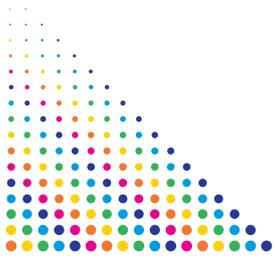




MUSEUMS LIBRARIES ARCHIVES
SOUTH EAST



The value of museums,
libraries and archives
to community agendas



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Introduction

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Many of you will be familiar with the museums, libraries or archives in your local community. You may well be a regular user – a Friend or card-carrying member perhaps!

Many of you, too, will recognise the unique value of these services. They hold the collections that are a unique testament to the creativity, activities and achievements of people, past and present. And they serve as a source of fascination and inspiration for generations now and yet to come. Many of the buildings these services occupy, are evidence of the local pride placed in these sources of knowledge.

However, they also have a role to play in achieving important community and local authority agendas. In particular, the sector makes a unique and effective contribution to the following areas:

Building **stronger and safer communities**: museums, libraries and archives are uniquely placed to do this. They are often the heart of a community, trusted and well-regarded by the people who use them; conduits for community networking, consultation and information; protectors of a community's assets, able to involve people in the story, renewal and regeneration of their community, and give individuals a sense of place and belonging that few others services can provide.

Helping **children and young people**: museums, libraries and archives are a unique resource for learning and have pioneered creative ways to engage young people – before, during and after school. The value of learning outside the classroom is widely recognised and championed by teachers and government-agencies across the UK. The sector also has a strong track record of working effectively with vulnerable and excluded groups of children and young people.

Improving **adult health and well-being**: as trusted sources of information, libraries are becoming an integral partner in health promotion campaigns across the UK. Their role is recognised in the recently published South East of England Health Strategy. Many libraries are now co-located with health centres. The sector as a whole has proved to be truly innovative in providing services for vulnerable groups, including adults with mental health problems, disabled people and older people.

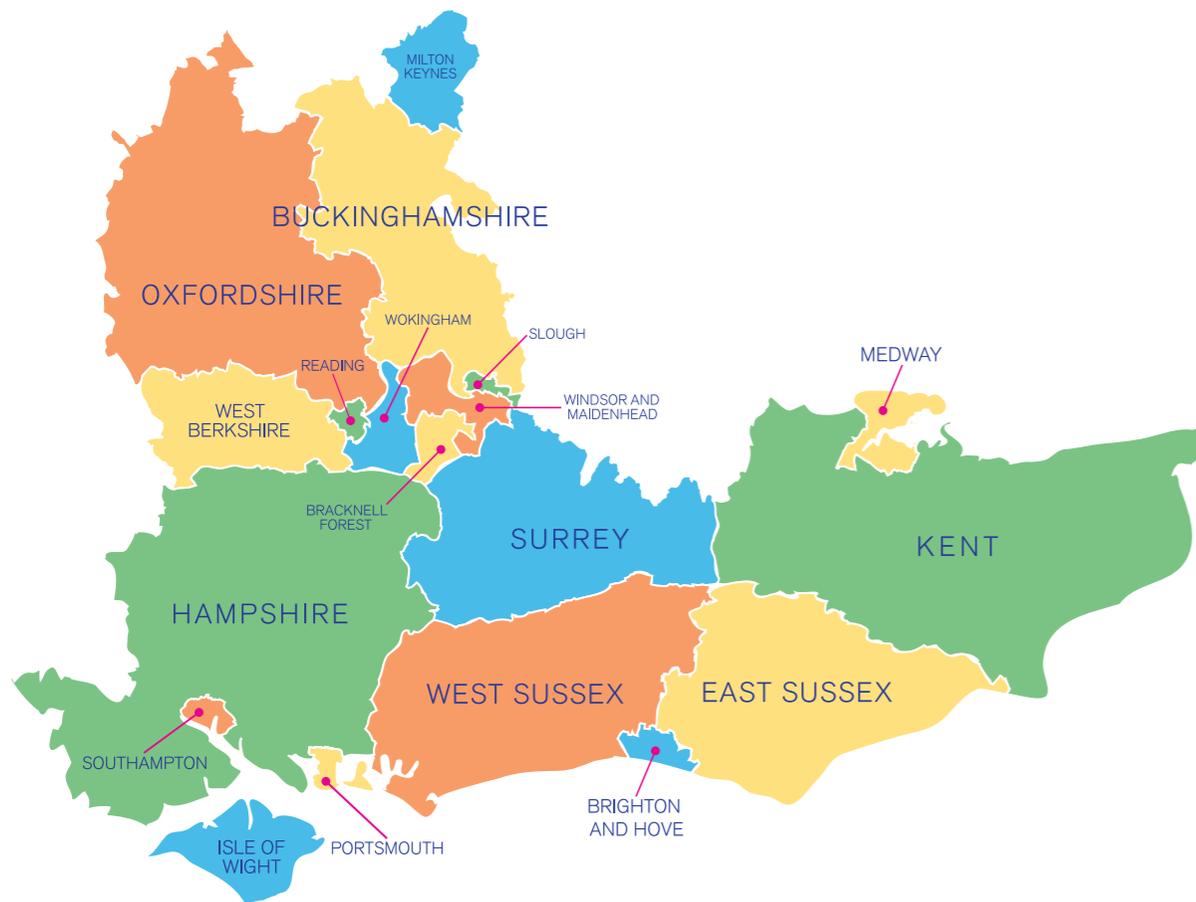
Building a **strong economy in the South East**: the sector makes a valuable contribution to basic skills training (libraries have particular success in recruiting adult learners where other bodies fail); the visitor economy (supporting 19,956 jobs, directly and indirectly, attracting a visitor spend of £229 million), and as agents of regeneration and place making, often attracting significant inward investment.

You may well be aware of, and actively supporting, the work of your local museum, library or archive in all these areas. We hope, with this publication, we can inspire your 'championship' further. In it we have laid out clear arguments as to how museums, libraries and archives contribute to these agendas, provided case studies of innovative and effective projects and a list of further resources to support the sector's case.

With your enlightened support and leadership, museums, libraries and archives can, and will continue to, contribute so much to your community.



Helen Jackson, Chief Executive, MLA South East
August 2008



South East region

The South East region covers the historic counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, West & East Sussex and Kent

74 local authorities, including 7 county councils with 55 district authorities and 12 unitary councils – the largest number of local authorities in any English region

8.2 million people in 3.6 million households, making this one of the most densely populated areas of the UK

Economically the region is strong, accounting for more than 15% of UK GVA, the second largest share of any of the English regions and providing 4.3 million jobs

Third largest English region after the South West and the East of England in terms of geographical area

Lowest level of public investment per head of any English region

Museums

- Over 8 million visits to the region's museums and galleries each year
- 45% of all adults in the South East have visited a museum or gallery *
- At least 66% of the region's primary schools and 57% of secondary schools use South East museums. The number of South East schools engaging with museum-based learning is increasing year on year **
- There are more than 300 museums and galleries in the South East – more than any other English region – about 260 of which are Registered/ Accredited by MLA
- Well established museum services include Brighton and Hove, Dover, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Portsmouth and Reading
- Museums employ around 4000 paid staff and over 7,000 volunteers
- Museums in the South East attract a tourism visitor spend of £224 million ***

* (In the 12 months prior to their interview: Taking Part Annual Report 2006/07, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2008)

** Museum related learning in the South East, MLA South East/South East Museum Hub 2008

*** Contribution of museums, libraries and archives to the visitor economy, MLA South East 2008

Libraries

- Libraries in the South East receive an estimated 45.5 million visits a year and deal with 6 million enquiries *
- 48% of all adults in the South East have visited a library in the last 12 months *
- There are 559 public library service points and 72 mobile libraries in the region **
- Libraries in the South East employ over 3,100 people and 2,890 volunteers
- There is an estimated 3000 school libraries, many managed by volunteers

* In the 12 months prior to their interview: Taking Part Annual Report 2006/07, Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2008

** Public Library Statistics 2006–07 Actuals CIPFA 2007

Archives

- Over 1,500,000 internet searches for archives in the South East in the last 6 years
- Archives are a boost to the South East's economy. For 87% of users, visiting the archive is their main reason for visiting an area, and while there 29% ate out locally and 36% used local shops and services
- 77% of people visiting archives in the South East are researching their family history. 9/10 people learn something as they visit archives in the South East
- 4.9% of adults in the South East have visited an archive and 71% of them said they attended once or twice a year *
- There are 377 archive repositories and collections in the South East, second only to London

** In the 12 months prior to their interview: Taking Part Annual Report 2006/07, Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2008*

How museums, libraries
and archives contribute



◀ Guy and his three children – Sebi, Bruno and Rosa – enjoy the opportunity to share some story telling from the wide range of books in the new Jubilee Library in Brighton

Stronger and safer communities

How do museums, libraries and archives contribute?

82% of people feel that it is important that their local town or city has a museum or art gallery.

96% of the population agrees “Libraries provide a valuable service to their local community”.

72% of visitors see archives as strengthening family and community identity.

Centres of the community

- Museums, libraries and archives are unique social and civic spaces: trusted, safe and suitable for all age groups and sections of the community to use. Very few local places are as open and accessible.
- They often offer space for community groups to meet, providing opportunities for people to work collaboratively and contributing to a sense of belonging.
- Many services are finding creative and cost effective ways to co-locate with other services thus providing more accessible, and complementary services for the community.

Co-location in the South East

Odiham library in Hampshire is co-located with police services, Jubilee Library in Brighton with an arts venue, St Barbe Museum in Lymington with the tourist information centre and Winchester Discovery Centre with exhibition and performance spaces.



◀ Ted is a retired naval architect who spent much of his career working in Chatham Dockyard and has now returned as a volunteer helper in the Museum

Community understanding and identity

Four out of five visitors to regional museums said their visit helped them to understand more about their local area and its people.

- Libraries act as information hubs for people to find out what is happening in their community and exchange news about their activities.
- Libraries offer free and low cost access to the Internet via the lottery funded, national 'People's Network'. In the first year of operation over 50,000 people nationwide used the People's Network for projects to support their local community.
- Museums and archives care for collections (maps, artifacts, records, archeological finds, art) that tell the unique story of a community and its heritage.

My Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove Museum and Gallery initiated the creation of a living history website called My Brighton and Hove. The site is built and edited by volunteers and provides a forum for people to share their memories, photographs, knowledge and opinions about the city as it is today and as it was

in the past. The site is a ground-breaking, award-winning and much-valued community resource. Over 2,000 visitors a day use the site and many users have commented on its capacity to increase their knowledge and understanding of Brighton and Hove and its people.



Meeting needs of excluded groups

- There are 72 mobile libraries in the South East that reach out to different communities helping to tackle rural exclusion, or as satellite units to hospitals and care homes. Mobile services bring requested items to remote locations for free, promote citizens' involvement and extend access to ICT across the South East.
- Libraries reach people at risk of social exclusion due to their language, culture or abilities, working with them to identify stock needs or supporting story telling across different cultures. They also support the reading and information needs of vulnerable sections of the community.
- Cultural activities provided and hosted by museums and libraries can help to divert young people away from criminal activity or anti-social behaviour. They can also provide targeted support to young people disaffected by formal learning.



Towner on the Town, Eastbourne

For the last six years the Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne has led this unique outreach project, using visual art to challenge and develop young people at risk of social exclusion, older people with health problems and those within the criminal justice system.

A range of projects are developed and measured in partnership with local organisations (including The Turnaround Community Detox Programme, Positive Activities for

Young People, East Sussex Youth Offending Team and The Eastbourne Health Improvement Partnership) and have proven the part galleries can play in deterring substance misuse and criminal activity, improving the self-esteem and employment prospects of disenfranchised young people, and reducing fear of crime throughout the community.

Following major inward investment, the Towner will be relocated to a new, purpose-built site in 2008 – the New Cultural Centre, where it will continue to deliver and expand its cultural programmes for the hard to reach.

Involving people in their community

- Museums and archives engage with local people, collecting 'hidden histories' and personal recollections to update the story of their community.

The People's History, Milton Keynes

This was a lottery-funded oral history project that sought to record the story of those whose lives had been affected by the development of the new town, including residents from the Somali, Chinese, Italian and Indian communities. The gathered material was presented in an exhibition that toured libraries, schools, colleges and community centres, helping to increase understanding of the diverse communities living within the town.



- Museums, libraries and archives also provide material to enrich the teaching of Citizenship as part of the National Curriculum in schools, and in post-16 formal and informal learning, helping to bring about a community-centred attitude of mind, appreciating diversity and participating in community development.
- Many museums, libraries and archives encourage people to be more actively involved in their communities by volunteering.



Chatham Historic Dockyard

This was nominated for the 2004 ODPM Sustainable Communities Award for the regeneration of the Dockyard site. It receives 15,000 volunteer hours support every year.

Community renewal and regeneration

- Museum and library developments have the potential to transform the local environment by producing new landmark buildings. These can radically improve the quality of the surrounding public spaces and facilities and genuinely boost the profile of an area, becoming a source of pride for the communities in which they are based.
- Libraries can be at the cutting edge of new developments, facilitating engagement with the wider community by hosting consultations that build connections between developers, existing and new communities.

- Museum services often sustain and revitalise historic buildings that play a significant role in defining a community's identity. One example of this is the Fleur de Lis Museum in Faversham which has been the catalyst for the sensitive and imaginative restoration of several sixteenth century buildings now publicly accessible.

Jubilee Library, Brighton

Winner of the South East England RIBA Award 2005.

Operational project with the best design – 2005 PFI Awards.

Named BSJ/CIBSE Major Project of the Year. Commended as an 'exemplary piece of urban development' by CABI. And on the shortlist for both the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award, and the RIBA Stirling Prize.

The Jubilee Library in Brighton opened in 2005. The new £14m landmark building was part of the large scale regeneration project for Jubilee Square.

The library offers a modern contemporary space for information provision with a number of major art installations. In addition the library is an exemplary building for energy efficiency and

also provides conference facilities for commercial and community use. Local residents were on board from a very early stage – invited to regular, well-attended public meetings to help influence the final design.





◀ Justyna and Adam's parents are Polish and the family have recently settled in this country. They enjoy visiting Chertsey Museum and learning about life in the area in the 20th century

Children and young people

How do museums, libraries and archives contribute?

Pioneers of learning

"Learning to read is probably the most important single factor in school success, and nothing contributes to success in early literacy as much as exposure to books."

- Children who are introduced to books and reading at an early age do better at school. All libraries in the South East take part in Bookstart, a national scheme that places books for babies directly into the hands of new parents. Research shows that Bookstart children do better in school in both literacy and numeracy.
- Museums, and increasingly archives too, offer a range of exciting learning activities for children, including at pre-school age, from museum activity backpacks, interactive displays, to half term activities and family fun days.
- All libraries in the South East take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, a national campaign that engages young people in reading activities during the summer holidays. In some areas such as Kent and Hampshire this has now been extended to family reading activities.
- Many museums and libraries in the South East provide extended support for students, through mechanisms such as homework clubs, teenage reading groups and e-learning resources.
- Museums and libraries actively support 14–19 year olds, meeting specific information needs, running activities such as teenage reading groups, creating partnerships with careers services and providing a neutral space for study.



◀ Abi and her sisters have been visiting the Headspace area in the new High Wycombe Library: they especially enjoy using the IT facilities and keeping up with friends on Bebo

Headspace

Folkestone's Headspace was one of the first of 20 'Book Bars'

set up across England. Young people aged 16 to 24 from a relatively deprived community were consulted and given ownership of all aspects of setting up the Book Bar, choosing the furniture and books, working with design consultants on branding, style and choice of title. Headspace was the title chosen by the Folkestone group and this eventually became the national brand. The young people showed their commitment to the project by producing a DVD for the launch and working late to get everything ready in time.

The young people have been able to improve their self-confidence, develop practical skills such as budgeting, and been able to work towards volunteering qualifications such as the Youth Achievement Award.

Staff of Kent County Council libraries and archives have been able to widen their experience of working with young people, and staff and users of the Youth Service are now much more aware of what libraries can offer them.

- Public libraries in the South East work closely, or are linked, with various schools and School Library Services. Some are co-located with schools to provide a comprehensive service to communities unable to access traditional town centre sites.
- Evidence shows that the quality of children's learning is enhanced by access to learning outside the classroom. Museums and archives support many aspects of the National Curriculum across a wide range of subjects through visits, outreach work and loan boxes.



Barton enjoys Music, Libraries, Arts and Culture (BEMLAC)

A pilot partnership between The Oxfordshire Museum, County Music Service, Headington Library and Bayards Hill Primary School, that aimed to encourage social inclusion, celebrate cultural diversity and involve parents in their children's learning.

Activities included a visit to The Oxford Museum, African drumming and Indian dance sessions at school, African and Indian art and a visit to the library with storytelling. Sessions took place in and out of school and parents were invited to join their children. The work was shared through a series of concerts, displays and a final exhibition.

Working as a team gave confidence to the pupils and they learned to appreciate the diversity of talent amongst their class peers. The pilot showed schools, children and parents the value of taking part in cultural activities.

The after-school sessions allowed parents /carers to share the enjoyment of learning a new skill with their child. 'One father consistently came to the African drumming workshop with his son. The boy was initially quite quiet when the workshops were in school time, but really blossomed when his dad came.'

Meeting needs of vulnerable children and young people

- Many libraries in the South East work with a range of agencies (education, social services, refugee workers, schools and foster carers) to support looked-after children and young people by offering tailored homework and reading support.

Imagined Lives, East Sussex

East Sussex Imagined Lives engaged young people from two care homes in East Sussex and a group of young people in foster care in a creative project using archive materials to explore what life was like for looked-after children in



the past. Through working with East Sussex County Council Record Office the young people looked at living and working conditions for children in Victorian times, particularly for children in care. The project helped develop the literacy levels of the participants, promoted discussion and collaboration among the young people and increased their sense of citizenship through discussions on history and location.

- Museums, libraries and archives have developed projects that target young people disaffected by formal education, and within the criminal justice system.

Project Hero, Reading

Based at a Young Offenders Institute in Reading, staff at Reading Museum and Library Service worked to raise young offenders' self esteem, enhance their key skills, and contribute to the positive mental health of participants. Using graphic novels from the Prison Library, and artefacts from the Museum, the project inspired the young men to draw, read and write creatively, develop social interaction skills and foster a team spirit.



"They've actually started thinking about each other – a transformation." (Mr. Day, Prison Officer).

- Libraries are partners in the government's Sure Start programme, which aims to increase the availability of childcare for all children, support emotional development for young children and support parents in their aspirations towards employment. This allows libraries to target some of the hardest to reach families within the community.



◀ PJ works in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and calls into the John Pounds Healthy Living Centre most weekdays to use the IT equipment in the library. The library is co-located with a GP surgery, making it very easy for patients to access health information

Adult health and well-being

How do museums, libraries and archives contribute?

Trusted sources of information

In Gateshead a study showed that almost one in two respondents had accessed health information through libraries, and of the 48% who accessed health information, 35% said that the library service had actually contributed to improving their health.

The Laser Foundation's report 'Libraries Impact Project' July 2005, looking at libraries role in providing health information concluded that there is powerful evidence that libraries' have a wider role in supporting public health.

- Public libraries have a well-established role in providing access to health information and resources through leaflets, books, and expert advice, and more recently through the People's Network.
- The role of libraries in reducing health inequalities and supporting carers of older people has been acknowledged in the South East of England Health Strategy (February 2008).
- These library services are strengthened through the work of regional partnerships such as the Health Information Partnership between NHS Librarians, NHS Direct and public libraries.
- Libraries also liaise directly with health groups to support local and national health campaigns e.g. National No Smoking day.



◀ Mary and her children – Max, Daren, William and Joanna – join in the fun of a Bouncing Babies and Rhymes session at Dover Library

World Mental Health Day, West Berkshire

In the South East, Newbury Library hosted a day of events to promote 2005 World Mental Health Day. Working with West Berkshire Mental Health Forum they used the theme of food for good mental and physical health with quizzes, tea tasting, live music, healthy snacks and complementary therapies, thereby reaching a far broader section of the community than the more traditional health providers.

- In addition, many public libraries are near to or even co-located with community or health centres.

The Ebbisham Centre, Epsom, Surrey

This is a shared library, Learning Centre, medical centre and gym. It holds themed days in association with The Centre e.g. 'Lifestyle Day' focusing on Healthy Living, Fitness, Food and Fun. The centre aims to foster the general health and well-being of the local community through offering a variety of social, recreational and leisure activities.



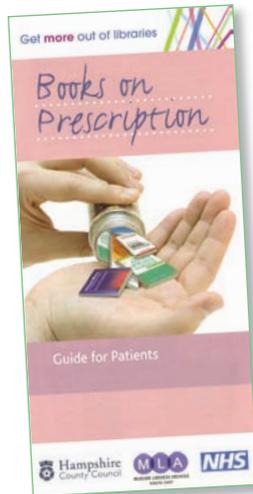
The John Pounds Healthy Living Centre, Portsmouth

This has recently opened in Portsmouth, offering leisure services, youth centre, public library, classrooms/IT training facilities and local offices for Police and Housing Services. It includes a GP Surgery and new residential housing as part of the regeneration of an inner city area.

Improving the health of communities

Improving mental health

There is strong evidence that reading benefits mental health and the social interaction of reading groups can encourage those suffering mild to moderate stress, depression, anxiety and social isolation to discover alternative coping mechanisms.



- Libraries and museums have established themselves as key partners with Primary Care Trusts, helping to develop and deliver services aimed at improving mental health.
- Bibliotherapy is being developed among many libraries in the South East. 'Books on Prescription' (the use of self-help books allowing the patient to read and understand the problem) and 'Books can Help' (the reading of fiction that explains through someone else's eyes similar issues relating to the patient/reader) are targeted at primary care patients with mild to moderate mental health problems.
- They also provide opportunities for volunteering, which is recognised as a positive influence on mental health and a source of skills development.

Working with children and young people

Sure Start, Dover

This programme's vision is to strengthen the community to improve the health, education and well-being of families and children before and after birth and up to age four. Libraries are involved in supporting this programme through the Breakfast Clubs. This involves the whole family, and aims to promote healthy eating, in conjunction with using free library services such as the Internet and book loans on relevant subjects.

Working with older people

- Public libraries in the South East also offer services to housebound readers and those in residential and sheltered housing, supporting positive mental health by combating exclusion and offering opportunities for interaction and reading.
- Museums, libraries and archives, both public and community-led, provide excellent and unique resources for reminiscence work helping older people unlock long-forgotten memories, and contributing their valuable memories to the historical record thus improving self esteem and well-being.

Working with disabled people

- Museums and archives also offer a range of services and facilities for people with disabilities. An ongoing museum development programme, funded by Renaissance in the Regions, also provides free access audits and modest financial support, to make venues more accessible across the South East.
- Public libraries in the South East have adaptive software for the People's Network terminals that includes screen-reading software, text highlighting and mouse alternatives as well as many other facilities for disabled users. There are also 18 reading groups for visually impaired readers in libraries in the South East.



eye2eye, Portsmouth
Portsmouth Library Service won the 'Libraries Changes Lives' award for 2003 for work that used ICT training with visually impaired people, 'eye2eye'.



◀ Denis and Eileen are researching their family histories (they are both originally from the Basingstoke area, although relocated to Weymouth in the 1960s). They are visiting Hampshire Record Office in Winchester in order to locate documents related to their forebears

Local economy

How do museums, libraries and archives contribute?

Supporting local enterprise

- Libraries (directly or in partnership) provide access to resources and information that provide an invaluable, low cost information service to small businesses and start ups to help them develop and grow.
- Half of library services in the South East are involved in the People's Network Real-Time Enquiry Service. This provides 24/7 access to library and information professionals in England through chat and e-mail technology.
- The People's Network is also an invaluable resource for job seekers providing access to job opportunities and the space to apply for them online.

Supporting the visitor economy

- Museums and archives play a central role in heritage tourism.
- There are around 21 museums in the South East that receive in excess of 100,000 visitors per year. Flagship libraries in the South East include the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford and the new Jubilee Library in Brighton.
- Overall museums, libraries and archives in the South East are estimated to support 19,956 jobs, directly and indirectly, within the visitor economy.
- Tourist visitors to museums, libraries and archives spend £229,981,260 in the South East's visitor economy. The vast majority of this expenditure is attributed to museum visits (£223,974,525 or 97%). Libraries and archives are thought to contribute £6m in visitor expenditure.



◀ Ama is studying law at her home university in Seattle, USA and has been on an international student exchange programme at St Anne's College, Oxford. She has taken advantage of a day off from studies to visit Oxford University's Natural History Museum

- The market for family history tourism appears to be growing via internet family history research. Archives are also acknowledged for their support role in the tourism sector. For example in Brighton, archive services have played a key role in their Blue Plaques Scheme, which provides public realm heritage information throughout the city.

Roald Dahl Museum, Great Missenden, Bucks

Since opening in June 2005, the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre has dedicated itself to challenging and exceeding visitor expectations. Using much-loved characters as its theme, the Museum immerses visitors in the subversive world of Roald Dahl, with the intention of sparking imaginations and enthusiasm for word play, stories and creative writing among people of all ages. Some of the most popular activities include making your own stop-frame animation film and recording your dreams in a dream bottle.

In 2007, it won the South East England Tourism's Award for Best Small Tourist Attraction and in April 2008, it won Gold, in the same category for the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence. Judges were won over by the Museum's high standards in content, presentation, visitor experience, and inspirational qualities and were particularly impressed by its free story-telling sessions, "motivating and



inspiring young children to explore their own creative potential".

The Museum has also won British Guild of Travel Writers' Best Tourism Project 2006 and Civic Trust Award 2007.

Culture-led regeneration and place making

- Museums, libraries and archives can play a central role in large-scale regeneration projects. They can act as a catalyst for inward investment as well as increasing civic pride. The Heritage Lottery Fund has invested over £473 million in the South East over the past ten years in schemes such as the Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne and a major new museum for the Mary Rose in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.
- The Jubilee Library in Brighton, Discovery Centres at Winchester and Gosport and the Lightbox at Woking have proven to be exemplary in the use of public facilities for regeneration purposes whilst also enhancing the visitor economy.
- Museums, libraries and archives have a vital part to play in the new and expanding communities that are planned for the South East. Along with other cultural facilities, they create sustainable communities, bringing people together and creating high quality places where people want to live and work with a strong sense of identity.

The Lightbox, Woking

Designed by Marks Barfield Architects, creators of the London Eye.

Built by a well established family firm, R Durnell & Son.

Winner of 49th Civic Trust Award, RIBA South East 2008 and The Art Fund Prize 2008.

Civic Trust judges conclude that “bold architectural design and extensive public consultation” mean it is “likely to become a popular landmark for Woking.”



The Lightbox in Woking is an award winning museum and gallery in the centre of Woking, Surrey. It began life in 1993, when 70 local people got together to create a gallery and museum for their town. Following over 40 pieces of consultation, significant fundraising and lobbying, their vision became a reality when the new building opened in September 2007.

“On an exiguous construction budget of £4.1m, they have designed an ingenious jewel that has immediately become the best building in Woking town centre.” – Stephen Bailey, The Observer, September 2007.



Discovery Centre, Gosport

One of two traditional libraries redeveloped by Hampshire County Council under a Discovery Centre brand. The Gosport Discovery Centre brings together a library, art gallery, cinema, performance space and coffee shop, and provides activities for young people, helping to revitalize the area.

- In addition, Canterbury's Library and Royal Museum (co-located) is to undergo a refurbishment in 2009 which aims to develop a wider audience and increase engagement with residents and visitors. The library will benefit from a number of additional functions and improvements. Co-location with the museum will maintain a footfall of tourist visitors to the site.

Basic skills: recruiting and re-engaging adult learners

56% of learners on library-based basic skills programmes had not been involved in any formal adult training before enrolling on a course at a library.

15% of respondents had been recruited to basic skills courses as a result of library events for families, particularly activities delivered as part of local Sure Start programmes.

Londoners Need to Read, ALM London, 2004

- Museums, libraries and archives have a high success rate in engaging and retaining adult learners, including those who have previously had poor experiences of formal learning. They are associated with learning that is voluntary, self directed and non-judgemental.
- Museums, libraries and archives can also provide relaxed and informal environments for recruitment of new basic skills learners by mainstream learning providers.
- Public libraries worked in partnership with the BBC on its biggest adult literacy campaign ever – RaW (Read and Write). The main drive was to remove stigmas around adult literacy, and to encourage adults who are bored by reading and writing through accessible informal activity.



Milton Keynes enrolment

Adult community enrolment sessions held in libraries in Milton Keynes have resulted in a high take up by basic skills students. Tutors feel this is due to the individual being able to enter the library without having to initiate contact i.e. filling in forms, answer questions and sign in. They can approach the enrolment desk in their own time.

- Family learning initiatives can be an important means of engaging and re-engaging parents and carers in learning. Museums, libraries and archives have long experience of running family activities and events.

Supporting basic skills learning

- Museums, libraries and archives offer a wealth of resources that can support formal learning courses. Many libraries in the South East have formal partnerships with Learn Direct and other course providers.
- Skills for Life reading material is available in most public libraries in the South East and can support both reading for pleasure and learning. Many libraries also have resources for tutors, and library staff can take or loan books to basic skills classes, encouraging discussion and independent library use.

Basic skills material, Kent

In Kent, 17 libraries across the county stock special collections of basic skills materials for Adult Education tutors to borrow. A library use module is also being piloted within the Adult Education Basic Skills programme, and once evaluated will be rolled out across the county. (KCC Library & Archive Strategy 2004–14).

- The rich and diverse collections held by museums and archives can also provide a motive and inspiration to learn.

Basic skills training, Hampshire Record Office

Archives are using the growing interest in family history to support a range of skills development, including basic skills. Hampshire Record Office has developed basic skills awareness training for front-line staff. It runs regular 'beginners' sessions for people keen to research family and local history, which involve elements of basic skills development including writing, reading and search skills. It also runs education workshops for schools and colleges.



- Staff in many museums, archives and libraries have training in information, advice and guidance and are experienced in signposting users to the right learning route to take.
- Museums, libraries and archives offer taster or introductory courses which encompass literacy, numeracy and language skills development.
- Every library in the South East offers free access to the internet through the People's Network. The People's Network has also attracted new users to libraries and to learning. Portsmouth Libraries report that over 30% of users are now aged 16–24.

A national survey of the People's Network in 2003 revealed that in the previous year 105,600 IT training sessions were run in public libraries and 62,400 people reported gaining a new skill.

Useful resources

Championing museums, libraries and archives

There are many other case studies and resources that advocate the value of museums, libraries and archives to community agendas

Case studies and evidence

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
www.research.mla.gov.uk

South East Local Area Agreement Toolkit
www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit

South East Cultural Observatory
www.seco.org.uk/welcome.html

Living Places: Stronger Communities Through Culture (currently under development)
www.living-places.org.uk

South East England Development Agency
www.seeda.co.uk/Publications/Strategy/docs/CaseforCulture.pdf

Beacon Council examples: culture and sport for hard to reach groups in Eastbourne
www.beacons.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageld=5098683

Culture South West: Culture Matters
www.culturesouthwest.org.uk/downloads/file.asp?Filename=culture-matters-final-.pdf

Research into the Impact of Bookstart
www.bookstart.co.uk/Press-and-Research/Research/Bookstart-studies/Bookstart-and-shared-reading-2007

Advice and guidance

Culture South East
www.culturesoutheast.org.uk/pages/content.asp

South East Local Area Agreement Toolkit
www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit

South East England Centre for Excellence - Developing Skills to Build Sustainable Communities across the South East
www.seeda.co.uk/News_&_Events/Press_Releases/2004/20040723.asp

East Midlands: Elected Member briefing pack
www.cipem.org.uk/councillor-briefings.html

Guidance in Integrating Culture and Sport into Local Area Agreements in the East Midlands (December 2007)
www.cipem.org.uk/LAA-briefings.html

Delivering Local Area Agreements - the contribution of cultural activity (March 2008) MLA London/Arts Council England
www.mlalondon.org.uk/priorities/index.cfm?NavigationID=406

Relevant policy and strategy

Regional

South East Local Area Agreement Toolkit

www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit

Regional Economic Strategy Implementation Plan

www.seeda.co.uk/res/RES_Implementation_Plan

South East Plan, South East England Regional Assembly

www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/seplan.html

Regional Sustainability Framework, South East England Regional Assembly

www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/sustainability_rsf.html

South East of England Health Strategy

www.sepho.org.uk/viewResource.aspx?id=11138

Government Office of the South East: Culture and Leisure

www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/cultureAndLeisure

National

Department of Culture Media and Sport, Targets and Priorities

www.culture.gov.uk/our_priorities.aspx

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Corporate Plan 2008-11

www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//C/corporate_plan_2008_13176.pdf

MLA Policy on Sustainable Communities

www.mla.gov.uk/policy/Communities/sustainable

Developing museums, libraries and archives

Improvement Tools

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

Resources for museums, libraries and archives DVD, MLA South East

Improvement resources section on MLA Council website

www.mla.gov.uk/policy/improvement

Department for Culture Media & Sport (DCMS) Cultural Pathfinders

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Publications/archive_2007/lessons_culturalpathfinders.htm

Collections Link

Practical advice for the sector

www.collectionslink.org.uk

Local Government Association

Local government cultural improvement

www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=337596

Unlocking Local Treasure: collections management and the local authority museum

www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=337575

Improvement & Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA)

Culture and sport improvement toolkit

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelD=7921050

Cultural Connections section

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelD=76729

The Cultural Olympiad

From autumn 2008 until the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, the UK will host the Cultural Olympiad, an opportunity for all local authorities to work with their communities, inspire and involve people and mark a significant event in most people's lives. To find out further information on the opportunities available, visit:

Plans for Museums, Libraries and Archives

www.mla.gov.uk/programmes/settingthepace

Plans for 2012 in the South East

www.seeda.co.uk/Work_in_the_Region/2012_Games

Plans for the Culture Olympiad nationally

www.london2012.com/plans/culture/index.php

Expansion in the South East

The South East region is planning for a significant period of growth, much of which will be channeled through key growth areas in the form of urban expansions and development of regional hubs such as Milton Keynes and Thames Gateway. This presents an opportunity for attracting funding from developers to enhance museum, library and archive facilities under section 106 of the 1990 Planning Act. To find out more about this, visit:

Public Libraries and Archives and New Development: A Standard Charge Approach

www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//P/Public_Libraries__Archives_and_New_Development__A_standard_charge_approach_13345.pdf

Featured project example Arts Council England, North West partnerships with Housing Market renewal areas - *New Communities, New Cultural Opportunities*

www.artscouncil.org.uk/subjects/projects.php?sid=27



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SOUTH EAST

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