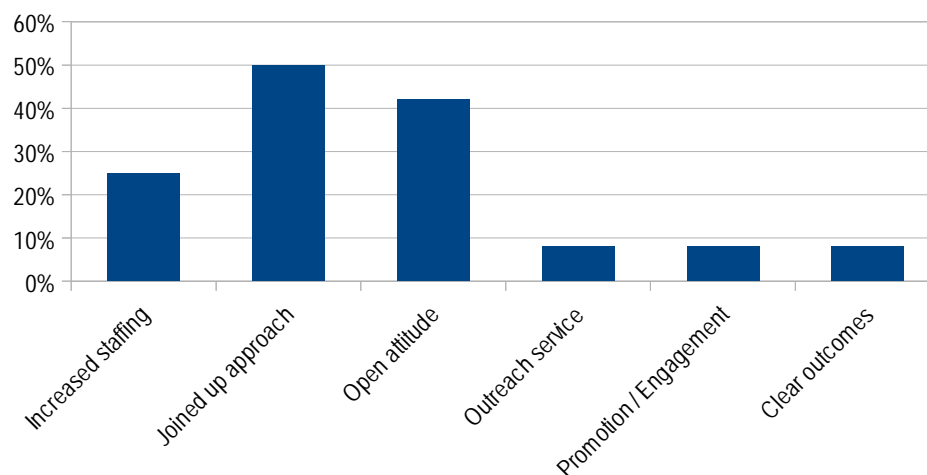
Graph 9 summarises responses to the question, 'What have been the barriers / challenges?'

Graph 9 Barriers / Challenges
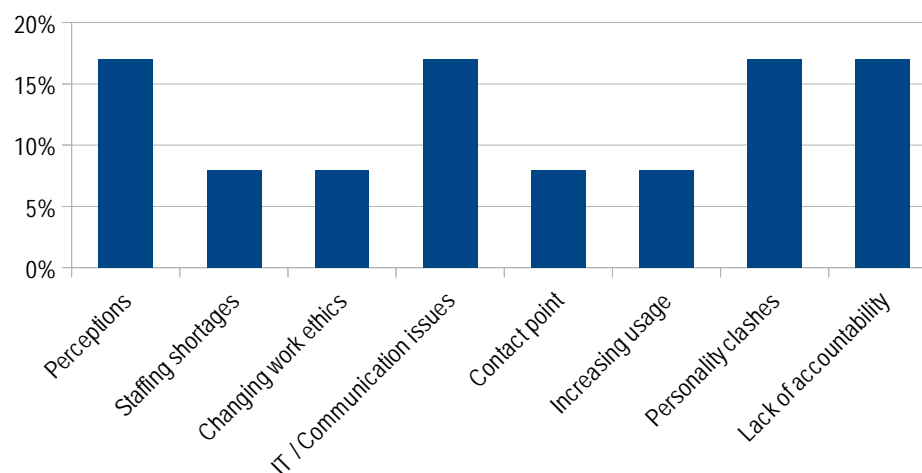
Appendix A lists responses to further questions:

o   What is good about the structure / exterior of the building?

o   What could be better?

o   How could they be overcome?

o   What are the future opportunities?

o   What are the potential challenges?

o   What needs to be done to meet opportunities and challenges?

o   'Wish List'

Summary of responses

o   public consultation and multi-agency partnership working has been key to the success of the Project

o   the building is situated in the right place in the Village

o   the building is modern and of extremely good design. As well as being functional and fit for purpose, it assists in delivering a welcoming and friendly environment to staff and visitors

o   it appears that access to parking can be a problem

o   interior and exterior lighting could be improved – to inform people on the outside that the Library is open and to improve external access / safety

o   future opportunities include more events, which could be linked to training / employability issues, and longer opening hours

o   future challenges include on-going running costs and the uncertainty of the long-term future of library services

o   the way forward involves expansion of services, involvement of the local community, use of volunteers, and continued partnership working

9.15   Library Advocates' Workshop

Graph 10 summaries responses to the question, 'What has the initiative done for you?'

Graph 10 What has the initiative done for you?

Appendix B lists responses to further questions:

o   What has it achieved for the Library / Community Hub?

o   What has it achieved for Norton Canes?

o   Why has the initiative been so successful?

o   What could be done better?

o   What are future opportunities?

o   What are potential challenges?

o   What needs to be done to meet opportunities and challenges?
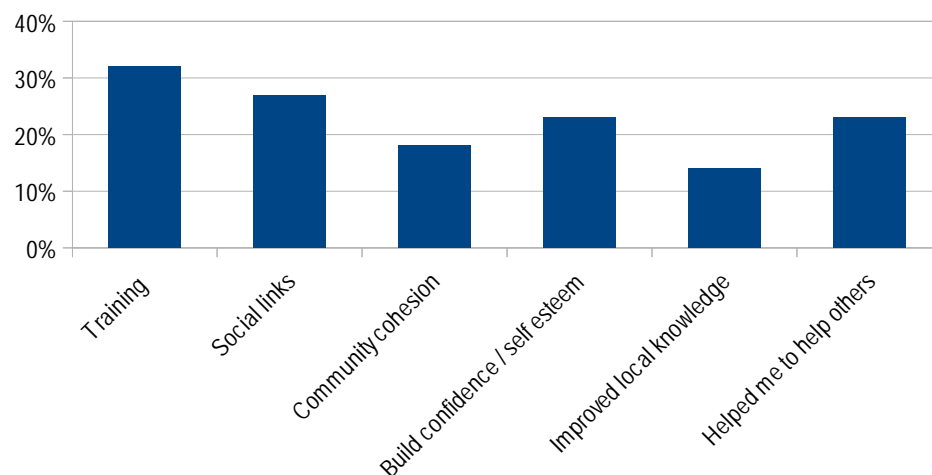
o   'Wish list'

Summary of responses

o   the Project has assisted in attracting new members to the Library

o   it has attracted and trained 'knowledgeable volunteers'

o   it has provided the Village a centre for information, contact and learning opportunities

o   it has brought people together and enhanced community involvement

o   people have been supported and treated with respect and friendliness

o   there is a recognition that additional funding and time will be required to continue the good work of the Project

o   there is acknowledgment that there remains a need to attract adult males and young people (16 to 19 years)

o   there is feeling of empowerment amongst the Advocates, achieved through training and confidence building

o   challenges include maintaining the momentum of the Project, the commitment of volunteers and the interest of younger people (16 to 19 year olds)

o   the way forward should include effective marketing / publicity and 'more of the same' in terms of what the Project / Library is now delivering

o   the 'Wish List' includes more funding, activities and facilities for young people

9.16   Case Studies

As outlined at Section 4.3 we have carried out 3 case study interviews with:

o   Library Advocate

o   committee member

o   young person

The following are summaries of the interviews (names have been changed).

Case Study 1 Pat

Pat is a long-term Norton Canes resident. She is married with 3 children. She has always been a visitor to the Library and a long-term community volunteer, with a clear passion to support the well-being of her local community. For example, before she became involved in the Library Project she was involved in the Konkas Youth Club and assisted in supporting the local Community Centre.

She became a Library Advocate to support her daughter, 'One of my friends had been recruited, and I was interested, but it was when I heard my daughter has become an Advocate that I decided to become one too. I thought my being involved would help her with her future career prospects'.

Pat was impressed with the training and support from the start, 'It was clear that we were not going to be left on our own. From the start we were supported and guided by members of the Library at meetings, and offered really useful training to build our skills, knowledge base and most importantly confidence levels. Confidence is key to doing something with your life and making a difference, and like most people I was aware that I could do with a boost.'

I decided to attend the PTLLS course (Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector), which would assist me in carrying out my role as an Advocate. Another reason was to support my daughter who had also decided to attend the course. It was all new to me, and I won't pretend that it wasn't a struggle. Before this a typical course for me would have been card making or something like that.. It stretched me and I really found it hard. It was therefore all the more rewarded to have completed it and it has made me feel really good about myself!

Pat is clear about the benefits to her and her family, 'It has made me a more confident and rounded person. I now have skills in things like holding meetings and helping others to achieve their aims. I feel I have become someone with a real purpose in my life. My husband has also become an Advocate and other members of my immediate family have become volunteers in our community.

 I have also improved myself in terms of what I read. As a result of being so close to the Library and joining a reading group I have found books that are really stimulating and interesting. I have found a 'new me' and I can best describe it as sheer enjoyment'.

Pat is also clear about how the Project has supported the Library and Village, and what now needs to be done, 'The Project has without doubt brought new people into the Library and opened up new opportunities. Courses and events have been put on, and targeted for example at young people.

Along with the other Advocates we assist the Library staff with events and meetings. As well as promoting the Library within our community, we are enabling more people to access the Library for longer periods. We are helping to make the Library the hub of the Village. We are seeing families come to the Library, particularly young mums and their babies and young children. We are also supporting vulnerable older people to come out of their homes and socialise with others.

There is however a need to encourage more teenagers and older men to come to the Library. It is clear that these should be the new targets in the future. We are also concerned about what happens when the Lottery funding runs out. Hopefully the Advocate scheme can keep running, because we still have lots to do'.

Case Study 2 Amanda

Amanda is 18 years of age and is Pat's daughter. She has been a pupil of Norton Canes High School and has recently left Sixth Form College. She has no children and is actively looking for employment areas associated with teaching and child care.

Whilst at high school she was a member of the Youth Parliament and readily accepted an invitation from the Library to become an Advocate. She says, 'It like a good idea and I was always interested in reading and the Library. Whilst not a key aim, it was always going to be a good opportunity to build on my skills and experience and help to prepare me for employment. I therefore enjoyed opportunities to attend courses and training such as PTLLS, which I found challenging and good. I learnt how to communicate with people of all ages, and learned key skills such as food hygiene and how to deliver community activities such as face painting. I was very keen to support my local community. I enjoyed the opportunity to be treated as an adult and for older people to respect what I had to say. Overall the experience helped to build my confidence, and has without doubt helped to make me better prepared to enter the job market. I am a more rounded person, and possess key skills in areas such as presentation skills, working with people of all ages, and supporting people to improve themselves'.

Amanda however feels that things could have been better, 'The only problem was, meetings were held during the day time when I needed to be at school. As a result I could not attend the vast majority of meetings, and whilst I was provided with minutes of the meetings, it was not the same. I felt excluded, and this was made worse when I saw a photo in the local paper of the adults burying a Time Capsule without me being there. I really felt left out and disappointed. In fact, I felt so bad I wrote a letter to the organiser of the Project to express my views. It made me feel they really did not want to listen to the views of younger people.

Amanda remains a supporter of the Library and is keen to offer advice to the 'Adults', 'If they really do want to involve young people, they need to be adaptable and understand more how being excluded the way I was can be upsetting. They also need to make the Library more young people friendly. For example, it would be a good idea to provide information about jobs for young people, and perhaps leaflets and information about key issues such as sexual health.

I really enjoyed being an Advocate and am so grateful for the training and overall experience. I am sure more young people would enjoy being involved if they took more time to really listen to us'.

Case Study 3 Michelle

Michelle is 11 years of age and has lived in Norton Canes all of her life. She is a pupil of Norton Canes High School. She really enjoys school and jumped at the chance to become involved in a special initiative to improve her reading skills.

She says, 'I had trouble with spelling and this was making it hard to read properly and follow books that were being read out in class. I felt like I was being left behind. So when they asked me if I wanted to go along to the Library and become better at reading I said yes straight away'.

Michelle is clear about what she enjoyed about being part of the initiative, 'It was all lots of fun. The lady in charge made it interesting and I really enjoyed being at the [Norton Canes] Library and exploring. We were given challenges and working in teams to find new books and solutions. It was great fun! I learnt so much'.

She feels the experience has improved her reading skills, 'I am much better at reading now, and have no problem to ask for help whenever I need it. I am really confident when asked to read out-loud in class. I used to dread it before – in fact I volunteer now. I love reading and read lots of books now'. I enjoy going to the Library and find all of the staff really helpful.

Michelle's teacher is supportive of the opportunity she has been given, 'Michelle is a bright girl, but was falling behind with her spelling and reading. She and others have really benefited from this initiative between the Library and the High School. For example Michelle has moved up from level 3 reading ability to level 4 since she attended. She is much more confident and really enjoys reading and getting involved in debates. She is much more vocal and involved in what is going on around her.

We really smiled the other day, when we carried out a survey of students about their current reading habits. We asked them when they last read something they really enjoyed. Answers available included last week, last month, last year, or ages ago. Michelle thought for a while and said, Miss, there's no option for today!'

9.17   Stakeholder Meetings

We have met with a number of stakeholders to gain evidence of:

o   partnership working / community engagement

o   added value to organisations' aims and objectives

o   'value for money'

o   good practice

o   lessons learnt

o   achieved unexpected outcomes / wider impacts

Stakeholders consulted have included:

o   Norton Canes Library staff

o   Norton Canes Community Partnership (NCCP)

o   Norton Canes Community Centre

o   Norton Canes High School

o   Cannock Chase Children's Centre / District Commissioning

o   Cannock Chase District Council Housing Team

o   Emotional Well-Being Team (Primary Care Service)

o   Library Advocates

9.18   Partnership Working

There is evidence of partnership / community engagement.   For example:

o   from the inception of the Project, and through development and delivery stages it is clear that all key and prospective stakeholders, including members of the local community have been consulted and made to feel 'part of the Project'

o   the Project has been steered by a multi-agency Joint Management Group, which has included members (see Section 6.3), including the Norton Canes Partnership (NCCP). The Chair of the NCCP reports, 'All meetings have been fully inclusive and have ensured that all partners and local community members have been involved in progress and made aware of what is going on in relation to delivery of the Project'

o   we have however noted an apparent lack of coordinated 'partnership working' between the Project, the NCCP and the Norton Canes Community Centre (pictured).   It is noticeable that is has not been possible / feasible for a Service Level

Agreement to be signed between the County Council and the NCCP

o   we have noted examples of current and developing multi-agency initiatives, such as Staffordshire Cares (see link http://www.staffordshirecares.info/Home.aspx), and a new Start2 service (see link http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/librariesnew/launchofstart2.aspx), which is a new service delivered in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and Jobcentre Plus

o   we have also noted impressive partnership working with other groups / agencies, such as the Cannock Chase Children's Centre Team. As the Head of the Cannock Chase Children's Centre points out, 'We have developed useful and meaningful partnerships with the Project and have developed really effective two way dialogue. We have worked jointly with developing and delivering initiatives such as Childs Play, Baby Bounce and Rhyme and the delivery of a Toy Library, where parents and young children who may not normally have access to play and toys can access both at the Library'

9.19   Added Value to Organisations' Aims and Objectives

There is strong evidence of the Project adding value to the Libraries and other organisations aims and objectives. For example:

o   a local authority representative of Cannock Chase Borough Council points out that, 'Access to the meeting room has enabled local authority housing officers to meet local people 'in the community', which has ensured that those most in need of support are able to access it.   This is a key objective of the local authority'

- o Norton Canes High School is extremely pleased with how the Project is playing a key role in supporting pupils achieve their objectives in relation to literacy. As the Headteacher points out, 'Reading is an essential key to all pupils' success in school, and will continue to be one of our key objectives. There can be no doubt that the reading initiative is a good example how, by working in partnership, we can all add value to our key aims and objectives. We are looking to continue such a fruitful and worthwhile partnership'

- o a member of the Emotional Well-Being Team points out, 'Part of our brief is to engage with people who are really isolated within their own communities. Too many people never leave their own homes, and risk sinking into depression and associated mental illnesses. Having access to the clubs and groups being held at the Library has provided us with an amazing local resource. We have had the opportunity to introduce lonely people to groups such as Knit and Natter, and they have been extremely welcoming to new people. There can be no doubt that such access has made significant differences to our clients lives and well-being'

- o the Head of the Cannock Chase Children's Centre points out, 'It is a key objective of ours to work with the most needy and deprived members of the local community. Access to people within the Library setting has enabled this. It is situated near to a pocket of deprivation, which is within the top 30% most deprived communities list. We have no doubts that the situation of the Library and the Project objectives to support the most needy members of the local community are playing a direct role in assisting us to achieve our objectives'

- o it is apparent that the building / role of the building is linking with the functions and role of the Community Centre. A spokesperson points out, 'We now have a purpose built Community Centre, which provides a focus for community activities. We see the Library as a central place for information, and a place where people can find out what is available to them in the Village and surrounding areas'

9.20   Good Practice

We have noted examples of 'good practice' that includes:

o   extensive public and multi-agency consultation at all stages of the delivery of the Project

o   the provision of a well designed building, which is clearly fit for purpose and situated in an ideal location in the Village

o   effective management and committed Library staff, who are clearly valued and respected by the wider community and multi-agency partners

o   the recruitment and support provided to the Library Advocates (pictured), or Community Library Link Volunteers as they prefer to be known. We are particularly impressed with the level and variety of training provided by key members of the Library Service.

Whilst the PTLLS course is not an easy option for the Advocates, benefits such as highly trained, proficient and confident group of Advocates have without doubt paid dividends. As well as delivering high quality community support work / library promotion, it appears highly likely that the group will be self-sustaining and continue long into the future

o   a base and meeting place for the NCCP and other local groups / societies (see Section 9.11). We noted during interviews with representatives of a number of the groups, such as the Heritage Group (pictured) that 'Other groups in other areas are clearly envious of the facilities available to us'

o   support and expertise provided in setting up and supporting local groups such as the Knit & Natter, Fun & Chatter Group (pictured). We are impressed with the flexibility demonstrated during the early stages of this group, when it appeared that a Knit & Natter Group was likely to fail due to a lack of local interest and local support. The provision of board games, opportunities for free discussions, interaction and a name change provided the impetus the Group needed to attract and sustain well over 20 members each week. The group has been described as a 'life line' to people who would not normally leave their homes, and carers, who receive short, but valuable periods of respite from their often elderly charges. We note that the group appears to be in control of its own destiny, and is highly likely to have a sustainable future long after Project funding has ended. For example the group has been encouraged to successfully apply for funding through the Staffordshire Local Community Funded (supported by Councillor John Rowley) to support activities.

o   use of the Library by the District Council to offer support to customers who may be having problems paying bills such as rent (see Section 9.3 – Value for Money)

o   the commissioning of a wide variety of external providers to deliver a wide variety of quality and varied activities (see Section 9.11) to a cross section of local community members. We are impressed with how initiatives such as K'Nex, Robot Wars and the Cartoon Club have encouraged team working, and parents and their children to be directly involved in the activities

o   initiatives such as the Literacy Project delivered in partnership with Norton Canes High School. The following is a summary provided by the deliverer of the initiative, Lisa Westmorland (Freelance Tutor):

Background
This joint project delivered on behalf of Norton Canes Library and Norton Canes High School, which began in September 2011, and involved a voluntary group of 10 Year 7 students with a reading ability of Level 3 or below, putting them in the 16% of 11 year olds who fail to achieve the expected grade (Level 4) on leaving primary school.   The aim of the project is to encourage these students to:

- o   improve their reading ability by practice

- o   improve their attitudes to reading

- o   widen their reading choices

- o   build a positive relationship with their local library and to value what it has to offer them

The families of each of the students were invited to attend the second half of these sessions to support their child's development. Many parents were unable to attend because of work or family commitments. However some did attend regularly, and their presence and encouragement had a noticeable impact on both effort and behaviour.

Format
There were 6 sessions in the Autumn term and a further 6 during the Spring term. Each of these fortnightly 2 hour sessions had a different theme that had been chosen by the students; these included graffiti, nature, film, food and art.

Activities involved individual and group work, which may have included reading a statement about an aspect of the chosen topic before deciding if it is true or false. The students then looked through a range of books to select an unusual fact and rewriting it to form a true or false question for the rest of the group to answer.

Outcomes
Initial assessment confirmed that all 8 of the original group had no enjoyment of reading and low opinions / expectations of the Library. At the beginning of the project all of the group were encouraged to join the Library and all have since borrowed books either about the different themes, or that reflect their own hobbies and interests. They have also all attended an author event at the library and some were inspired to then buy or borrow that author's books.
Although progress has been slow, most of the group are now more comfortable and willing to read aloud. In some cases they are noticeably more fluent when reading. Tracking (see Table 19) carried out at the school in November 2011 and February 2012 shows that all have made improvements, with 3 students moving up 3 sub-levels e.g. 2C to 3B and 4 of the group have gone from a 3C to a 4C or 4B.

Table 19 Tracking of Students Attending Library Literacy Sessions

Gender	Entry Level	Track 1	Final Track
Female	3	3A	4
Female	3	3B	3B
Male	B	3	3B
Male	3	3	4B
Female	3	3C	3B
Male	3	3	3B
Male	3	3B	4C
Male	3	3B	4C
Female	B	3	4C
Male	B	2A	3B

Source: Lisa Westmorland (Freelance Tutor).

9.21   Lessons Learnt

It is apparent that there are a number of lessons to be learned as a result of the delivery of the Project, which includes:

o   the lack of a service level agreement between the NCCP and the County Council.   It seems likely that the issue became too complex once the County Council's legal department became involved in the issue. A compromise has been the introduction of a lease agreement

o   as highlighted at Section 9.21, there appears to be opportunities for improved coordination and partnership working between the Library, the NCCP and the Norton Canes Community Centre

o   a need to re-think how to involve young people, particularly those between 16 and 19 years in library / community activities.   We acknowledge that this is not just a challenge for Norton Canes Library, rather the library service as a whole. Lessons learnt from this Project appear to include an understanding that:

o   young people value the opportunity to become directly involved in community activities, and understand the benefits such involvement can bring to the community and their personal development / curriculum vite

o   experience has shown that it is often not feasible for young people to effectively contribute to meetings where adults are present and outnumber the young people. Adults can often appear over-bearing, do not possess a full range of communication / listening skills, and young people often lack confidence and communication skills to put their points / opinions over

o   students will be reluctant or unable to attend meetings during school hours

o   the provision of minutes of meetings may not be sufficient in terms of young people feeling involved and aware of key activities / decisions

o   young people risk being de-motivated if they are not fully involved in Project decisions / activities

9.22   Observational Visits / Attendance at Key Meetings / Community Activities

As outlined at Section 4.3 we have carried out a number of visits to the Library, which have on the whole been unsupervised, and on occasions, unannounced.   We have also attended meetings / events as a 'fly on the wall'. Our observations include:

Building

o   the exterior of the building is well-maintained and well lit at night time. Whilst there is limited parking available, we have noted a regular flow of visitors are normally able to park; with no evidence of staff or other visitors 'hogging' the majority of available parking places. We are impressed with the outside seating area (pictured)

o   we have noted evidence of community / childrens' involvement in planting / garden design to the rear of the building (pictured)

o   reference to the Big Lottery Fund having funded the Project / building is clearly evident on prominent notice boards at the entrance to the building

o   we have noted a plaque (pictured) at the entrance to the building that describes the facility as the Norton Canes Library and Information Hub, rather than Norton Canes Library and Community Hub (which is the title of the Project within the funding application)
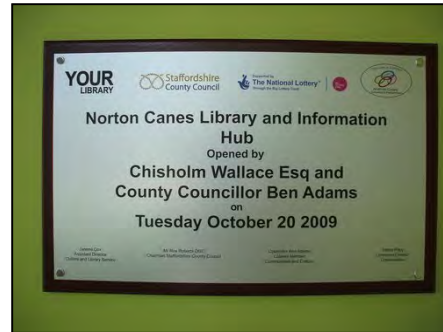
o   it is clearly apparent that the Library Building and Community Hub have been designed and built to a high specification and quality – achieving a 'Highly Commended' award in the 2011 Southern Staffordshire Design Awards.   The interior of the building is

bright and cheerful in its outlook and seems to provide an efficient work place for staff and visitors. This is clearly reflected in the welcome staff provide, which is always cheerful and obviously appreciated by visitors to the Library

o   we are impressed with the large meeting space available within the building, and note regular use by the various groups highlighted at Section 9.11. Tables, chairs and book racks are movable, which provides impressive and noticeable flexibility available in terms of how all spaces throughout the building can be utilised

o   a separate smaller meeting room is well-used and provides a confidential meeting place whenever required

o   tables, chairs and book racks are movable, which provides impressive and noticeable flexibility available in terms of how all spaces throughout the building can be utilised

Services

o   there appear to be a wide selection of books and information available, and services such as a fully equipped IT room (pictured) is clearly well used by a wide variety of local people

o   we have noted the Library is child / baby friendly, with space available in terms of soft chairs and fittings for mothers and babies / children

o   whilst we have noted public information points and boards, we have not noted specific / targeted information available for young people in the 16 to 19 year old age bracket. We have noted comments from young people that include 'the Library seems to be focused on the needs of young mums and the elderly'

o   we note good use of plasma screens throughout the building

o   it is however apparent that a plasma screen provided for community / NCCP use within the entrance to the building is not utilised for that purpose. It seems that the NCCP has yet to take on the responsibility for inputting information onto this screen

o   at the time of our initial visits to the Library we noted a lack of display materials within two cabinets situated in the main meeting rooms that related to the community groups that use the building.   Having made comments about this, we have noticed that this was quickly remedied, and both cabinets now contain interesting material linked to groups involved in the history and heritage of the Village

Management

o   we do note that Joint Management Group meetings continue to take place.   It
     does however appear that multi-agency attendance has dropped off, as Project
     funding comes to an end

o   it is clear that local groups take great pride in the building

o   responsibility for management of the building is with the County Council. This
     includes booking meeting rooms on behalf of local groups and agencies, and
     what is allowed to be displayed on walls / display areas; thus ensuring the
     integrity of the building as a whole is maintained

9.23   Value for Money

Whilst it is always difficult to accurately attribute actual financial savings to Projects, we
have noted evidence of 'value for money' being achieved, which includes:

o   the recruitment of the Library Advocates and other volunteers. Comparative low
     training and support costs have resulted in numerous examples of volunteers
     freely giving up many hours of their time (circa £17.00 per hour 'in-kind) to
     support the delivery of Library / community services; without which we are
     informed would not have taken place due to a lack of resources

o   we are informed by the District Council has made saving of 28.5% in rent
     arrears, which amounts to £61,813. A spokesperson says, 'Whilst we clearly
     cannot attribute such impressive saving directly to the Project, it can be safely
     assumed that providing early and mutually convenient direct access and
     support, within the Library to our customers, who may be having difficulties in
     paying their bills, has played a significant role in the local authority meetings
     such an impressive target sum' (see Section 9.20 – Good Practice).

o   it is also clear that those vulnerable members of the public who have met with
     local support agency members within the Library, rather than travelling
     significant journeys to Cannock and other locations have saved money in terms
     of expensive travel costs

o   the Head of the Cannock Chase Children's Centre points out, 'We have made
     significant savings in our budget by being able to share resources, which
     includes staff and public meeting spaces. I would like to think that such 'joined
     up action' has intensified our work, enabling us to deliver a more intensive
     support to the most at risk of exclusion within existing budgets'

o   the member of the Emotional Well-Being Team points out, 'There will be without doubt significant savings in terms of NHS costs related to those people who we have been able to refer and place with the clubs and groups being held at the Library. In addition to their being provided with life-lines in terms of their personal well-being, it is far more expensive and time consuming to treat someone with a serious mental illness, which can of course be a direct consequence of isolation and depression.

10.0 Summary of Findings

10.1 Introduction

In line with the key objective of this commission to produce a report to independently evaluate the Norton Canes Library and Community Hub (The Project), a summary of findings are provided in relation to:

o   Outcomes

o   Milestones

o   Wider Impacts

o   Project delivery

o   Management of the Project

o   Good practice

o   Value for money

o   Strategic Influences

o   Sustainability

10.2 Outcomes & Milestones

As outlined at Section 9.2, we are satisfied that on the whole the Project has delivered outcomes agreed with the funder within agreed milestones.   We note the following:

o   whilst it is not feasible to guarantee that: 950 new members from low income or low qualification groups will report on positive impacts that the new services and facilities have made on their skills and confidence levels; and 4,000 people within Norton Canes will be aware of the positive and environmental benefits of constructing a building which meets the Building Regulations Part 2, as outlined at Section 9.2, there is evidence to suggest that such outcomes have been achieved overall

o   it has not been feasible / possible for a Service Level Agreement to be agreed / signed between the County Council and the NCCP

o   it has proved difficult to attract 16 to 19 year olds to the Library – it is apparent however that this is a challenge all Libraries currently face

10.3   Wider Impacts

As outlined at Section 9.3, there is evidence to suggest that it is apparent that Norton Canes Library has out performed comparative libraries:

o   since 2004, active borrowers have increased by 13%, whilst the other libraries have fallen by 9.4% and 15%

o   annual visits have increased by 78%, whilst they have fallen by 6.7% and 5.1% at the other libraries

o   use by 5 to 15 year olds has increased by over 26% at Norton Canes, whilst it has fallen by over 10% and nearly 14% at the other libraries

o   new members have increased by over 29%, whilst the other libraries have fallen by 11% and 23%

We also note that:

o   active borrowers in the 16 to 19 year old age group has fallen significantly at all of the libraries - just under 20% at Norton Canes Library

o   active borrowing by the over 75s has increased significantly at Norton Canes (over 41%) and one of the comparative libraries

Taking note of findings highlighted at Section 9.24 (Lessons Learnt), which highlights issues regarding young peoples' use of the Library, it could be concluded:

o   that initiatives to attract young mothers / children and older people, could have had detrimental effects on the 16 to 19 year old age group (see comment – 'the Library seems to be focused on the needs of young mums and the elderly')

o   or, more could have done to attract the 16 to 19 year old age group to the Library / libraries as a whole?

In relation to the opinions of users / the reasons for visiting, there appear to be differences in relation to those using Norton Canes Library in comparison to the comparative library.   As outlined at Section 9.11:

o   the majority of Norton Canes respondents rate the Norton Canes Library noticeably higher in terms of location, being a pleasant place to visit, staff being helpful, access to books / learning materials and awareness what is going on at the library

o   Norton Canes Library appears to be used more for education, training, employment support and access to IT than the comparative library

o   Norton Canes Library appears to be attracting more community volunteers

10.4   Project Delivery

Based on our findings, we are satisfied that Outcome 1 has been achieved with distinction, in that there is strong evidence of wider community members and other key stakeholders being actively engaged in all stages of Project delivery. Indeed, we feel that such engagement has been central to the successful delivery of outcomes, and is also evidenced by wider impacts such as public opinions outlined in responses to questionnaires, and desk research, summarised at Section 10.3.

We also make note of the award winning building design that has without doubt been key to Project delivery. For example:

o   the building is clearly situated in the right place in the Village. It is central, close to bus stops, has accessible parking and is easily accessible by all sections of the community, no matter what age or disability

o   the functional design and layout of the building has enabled staff, users and visitors to make best use of the space available

o   good use is made of natural light

o   the building enables a positive 'feel good' factor, which enables staff, users and visitors to relate in positive and friendly ways to others

As outlined at Section 9.0, we note the impressive range and nature of projects and initiatives that have been delivered in the building throughout the life of the Project. It is noticeable that these have included those delivered by the Library Service, the NCCP and community groups, such as the Wildlife Project (see Section 9.2), which has transformed the garden area at the rear of the building.

We feel that on the whole, projects and initiatives have been well thought out and have enabled Project outcomes to be achieved.

In relation to findings outlined at Section 9.21 (Partnership Working) and Section 9.24 (Lessons Learnt), we feel that:

o   as outlined within our evaluation of the Norton Canes Community Partnership (Norton Canes Community Partnership, Building Community Independence Project, Independent Evaluation, Wider Impact Consultancy, 2012), conditions for partnership working with the NCCP have been 'complex and challenging', and generally out of the control of those delivering this Project. We are however satisfied that those who delivered the Project have made best use of opportunities available to develop and deliver partnership working

o   as outlined at Section 9.21, we have noted examples of partnership working with external organisations and agencies

o   in relation to working with young people in the 16 to 19 year old age bracket, lessons have clearly been learnt. For example, we are pleased to report, with the agreement and support of the Big Lottery, the Project has extended the life of the Project, and is taking time during July, August and September to work in partnership with Wider Impact Consultancy to carry out peer led research in relation to the needs and demands of this age group, with objectives that include:

o   encouraging 16 to 19 year olds to increase their use of Library services / the building

o   explore forming a Young Library Advocates Group

Findings into this research and outcomes will be delivered as an Addendum to this report during September 2012.

10.5   Management of the Project

We are satisfied that the Project has been extremely well managed. For example:

o   the Project has overall delivered Project outcomes on time and within budget

o   the regular and high quality submission of returns forwarded to the funder, which have been on time, and contain high quality and informative information and data

o   the manner in which the wider community and key stakeholders have been consulted and involved in all stages of Project delivery

o   the formation and delivery of the multi-agency Joint Management Group

o   the manner in which the Library and meeting rooms have been made accessible and open to the wider community and stakeholder groups

o   the way the building and surrounding areas have been managed and maintained

o   the high quality and informative data and information supplied to us as part of the wider community and stakeholder groups

o   the continued high quality and friendly front-end support to service users and visitors to the Library

10.6   Good Practice

As highlighted at Section 9.22, we have noted a number of examples of good practice that include:

o   extensive public and multi-agency consultation at all stages of the delivery of the Project

o   the provision of a well designed building, which is clearly fit for purpose and situated in an ideal location in the Village

o   effective management and committed Library staff, who are clearly valued and respected by the wider community and multi-agency partners

o   the recruitment and support provided to the Library Advocates. We are impressed with the level and variety of training provided by key members of the Library Service

o   the provision of a base and meeting place for the NCCP and other local groups / societies

o   the commissioning of a wide variety of external providers to deliver a wide variety of quality and varied activities to a cross section of local community members

We are particularly impressed with the following, which others delivering similar projects could learn from:

o   support and expertise provided in setting up and supporting the Knit & Natter, Fun & Chatter Group

o   the Literacy Project delivered in partnership with Norton Canes High School

10.7   Value for Money

As outlined at Section 9.23, we are satisfied that the Project has delivered value for money. For example:

o   the recruitment of the Library Advocates and other volunteers, who are freely giving up many hours of their time (circa £17.00 per hour 'in-kind') to support the delivery of Library / community services

o   the local authority Housing Team making impressive financial savings in rent arrears budgets

o   vulnerable members of the public who have met with local support agency members within the Library, rather than travelling significant journeys to Cannock and other locations have saved money in terms of expensive travel costs

o   agencies such as the Cannock Chase Children's Centre making 'Significant savings in their budget by being able to share resources, which includes staff and public meetings spaces …. providing intensive support to the most at risk of exclusion within existing budgets'

o   savings in terms of NHS costs related to those people who have been referred and placed with the clubs and groups being held at the Library. In addition to their being provided with 'life-lines' in terms of their personal well-being, it would clearly be far more expensive and time consuming to treat someone with a serious mental illness, which can of course be a direct consequence of isolation and depression

o   it is also clear that the community has access to a popular and sustainable buildings / structure that will support community needs for generations to come

o   the 'Building Rating' which demonstrate that the new library as designed (BER), demonstrates an approximate efficiency and CO_2 emission improvement against the notional building in the region of 25% (35.17KgCO2/m^2 as opposed to 46.2KgCO2/m^2). Basically this has been achieved through a combination of improvement factors to the thermal efficiency of the building and improved ventilation resulting in reduced energy consumption and CO_2 emissions

10.8   Strategic Influences

Understanding the need to look forward, information highlighted at Section 8 should direct the future strategic direction of the Project and the need for partnership working. We note in particular the following issues, which we feel the Project and other groups should be looking to address now and into the foreseeable future:

- o   Health – with particular regard to:
  - o   Prevalence of obesity
  - o   Teenage pregnancies
- o   Youth educational attainment
- o   Youth unemployment
- o   General unemployment / Benefit claimants

10.9   Sustainability

Whilst the Project has generally reached its conclusion in terms of Big Lottery funded activities, it is encouraging to note that all those we have interviewed and have come into contact with are extremely keen to ensure that the role and activities of the Staffordshire Library Service and the building continues long into the future.

There are clearly going to be a number of challenges with regard to front-line partnership working if the strategic influences highlighted at Section 10.8 are to be addressed. These include:

- o   it will be impossible to maintain such a high level of initiatives and projects without the Big Lottery funding
- o   under the shadow of austerity, front-line public sector services will continue to be under threat for the foreseeable future
- o   the need for improved locally based and joined up partnership working

On the positive side:

- o   the community / key stakeholders have access to high quality buildings / resources in the form of the Library / Community Hub and Community Centre
- o   it is apparent that the Library / Community Hub is well placed to support / add value to a locally based infrastructure:
  - o   the Library / Information Hub (rather than Community Hub) acts as a centre of knowledge, information and referral

- o the Community Centre acts as a Community Hub and place for community meetings / activities

- o the NCCP acts as an over-arching, umbrella organisation, supporting and advising the numerous voluntary groups and organisations based in and about the Norton Canes area

- o the Project and other local agencies, including the NCCP and the Community

- o all those involved in the delivery of the Project have gained important skills and experience in addressing the needs and requirements of local community members

- o the Project has recruited and trained committed Advocates / Community Volunteers

- o the Library Advocates are particularly well trained and well placed to add value to the role and functions of locally based agencies / organisations

- o based on the success of the Project, and opportunities for locally based partnership working, there will no doubt be opportunities for local groups / partnerships to apply for appropriate funding / support in the future

11.0   Recommendations

11.1   Introduction

Based on research findings and our experience of supporting similar partnerships, the following recommendations are tendered:

1. The Library Service / Libraries should as far as feasible continue to be based with local communities, and should take note of good practice successfully delivered by this Project, which includes:
    a) Close partnership working with key stakeholders.
    b) Extensive community consultation.
    c) Involvement of the local community in the development and delivery of local services / initiatives.
    d) Targeted support for the most vulnerable members of local communities.

2. The Norton Canes Project should continue to support and respond to the findings of the on-going peer-led research into the needs and aspirations of young people; specifically targeting the 16 to 19 year old age group.

3. As the Project draws to a close in relation to Big Lottery funding, the Joint Management Group should re-focus priorities towards the creation of a new group that supports sustainable partnership working with locally based organisations and key stakeholders / partner agency members.

4. Within 8 weeks of the group highlighted at Recommendation 3 becoming established, the County Council should lead on the signing of a formal Service Level Agreement that relates to the use of the Library / Information Hub building by all stakeholders, including the Norton Canes Community Partnership (NCCP).

5. Key strategic priorities of locally based organisations and key stakeholders should be to support tackling issues such as those identified at Section 8:
    a) Health – with particular regard to:
        i. Prevalence of obesity
        ii. Teenage pregnancies
    b) Youth educational attainment

6. Youth unemployment

7. General unemployment / Benefit claimants

8. Key local priorities should be to enable the on-going development and delivery of good practice initiatives developed by the Project, such as:

   o wide ranging consultation, involving local community members

   o supporting local groups / societies, such as that provided to the Knit & Natter, Fun & Chatter Group

   o supporting innovative partnership working with local schools, with particular emphasis on initiatives such as the Literacy Project developed and delivered in partnership with Norton Canes High School

9. Key stakeholders / partner agency members should urgently collaborate and offer / provide appropriate support to the Norton Canes Community Partnership that assists / enables the Partnership to develop / move forward, and achieve current and future aims and objectives.

10. This report should be circulated to the widest possible audience, in order to enable other Libraries, stakeholders and partner agency members to benefit from report findings, with particular emphasis on 'lessons learnt' and 'good practice.

12.0 Conclusions

12.1 Introduction

The Project has successfully delivered the majority of outcomes agreed with the funder within budget and within agreed milestones. It is noticeable that during the life of the Project, the Norton Canes Library has significantly out-performed comparative libraries in areas such as membership growth / sustainability, library use, borrowing and user perceptions.

12.2 Management of the Project

Such successful development and delivery of the Project, has clearly been enabled by a robust Business Plan, delivered by talented and committed managers, support staff and key stakeholders, which significantly include community volunteers.

12.3 Good Practice

We have identified numerous examples of good practice that includes:

o   close partnership working with key stakeholders

o   extensive community consultation

o   involvement of the local community in the development and delivery of local services / initiatives

o   training and support provided to the Library Advocates

o   the role of the Library Advocates

o   targeted support for the most vulnerable members of the local community

12.4 Lessons Learnt

Whilst attracting young people in the 16 to 19 year old age bracket is a challenge for the Library Service as a whole, it is apparent that lessons have been learnt by those delivering this Project in relation to seeking the support of young people in this age group. For example, it has been noted that it has been difficult for young people to join and contribute to groups that are mainly made up of adults.

We note that managers of the Project and the Big Lottery have agreed to extend the life of the Project, to take time to pilot an initiative to work with a representative group of young volunteers.

Aims of the pilot include the young people supporting peer-led research, with objectives that include attracting more young people to the Library, and exploring the feasibility of creating a Young Persons' Advocate Group.

12.5   Value for Money

We have noted tangible examples of how the Project has delivered value for money. These include:

o   following relatively low cost training and support, the role provided by the Library Advocates, who provide many hours of valued support to the Library and wider Norton Canes community

o   the minimal cost of access to the local authority Housing Team to meeting facilities within the Library, has played a role in achieving 28.5% (£61,813) reductions in local authority rent arrears

o   financial savings to vulnerable local community members who do not have to meet expensive travel costs when meeting agency representatives, such as local authority Housing Team members

o   agencies such as the Cannock Chase Children Centre and Social Care Teams have delivered key front-end customer support from the Library building, which has reduced overheads, and enhanced services to the most vulnerable members of the local community

o   local community groups have affordable access to a high quality community based meeting place and support facilities

o   wider impacts, such as anticipated long-term reductions in NHS mental health costs, due to interventions and preventative work delivered within the heart of the community

12.6   Sustainability

The Norton Canes community has been provided with a high quality, multi-purpose building and infrastructure that will play a key role in sustaining the on-going regeneration of the area.

Whilst the Project has ended, we feel that provided recommendations highlighted at Section 11 are acted on, the Library Service and other key stakeholders are likely to continue to play an important and integral role in supporting the long-term needs and aspirations of the Norton Canes Community.

Appendix A

Summary - Partner Agency Members' Workshop

How have the barriers / challenges been overcome?

- o Different activities bring in people who might not necessarily use libraries
- o Free events
- o Building trust political will
- o Consultation
- o Not as yet CCDC to approach / approve
- o Free internet and WIFI
- o District Council presence i.e. benefits

What is good about the structure / exterior of the building?

- o Good design / community pride
- o Building is new - looks nice, feels nice, nice space
- o Very pleasant
- o Modern and inviting
- o Nice village focal point
- o Looks modern, friendly and welcoming
- o Privacy and pleasant surroundings and helpful staff
- o Has transformed the 'image' of the service

What could be better?

- o More landscaping
- o Parking
- o Lighting - building always looks closed
- o Meets all our requirements
- o Arrangements for reception of visitors / new users
- o Inside - better use of small meeting room (insist it is cleared out and tidied up)
- o Additional exterior lighting 'library open' not always obvious at present

How could they be overcome?

- o Keep the blinds open
- o Buy more land for garden / parking
- o None to overcome
- o Involve in organising activities etc.
- o Inside - Signage / posters

What are the future opportunities?

- o School events held at the library and this will improve (our treatment of)??? Of wider community and bring new involvement from stakeholders
- o Employment related learning / training
- o Agencies in the community e.g. CAB, housing etc.
- o Extend services offered
- o More lottery funding
- o Extended / possible further surgeries
- o Community room could be used more - open longer hours

What are the potential challenges?

- o Other agencies capacity / costs in using the facilities
- o Competition from organisations / agencies / companies
- o Maintaining links as personnel change
- o Funding future of library services volunteer agents
- o Funding
- o Lack of funding / companies networking. Opportunities for the future
- o Future of library services

What needs to be done to meet opportunities and challenges?

- o CCDC to be able to expand services
- o Don't stop working in the community
- o Marketing / visioning about possible future trends / initiatives
- o Volunteers need to continue to gain from experience i.e. PETALS
- o Funding streams
- o JMC could broaden out to include other members after BLF project ends
- o Use of library volunteers in conjunction with paid staff. Learning / training experiences for volunteers
- o Keep JMC running - may change in focus but is important

Wish list:

- o Payments/ and possibly reception on daily basis
- o More staff
- o Volunteers given a greater voice
- o Agreement with high school as work experience initiative

Summary – Library Advocates' Workshop

What has it achieved for the Library / Community Hub?

- o New members (x 3)
- o People participation
- o Helped library to have knowledgeable volunteers
- o Borough library to the attention of community
- o Brought more youngsters in
- o Given a purpose to help people less able than me

What has it achieved for Norton Canes?

- o Brought people together (x3)
- o Given Norton Canes a centre for information
- o Given opportunity for learning in the community
- o A group of volunteers who are the link between the library and the public
- o People are starting to ask about things that are happening here
- o Volunteers that can deliver courses and more for the village
- o Good community spirit in the village

Why has the initiative been so successful?

- o It has helped people from all walks of life and with various problems
- o Activities for all age groups
- o Increased people coming to library
- o The group are friendly
- o We respect each other
- o Everyone equal and respected
- o The good support from the library
- o Willing to work together
- o Commitment of staff and volunteers
- o Provided social contact for people who were somewhat isolated
- o Everyone works together

What could be better?

- More money to do things in the community (x 3)
- Make the most of available people with knowledge
- Give more time
- Possibly more volunteers
- Need to provide initiatives to bring more men into the library
- Initiatives to bring younger people in

What are the future opportunities?

- Hopefully to continue
- Continuity
- Moving forward with opportunities for the village
- To continue and expand learning opportunities
- With our qualifications we can do much more as volunteers
- Anything that is thrown at us
- Growth of existing groups / new ones set up

What are the potential challenges?

- Lack of money (x 2)
- Increase numbers
- Keep on going and growing
- To sustain our community
- To continue and work for any projects in the future
- Making sure we keep going
- Getting certain age groups to take part
- Encouraging the youth and younger members
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Providing motivation for the non-motivated

What needs to be done to meet opportunities and challenges?

- o Relentless advertising, money for advocates on-going training
- o Publicity. Get out and do more to make aware of what is offered
- o Continue funding and deliver services
- o More of the same work some more money for us to learn as much as we can to deliver this
- o Make the most of available funding

Wish list

- o More training (x 2)
- o To be able to help some of our local disabled members in getting to the library functions
- o More courses for advocates
- o More craft opportunities
- o More funding
- o Money to put into practice every idea we have
- o A new build youth club for Norton Canes
- o Able to deliver lots of things for the village

Appendix C

wider**impact**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short questionnaire, which will be used to independently evaluate the **Norton Canes Library and Community Hub**.

Personal Information

Name ……………………………………………………

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Ethnic Origin ………………………………………………

Age .... **Postcode** ……………………………

Employment Status ....

Registered disabled Yes ☐ No ☐

Section 1
Use of Norton Canes Library

How often do you visit the Norton Canes Library / Community Hub?

At least once a week ☐

More than once a week ☐

Rarely – less than once a month ☐

Never ☐

Why do you visit? (*please tick **all** that apply*)

Access to books / learning materials ☐

Education / Training / Employment Support ☐

Access to IT facilities / computers ☐

Involvement in community activities / volunteering ☐

Recreation / a place to meet others ☐

Other (please specify) ....

Section 2
How would you rate the following regarding the Library and Community Hub?
(1 is low – 5 is high) (0 – no views)

The building is in an ideal location in the Village	0 1 2 3 4 5
It is a pleasant place to visit, and I enjoy being there	0 1 2 3 4 5
Staff are helpful and accessible	0 1 2 3 4 5
I am able to access the books and learning materials I require	0 1 2 3 4 5
I am able to access the support and / or training I require	0 1 2 3 4 5
IT facilities / computers meet my needs	0 1 2 3 4 5
I am aware of what is going on at the Library and Community Hub	0 1 2 3 4 5
I would recommend the Library / Community Hub to others	0 1 2 3 4 5

Section 3
Please list up to 3 ways the Library / Community Hub has helped / supported you

1.

2.

3.

Section 4 (*If appropriate*)
Please state how you feel the Library and / or the Community Hub could be improved

Anything else you wish to add?
(*Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary)*

For further information, please contact **Edwin Lewis** at Wider Impact Consultancy on **0845 165 0491**, or email **edwin@widerimpact.com**

Supported by
The National Lottery®
through the Big Lottery Fund

wider impact

Independent Analysis. Strategic Reviews

Scan QR Code to visit website