

Normanton Library update

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress with re-establishing a library in Normanton, enabling comparison on two key indicators with other lending sites operated by Derby Libraries.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To propose that Scrutiny acknowledge that the performance of Normanton Library post lockdown is improving in line with service take-up at other statutory lending sites.

Reasons

- 3.1 Appendix 1 provides footfall and, more importantly, stock issue figures for Normanton and the other statutory lending sites. Figures for 2017/18 have been included as a baseline. The periods of closure (closure of the Pear Tree site and then lockdown) are shown in the data. The impact of lockdown on the library service is clear to see with minimal use by customers. Post lockdown library staff have worked to rebuild customer use and there is clear growth.
- 3.2 Appendix 2 provides a couple of examples of the positive feedback that have been received after our recent efforts to re-establish Normanton. We are particularly proud of the first comment from a large local school Academy that acknowledges the positive impact we have had on pupil attainment.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Pear Tree Library closed in April 2018 at a time when there was much talk in the national media about library closures. The library (renamed Normanton) reopened on a new site in November 2019. A pandemic lockdown was declared on the 23rd March 2020 which greatly impacted on the community and therefore the library. The library only fully reopened on 29th July 2021. The library team realised that many in the community were not aware of the new library and its changed location.

- 4.2 Since reopening, a lot of work has been done to raise awareness of the library in the community. The library team is small with 4 part time staff supporting a Library Manager. With limited resources we've tried to maximise our impact by working with / through partner organisations. For example, we've built relations with schools and nurseries and invited them to bring children to the library. We have also encouraged cultural organisations in the city that want to improve the cultural offer in Normanton to exploit the library. One organisation / network that has helped us reach into the Normanton community is the Normanton Community Information Network. The network brings us into contact with a host of organisations working in Normanton. We have been actively using this pre-existing network to promote things that are happening in the library, including our library celebration in October, and we've also hosted two of their network meetings.
- 4.3 We recognise that we need to build awareness of the library amongst residents. This is even more true in Normanton than in other communities because residents can prove quite transitory – moving in and then out quite quickly. We've taken several actions including paying for a small social media campaign on Facebook and Twitter. There has also been a letterbox drop by Royal Mail. To raise awareness further we've also focused our National Library Week celebrations at Normanton Library, offering a range of activities and events.
- 4.4 The National Library Week celebration offers potential customers a range of one-off experiences, and our job is to encourage those that attend to keep coming back to the library. Sometimes it's necessary to help people understand how the library can help them. The library offers a range of things that promote literacy and support wellbeing:
- Reading groups (supporting wellbeing and love of reading)
 - Adult literacy sessions (supporting literacy)
 - Child literacy sessions (PEEP – family learning)
 - Coding sessions for children (digital literacy)
 - Internet tasters for adults (digital literacy and wellbeing)
 - Rhymetimes for children (literacy and wellbeing for adults)
 - Storytimes for children (literacy and wellbeing for adults)
 - Job Clubs (supporting literacy, digital literacy and wellbeing)
 - Coffee mornings (wellbeing and sense of community / place)

At the time of writing the team are piloting a number of additional activities at Normanton to see if there is interest:

- Seed exchange / gardening club (cost of living, wellbeing, reading)
- Working with a charity to provide free data (getting people online)
- Warm library / Radio Derby blanket collection point
- Coffee morning extended with themed sessions and activities (wellbeing)
- Author and poetry events (literacy / creativity / cultural)
- Weekly yoga and mindfulness sessions (wellbeing)
- Livewell are providing keep fit classes (wellbeing)
- NHS clinicians using library rooms to meet clients (wellbeing)
- Menopause support sessions are going to be offered (wellbeing)

It's important that all these activities / events have their roots in supporting literacy.

A lot of networking is going on with individuals and community groups around these initiatives. The team at Normanton are open to customers' ideas and have a display

board in the library where customers can make suggestions about what they would like to happen at the library. These boards supplement the more formal council comments scheme. Customers also comment and ask questions via social media.

- 4.5 Normanton benefits from a small hall and meeting room and we continue to explore how this space can be used to enhance the cultural offer in the area. There have already been a series of events. Derby Theatre has had a community open day and rehearsals. There has been a one-woman play performed there and another show is planned. Derby Theatre intend to use this hall as a base for their outreach work. Derby Libraries has also hosted a popular performance for children called Roti Moon which was produced by Fishhouse Productions. This performance was heavily subsidised by the Arts Council.
- 4.6 In the future the plan is very much about using the space for cultural and wellbeing activities. Customer reaction has been positive to women only dance and exercise activities and the intention is to establish a permanent programme of yoga and dance classes in the hall. Discussions are also underway with QUAD around film shows and Anansi Theatre are interested in using the venue for performances.
- 4.7 Following the sale of the Council's interest in Pear Tree Library, extensive repairs and renovation works were undertaken by the new owner to bring it back into use and the building opened as a modern shopping plaza in July 2021. The landlord aims to attract new businesses with retail space to start or to expand their businesses. Tenants are given flexible terms, flexible space from which they can explore new ventures and pursue business opportunities. There is a wide selection of independent retailers with a strong fashion mix and food, and now all 10 units are let, occupied and trading. Several of the innovative businesses are owned by aspiring entrepreneurs in their mid-20s, including one person that has just completed university education.
- 4.8 In addition to the shopping plaza, the new owner allows the large community space on the first floor to be used by local community groups. It is considered that the re-use / refurbishment of the building is beneficial to the local community due to the encouragement it offers to new businesses and the subsequent employment it provides.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 There has been considerable customer and stakeholder engagement as described previously in the paper. Staff have been actively networking and building relationships with stakeholders and within the library we encourage customer feedback.

Other options

- 6.1 Rather than actively promoting the library we could have been less proactive and waited for customers to return.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Running costs of Normanton, and the rest of the statutory service, are met by the library budget. As customer take-up increases so will the social impact. It can be argued that the greater the social impact the better value for money the statutory service is.

Legal implications

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

Climate implications

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report.

Socio-Economic implications

- 10.1 A library like Normanton offers lots of activities that can have a socio-economic impact, such as coding for children and job clubs. Whilst these are worthwhile activities it's important to remember that the key remit for the library is to encourage literacy and reading. There is lots of research to confirm that developing an early love of reading can be life changing. That is why at Normanton we are deliberately focusing on children in terms of library layout, stock, activities and promotions [One in five children in England do not own any books of their own | Books | The Guardian](#)

Another important theme for the library is wellbeing and Normanton offers health information, social interaction and exercise opportunities.

Whilst there is national research Derby Libraries would like to commission some local analysis of the social impact that our statutory sites, including Normanton, have on the communities they serve. Current financial pressures mean that we are unable to fund this work. The library team are, however, involved in an NHS project at Sinfon where considerable effort is being put into quantifying the social capital that a large new community hub, that may include a library, will have on the community.

Other significant implications

- 11.1 None arising directly from this report.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal Finance Service Director(s) Report sponsor Other(s)	Claire Davenport	09/11/2022
Background papers:	Section 10.1. Link to Guardian article reporting on a National Literacy Trust report on Childrens Literacy	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 Footfall and stock issues Appendix 2 Comments by 2 partners involved with Normanton	

Appendix 1 Recovering from lockdown

Visitor Count - 2017/18	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Pear Tree	2,259	2,780	2,814	2,979	3,528	2,566	2,984	2,663	2,166	2,669	2,607	2,729	32,741
Alvaston	2,857	3,189	3,158	3,008	3,613	3,743	3,326	3,563	2,642	3,449	3,020	825	36,393
Central	10,559	11,412	11,421	5,422	5,577	5,743	4,941	5,287	4,344	5,202	5,164	5,433	80,503
Mickleover	3,096	5,915	5,105	5,482	6,709	5,911	5,331	4,811	4,268	4,663	4,568	2,897	58,756
Total	18,771	23,296	22,498	16,890	19,427	17,963	16,582	16,324	13,420	15,983	15,359	11,884	208,393
Visitor Count - 2019/20	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton								1,243	2,710	3,307	4,191	2,849	14,300
Alvaston								3,270	2,573	3,388	2,761	2,339	14,331
Riverside								18,277	12,006	15,466	15,063	8,804	69,615
Mickleover								5,450	3,916	4,853	5,406	3,158	22,783
Total								28,239	21,205	27,013	27,421	17,150	121,028
Normanton Library opened in November 2019. Also all library branches closed to the public after Saturday 21st March 2020 due to COVID													
Visitor Count - 2020/21	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton	0	0	0	0	68	220	297	199	234	124	217	307	1,667
Alvaston	0	0	0	0	86	282	256	242	256	301	257	294	1,974
Riverside	17	0	0	0	769	1,274	1,398	356	164	78	147	181	4,384
Mickleover	0	0	0	0	814	1,143	1,183	826	1,079	886	798	869	7,598
Total	17	0	0	0	1,737	2,919	3,134	1,623	1,733	1,389	1,419	1,651	15,623
Visitor Count - 2021/22	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton	420	658	861	1,033	1,815	1,625	1,709	1,401	1,519	1,718	1,935	2,094	16,788
Alvaston	419	781	781	995	1,447	1,047	1,717	1,633	1,410	1,601	1,745	1,843	15,419
Riverside	908	1,088	798	906	3,037	4,427	4,900	4,633	4,388	5,202	5,774	6,516	42,574
Mickleover	1,005	1,421	1,508	2,260	3,817	3,264	3,669	3,526	3,126	3,642	3,267	3,653	34,158
Total	2,752	3,948	3,947	5,193	10,116	10,363	11,995	11,193	10,443	12,162	12,721	14,106	108,939
Visitor Count - 2022/23	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton	1,952	2,513	2,423	2,822	2,898	2,120	2,541	0	0	0	0	0	17,268
Alvaston	1,669	1,939	2,227	2,912	2,781	2,394	2,425	0	0	0	0	0	16,347
Riverside	5,701	6,855	8,744	9,506	11,202	10,424	10,144	0	0	0	0	0	62,575
Mickleover	3,635	4,901	3,778	4,000	4,782	4,258	4,141	0	0	0	0	0	29,495
Total	12,957	16,208	17,172	19,240	21,663	19,196	19,251	0	0	0	0	0	125,685

Appendix 1 Recovering from lockdown

Issues - 2017/18	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Pear Tree	2,549	2,538	2,354	3,035	3,604	2,432	2,722	2,402	2,410	2,516	2,674	2,873	32,109
Alvaston	3,018	3,190	3,541	3,666	4,698	3,704	3,760	3,841	3,227	3,760	3,465	1,516	41,386
Central	9,587	9,016	9,831	10,104	11,063	9,989	9,496	10,679	10,318	12,071	11,053	12,763	125,970
Mickleover	5,708	5,545	5,807	6,949	8,336	6,017	5,621	5,626	4,778	5,666	5,402	3,609	69,064
E-Resources	2,760	2,940	2,884	2,742	3,178	2,949	2,924	2,610	2,555	3,041	2,746	3,295	34,624
Total	23,622	23,229	24,417	26,496	30,879	25,091	24,523	25,158	23,288	27,054	25,340	24,056	303,153

Issues - 2019/20	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton								84	1,745	2,711	2,854	2,560	9,954
Alvaston								3,668	2,723	4,018	3,665	3,625	17,699
Riverside								8,220	5,308	8,827	8,705	6,534	37,594
Mickleover								7,468	5,812	7,346	7,202	6,109	33,937
E-Resources								5,880	5,662	6,506	6,701	8,447	33,196
Total								25,320	21,250	29,408	29,127	27,275	132,380

Normanton Library opened in November 2019. Also all library branches closed to the public after Saturday 21st March 2020 due to COVID

Issues - 2020/21	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton	3	0	22	3	144	334	462	566	596	361	633	762	3,886
Alvaston	0	0	12	0	199	432	681	793	1,033	792	819	954	5,715
Riverside	60	0	1	2	1,459	2,101	2,442	1,938	1,749	1,930	1,323	1,381	14,386
Mickleover	6	0	8	0	2,269	2,737	4,546	2,381	2,124	2,082	2,026	1,851	20,030
E-Resources	9,763	10,259	10,430	11,175	10,661	10,331	10,800	9,848	10,855	10,393	10,198	12,135	126,848
Total	9,832	10,259	10,473	11,180	14,732	15,935	18,931	15,526	16,357	15,558	14,999	17,083	170,865

Issues - 2021/22	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Normanton	985	1,362	1,740	1,741	2,556	2,111	2,410	2,103	2,687	2,642	2,890	2,874	26,101
Alvaston	1,199	1,487	1,936	2,382	3,173	2,266	2,994	2,796	2,789	3,402	3,251	3,188	30,863
Riverside	2,194	2,492	3,092	3,895	4,937	4,503	4,757	3,999	3,814	4,287	4,263	4,640	46,873
Mickleover	2,797	4,312	4,396	6,264	6,895	6,325	6,293	5,818	5,077	5,430	5,094	5,852	64,553
E-Resources	11,900	9,086	8,195	8,518	8,813	8,232	8,600	7,748	7,848	8,673	7,992	8,598	104,203
Total	19,075	18,739	19,359	22,800	26,374	23,437	25,054	22,464	22,215	24,434	23,490	25,152	168,390

Issues - 2022/23	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
Normanton	2,697	3,310	3,095	3,218	3,773	3,204	4,406	0	0	0	0	0	23,703
Alvaston	3,565	3,882	3,218	4,357	4,457	3,774	4,079	0	0	0	0	0	27,332
Riverside	4,636	4,751	4,715	5,646	6,396	5,157	5,237	0	0	0	0	0	36,538
Mickleover	6,093	6,164	5,580	7,015	8,379	7,078	6,907	0	0	0	0	0	47,216
E-Resources	8,661	8,969	8,851	9,114	9,679	9,195	8,963	0	0	0	0	0	63,432
Total	25,652	27,076	25,459	29,350	32,684	28,408	29,592	0	0	0	0	0	141,932

Appendix 2

Supportive statement from the Harmony School Trust

I am pleased to be able to provide a statement in regard to the support that has been provided by the Derby Library Service for our Derby academies including Village Primary Academy.

Initiatives developed and led by Collette and her colleagues have ensured that children and their families who do not have access to books in their homes have access to limitless books. Historically parents have found joining the library difficult for a range of reasons but Collette and her team have removed all these barriers and made the library service accessible to all.

Our pupils have also been motivated to read thanks to the Summer Reading Challenge which they enjoy taking part in each year.

The library service have also supported our academies with book loans which have been greatly appreciated at a time when school budgets make purchasing books very difficult.

We are excited to be planning to work with the library service in relation to our new Inclusion Hub within one of our academies where pupils who have social, emotional and mental health issues will be using the 'Reading Well' guide. The hub will receive a loan of appropriate texts and having read these will be supported by Hub staff to write reviews for publication on websites. This will be hugely significant for these pupils and will help with their self-esteem.

As a trustee of another multi academy trust in Derby I have been able to pass on information related to the 'Laptop Loan Initiative' which will benefit pupils significantly.

It has been a pleasure to work with the library service as I am convinced that they have been a key reason why reading levels for year 6 pupils within the Harmony Trust Academies have increased by 2% whilst national results increased by 1%.

Kind Regards,

Jane Green
Head of Inclusion
The Harmony Trust

Supportive statement from Derby Book Festival regarding project work at Normanton.

Derby Book Festival has recently worked with Derby Libraries to develop and deliver two initiatives as part of its annual Festival activities.

Early Years Picture Book Award

The aim of this project is to help parents choose and use books with their children to support the development of good literacy skills so they can all enjoy the positive and life-changing benefits that reading can bring. It is targeted at families who need this support for a variety of reasons including economic, social and because English isn't their first language. By working in partnership we pooled our skills, experience and expertise to achieve more than we could have alone, and reached a total of 9 families from three different nurseries. The aim is to continue to develop this initiative so it is available in more areas of the city over the coming years.

Shared Reading Project

Derby Libraries has also worked with Derby Book Festival to deliver their Shared Reading Project, the aim of which is to increase well-being by bringing people together through interactive reading sessions which can lead to improved confidence, reduced social isolation, and stronger, more supportive communities. Two groups are now established in two libraries with more planned in future months across the city.

It has been a pleasure to work in partnership with the library service - we believe we are, between us, making a positive difference to people's lives.