

DIGGING DEEP TO TRANSFORM CHURCH STREET LIBRARY

PROJECT UPDATE

21st April 2008

Project Update

- Detailed Business, Capital Delivery and Community Engagement Plans have been submitted to the Big Lottery (a requirement of our funding agreement). These plans will now be considered by a team of Grant Officers. Following approval (in June 2008) we can go full steam ahead on the project!
- Welcome back to Lina Van Velzen the manager of Church Street Library who has been on maternity leave for the last 9 months. Thanks to Nicola Hutchison for managing the library in Lina's absence.
- Interior designers Bisset Adams have been appointed to design the interior layout of Church Street Library. Their experience includes Tower Hamlets' Ideas Stores and the Stowe Club in Westminster. Concept designs are currently being drafted and will be shared with the local community for consultation.
- Planning permission is now being sought to redevelop the garage adjacent to the library into a library extension, a decision is expected in approximately 8 weeks.
- We plan to start work on site at Church Street Library in October 2008. To allow for building works the library will be closed for approximately 9 months. During this time a temporary library will be provided. Empty shops along Church Street are currently being investigated as possible locations.

Resident Consultation Feedback

During January – April 2008 Church Street Neighbourhood Management carried out and commissioned a large amount of local consultation to inform the development of Church Street Library. Results of this consultation and plans for future engagement have been set out in the project Community Engagement Plan (available electronically upon request).

Over 200 adult residents completed a questionnaire developed by the Paddington Development Trust Community Research Team during February and March 2008.

The questionnaire asked for views and ideas relating to

- What improvements respondents would like to see in the library
- What respondents thought about current opening hours
- What respondents would like to use computers in the library for
- What classes or learning activities respondents would be interested in attending

206 individuals responded to the survey, the key findings of which were:

- The most popular improvements requested were more newspapers in different languages – the most popular being Arabic followed by French and Bengali.
- Just over half the respondents said they would use the library if it was open later or on Sundays
- Additional computing capacity would be used for learning new skills on-line, e-mail for work or study and e-mail for keeping in touch with family and friends
- 64 people indicated that they want to be involved further in the detailed designs and service development stages of the project.

Libraries Teen Dream Team – Feedback from book buying expedition

Westminster Libraries have established a group of eight teenagers called the 'Dream Team' led by a Children's Librarian from Pimlico Library. During April the team were accompanied on a book buying visit to Borders bookshop by 2 librarians. The team worked hard choosing books, which unless already in stock were purchased.

As well as novels they wanted manga, humour, getting rich and getting fit books. At one point the librarians tried to tempt the group with books about puberty, growing up and sex but they didn't want them. They thought they were embarrassing and that you would just ask your mum or your mates about stuff like that. A few were sneaked onto the trolley though, for those without mums or friends!

The trip ended with a trip to Starbucks where the team were rewarded with a coffee. This exercise helped involve young people in decision making and will be built upon following the establishment of Church Streets Youth Forum.

Health

Life Expectancy for males and females in Church Street is some 8 years below the Westminster average. Rates of death from Cancer and Circulatory Diseases are also the highest in the City.

Westminster Libraries carry out a range of activities that can both directly and indirectly contribute to improving the health of people in Westminster. The following areas are examples of the **FREE** activities currently delivered by Westminster Libraries across the City.

- Provision of information regarding physical health (including life threatening and life changing conditions such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes)
- Provision of information regarding mental health, including resources for people with low level mental health problems
- Prevention or delay in the onset of conditions such as dementia through programmes for older people including reminiscence sessions, book clubs and IT sessions
- Provision of self help information including links to support groups
- Advice sessions on lifestyle issues including diet and nutrition, exercise, smoking cessation, alcohol reduction, drug use
- Referrals to local primary care services and provision of information about other health and personal social services as appropriate
- Support for online booking of appointments
- Books on prescription programme

Following the transformation of Church Street Library an increase in these and other activities will be delivered to help improve the health of people in Church Street.

For further details on the transformation of Church Street Library please contact Laura Hannan on 020 7641 3270 or at lhannan@westminster.gov.uk



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