

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 12 JULY 2013**

**Statement from: Cllr C N Worth, Executive Councillor for  
Libraries, Heritage, Culture**

### **Library Needs Assessment**

The way in which libraries are used is changing, not just in Lincolnshire, but across the country. In Lincolnshire, 82% of the population are not active borrowers, and book stock issued in the county in the last 10 years has dropped from 5 million to under 3 million items a year.

Smart phones, tablets, Kindles and new technology are changing the way we do things. The library service is changing, like it or not, and our vision for the future of the service is a comprehensive one, but one that remains both affordable and efficient.

Despite the need for change, our ambition is to keep all of Lincolnshire's libraries open. However, this is only going to work with the support of our local communities. We will support residents and organisations that step forward and lend a hand and by getting them more involved we think we can actually create a library service that's better tailored to each community's individual needs.

Successful changes have already taken place at a number of libraries, such as Saxilby and Waddington, improving services and getting better value for money. There is no reason why this will not work elsewhere – providing that's what local people want

### **Summer Reading Challenge**

The library service has been successful in securing a £71,100 grant from Arts Council England to work with Dance4, the regional dance agency, the University of Lincoln, local people and delivery partners to commission a choreographer to create a spectacular piece of dance and digital artwork developed in libraries across the county to be performed at the Frequency Festival in October 2013. This work links to the Summer Reading Challenge theme for 2013 which is *Creepy House*.

### **Reading Well: Books on Prescription**

On 11 July Reading Well: Books on Prescription, a new health and wellbeing initiative from The Reading Agency, is being re-launched in Lincoln. We have run a Books on Prescription service for the last eight years and this event is part of a nationwide celebration of the scheme which is now being rolled out across the country. The scheme uses reading to help the 6 million people in England who suffer from conditions such as depression and anxiety.

### **Renaissance at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life**

A £535k scheme to reduce energy consumption and improve the visitor experience at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life is nearing completion with the installation of a new outdoor play area in the courtyard. Other works have included the installation of more energy efficient lighting, a new CCTV system and redeveloped shop. Solar

panels are also due to be installed on one of the roofs of the Agricultural Gallery shortly.

Most of this scheme has been paid for by the Arts Council England's Renaissance programme, and a further £223k has been secured from the same programme for the *Bringing the Barracks to Life* project to introduce augmented reality technology to the galleries and to develop an interactive electronic guide to the museum, similar to those recently introduced at Gainsborough Old Hall and The Collection. Military history will be the key theme for this work since the museum is located in the 1857 Militia Barracks and it is the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in 2014.

### **Usher Gallery Commended**

The new pavilion entrance building to the Usher Gallery was commended by the Royal Society of Chartered Surveyors at their regional awards ceremony on April 2013.

### **Lincoln Castle**

It is now just under two years until the redevelopments at Lincoln Castle will be opened to coincide with the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta. Work continues apace, but as well as being committed to carrying out the work professionally we are also committed to keeping the public up to date with what is happening on the project. To that end, we have recently held two very successful events: an evening where local businesses could be the first to experience the new walk along the south wall and the 1000 Years of Traditional Crafts event which showcases the traditional skills that are available in the county and beyond.