

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

18th July 2018

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

COUNTY COUNCILLOR GREG WHITE

Libraries

Summer Reading Challenge

There'll be mischief afoot this summer when North Yorkshire libraries and the Reading Agency invite all primary school children to sign up to read six books for the Summer Reading Challenge 2018.

The annual Summer Reading Challenge will launch in libraries across North Yorkshire on Saturday, 14 July, and will run until Saturday, 8 September. This year's theme is Mischief Makers, inspired by the much-loved children's comic, Beano, which is celebrating its 80th anniversary and children aged between four and 11 will be asked to borrow six library books over the summer holiday period.

Last year saw more than 9,600 children taking part across the County, with 103 young volunteers providing 2,028 hours of support as "Reading hacks". This is a fantastic opportunity for young people aged 13 to 24 to help with events and activities and to gain invaluable experience of working with children and families in a library environment, and I would urge Members to encourage young people who would benefit from this opportunity to contact their local library.

The above was achieved within just four months of the transfer of a further 22 libraries into community management and those libraries that demonstrated exceptional performance in this area were awarded certificates. This proved extremely popular amongst the community managed libraries and we will therefore be making this an annual event.

To take part in the challenge, children just need to sign up at their nearest library as members and they will be given a colourful collector's map of Beanotown to keep a record of their Summer Reading Challenge journey, and there is also a mini Gnasher challenge for pre-schoolers with stickers and certificates for little ones to collect. .

The summer holidays are a great opportunity for children to develop the reading habit, and a programme of events and activities for families to support the challenge has been devised for libraries across the County. This will include cartoon workshops, animation film-making, Lego building, badge making, T-shirt design and Gnasher collages.

Cook 250

Over the weekend of July 7th and as part of the Cook 250 festival, a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the explorer's first expedition to the South Seas in 1768; Whitby library invited local people to delve into the art and science of Captain James Cook.

Funded by the Arts Council, Whitby Library and the County Record Office worked with Scarborough-based art and science organisation Invisible Dust, and volunteers from Whitby and Great Ayton libraries on a series of projects. Events included 2 specially commissioned art works, an exhibition by the library volunteers using material from the County Record Office, workshops, talks by artists and a special appearance by Dr William Frame, Curator of the British Library's major exhibition on James Cook, for a behind-the-scenes look at some of the remarkable objects in the collection.

E-lending

On the 1st July, Libraries Minister Michael Ellis announced that the Public Lending Right Scheme will now cover e-books and e-audio books loaned from public libraries across Great Britain. I am delighted to report that our libraries are responding to customer demand and thriving in the digital age and Members may be aware that North Yorkshire's Library service has been making e-book and e-audio books available to its members since 2010 recording 4000 issues in the first year.

Users of the service can now choose from a wide range of titles including non-fiction and children's books and the number of people using the service and the number of titles being made available to library members has soared. In 2017 North Yorkshire issued over 104,000 e books/e- audio books which (nearly 9000/ month) with over 200 new users registering to use the service every month. This is just part of the excellent digital offer to library members that includes a wide range of reference and research resources, newspapers, magazines, comics, local history material and children's literacy support.

Filey Library

Filey Library reopened on Wednesday July 11th following its closure in June for refurbishment. The new flexible shelving design will easily enable the library to be used for a variety of community events and activities, and the dedicated children's area has been completely remodelled to provide a stimulating and colourful environment in which children can read and learn at leisure. There is also a new layout for the IT suite and plenty of table space for customers to bring in their own devices and connect to the Wi-Fi. The refurbishment also provides a more flexible environment for partners such as Scarborough Borough Council who run a weekly customer service desk from the library providing help and advice for Filey Residents. To celebrate the new look, library customers will also benefit from an injection of over 1500 new books. The official opening of the library by the County Council's Chairman will take place on Friday 27th July.

Reading Well

A new "Reading Well" scheme for people with mental health conditions has been set up with funding from Arts Council England and the Wellcome Trust. The titles have been chosen in collaboration with health partners, people living with long-term conditions and their carers, and libraries across the County will display the new books and health practitioners will be made aware of the collection. As with existing Reading Well collections, health professionals can recommend titles on the list to patients and the titles are available for anyone to borrow for free through their local library.

The collection was officially launched at Northallerton library on Tuesday, 5 June, and at the same time, local launches and networking events took place at Scarborough Skipton, Ripon and Malton libraries where local health groups and partners were invited to view the collection and network with other health providers over refreshments.

Archives

To coincide with & celebrate Local History Month in May, the Record Office's pop-up archive was out and about throughout the county visiting eight venues from Great Smeaton and Hinderwell to Harrogate and Skipton. The pop-up archives, held in partnership with local heritage groups, promote the work of the office and are an opportunity for people to access advice from archive staff and to view a range of records relating to the local area. Over 350 people have attended the events so far and more events are planned for the coming months.

The eighth annual open evening, Archives at Dusk, was also held in May. This year's event was the most popular yet with over 230 visitors enjoying an evening of medieval entertainment including falconry, music, tool making, calligraphy & spinning, and displays telling the story of North Yorkshire's castles, abbeys and lost villages. Visitors remarked that it was 'educational, informative, fascinating and an excellent evening' & that it was 'a real pleasure and a privilege to see such wonderful stories brought to life'.

As previously reported; the Record Office has also been working with volunteers from Whitby and Great Ayton Libraries as part of the Arts Council funded project to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's first expedition to the South Seas. Volunteers from the libraries visited the Record Office to study unique historic records and to build up a picture of life in eighteenth century Whitby as well as the contemporary view of the natural world at the time of Cook. Records discovered by the volunteers will be exhibited at Whitby Library in an exhibition entitled *Archive Explorers: riding the waves of discovery*, as part of the Whitby Cook250 festival weekend.

Registration

From July 1st onwards it has been easier for mothers in the Malton and Selby areas to register the birth of their babies. Previously, mothers who had their babies in York hospital had to register their new arrivals with the York register office, which meant that mothers from the Malton and Selby areas had to travel to the city, or experience delays in getting the birth certificate as the paperwork had to be sent to York.

North Yorkshire registrars have now been given the authority to register births on behalf of York directly in Malton and Selby and mothers will receive the birth certificate at the time they visit these offices. This new agreement is an excellent example of how, by working in partnership with our colleagues in York, we can improve the service to our customers at no additional cost.

Appointments to register a birth can now be made through the service's online diary which is quick and easy to use and can be found on the County Council's website at www.northyorks.gov.uk/registering-birth-your-baby. The website also gives more information about the questions that mothers will be asked on arrival.

Members may also have seen press reports that the Supreme Court has ruled that Civil Partnerships should be opened to opposite sex couples rather than confined to just same sex couples as is currently the case. The Registration service is awaiting the government's official response to this judgement which will require that legislative changes are put before Parliament. It is likely to be several months before any solution emerges and I will update members when further details are known.