



Comhairle Contae  
Átha Cliath Theas  
**South Dublin County Council**



South Dublin County  
Libraries Development Plan

2007-2011



## Mayor's Foreword

I am pleased to welcome the five year Development Plan for the Library Services. This plan is the result of extensive public consultation as befits a public orientated service. Submissions were received from the public as a result of newspaper notices as well as views put forward in a series of focus groups held through out the county. The degree of response from the public was very pleasing and shows the interest the public has in its library service.

The Development Plan is underpinned by the themes of customer care, access and social inclusion. These themes will be seen in one of the first initiatives from the plan which will be the opening of the newly extended County Library in Tallaght. This facility will integrate a new self service system with an enhanced ICT provision and a range of spaces that will cater for all customers needs whether it be studying, relaxing or browsing.

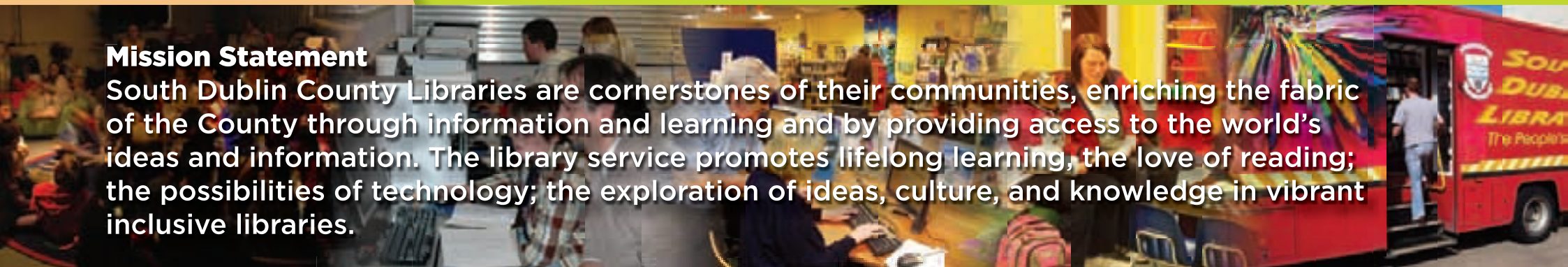
I would like to thank everyone involved in the formation of this plan and especially the library staff for their commitment to the development of a progressive library service.

I wish the Libraries Department every success in the implementation of this ambitious plan and I look forward to seeing all aspects of this plan coming to fruition in the next few years.

**Marie Corr, Mayor**

### **Mission Statement**

South Dublin County Libraries are cornerstones of their communities, enriching the fabric of the County through information and learning and by providing access to the world's ideas and information. The library service promotes lifelong learning, the love of reading; the possibilities of technology; the exploration of ideas, culture, and knowledge in vibrant inclusive libraries.



# Foreword

Public Libraries are both a very old and a very new idea. The modern library service of South Dublin Libraries is recognised for its strong customer service ethos and its innovative use of technology for improved service delivery. This Development Plan will address challenges and opportunities raised by the changing cultural, knowledge and information climate of the county over the next five years. A strengthened infrastructure and a stream lined responsive library service are the core objectives of this plan, along with the development of a skilled focused work force alert to the needs of the communities with whom they work.

Libraries are constantly changing and this is reflected in the range of initiatives that will be embarked upon in the future. The themes in this plan reflect the strategies and policies of the Council as set out in the Corporate Plan 2004-2009.

Our libraries are community spaces aimed at providing and embracing the cultural diversity that is present in Ireland today. The library service has greatly improved access to this space, and the facilities within the space, in recent years and this plan aims to build on these initiatives.

While recognising the critical role of books in contemporary libraries South Dublin Libraries will embrace emerging technologies and resources such as digital books and downloadable audio books over the next years. Technology has changed the face of libraries and ICT has enabled South Dublin County Libraries to help library users surf the net, download books, learn new skills, educate, entertain and inform themselves. The newly extended and re-imagined County Library in Tallaght will showcase these new technologies.

Contemporary libraries offer civic spaces for citizens to read, relax, surf and learn at every stage of their lives. Children are the readers and citizens of tomorrow and South Dublin Libraries customises a range of year round activities to help children engage in learning and artistic activity. Our schools library service works with over ninety four primary schools across the County to further enrich the learning experience of younger people. On going education in computing, languages, literature, music and the sciences further enhance the learning network of the County through our branch library service. The libraries are also actively involved in liaising with the university of the third age.

This development plan has as its main theme the improvement of the service to the library customer in all its forms. I look forward to seeing the objectives in this plan coming to fruition in the next five years.

**Joe Horan, County Manager**



## Creating a Library Service for the 21st Century

South Dublin County Libraries, in the heart of local communities, offer inviting and dynamic services in libraries that demand exploration.

As cornerstones of their neighbourhoods our libraries connect people to each other, to their local authority and to their greater community. The library service promotes and enriches the democratic, cultural, educational and economic life of this evolving and diverse area.

Our role is to promote universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment. New technologies extend access to global information beyond library walls. South Dublin County Libraries provide free and equitable access to public library services which meet the changing needs of a growing community.



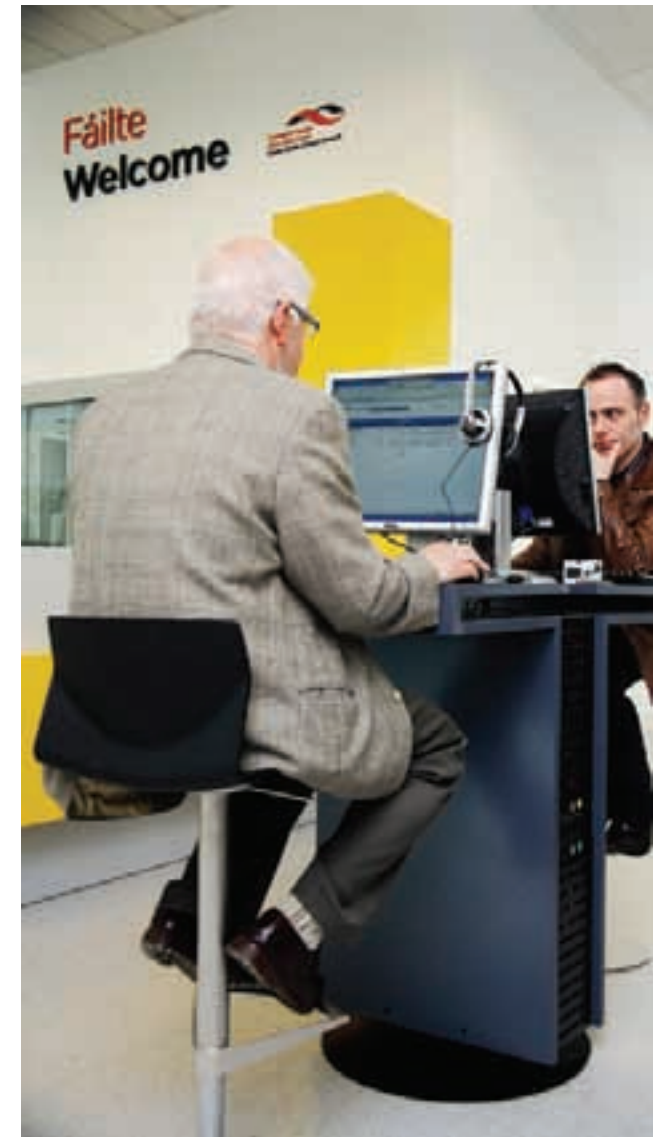
## The Plan in Context

The Library Development Plan is informed by several seminal documents which underpin its themes, objectives and actions including the Local Government Act of 2001 and the County Development Plan 2004-2010 and the South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan, Connecting With Communities

This plan also reflects the proposals contained in Towards 2016 regarding the modernisation of services, co-operation with community groups, measurement of performance, Performance Management Development System (PMDS), customer care, Partnership, health and safety, the National Disability Strategy and continued expansion of ICT services.

The plan is informed and builds on the recommendations and guidelines of national reports on the library system such as Branching Out and Joining Forces.

This Development Plan draws on these documents to set in place a framework for a modern, dynamic and holistic library service for the citizens of the County. The lifecycle framework for policy development and delivery as outlined in Towards 2016 is one which South Dublin County Libraries has always embraced. This approach to planning and service delivery underpins this document.



## Core Strands

### of the Libraries Development Plan 2007 – 2011

#### ICT

- Provide public access to Information and Communication Technologies throughout the Library Service, recognising the vital role this plays in the development of the knowledge economy within the County

#### Access and Inclusion

- Celebrate and support the increasing multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nature of our communities.
- Implement initiatives to promote e-Inclusion and address the digital divide, using the Council's network of local offices, libraries and service points.
- Ensure equality of access to our services and buildings for disabled customers through a progressive programme of access improvement works and the use of technology

#### Readers Services

- Develop a holistic approach to collection development coupled with reader centred stock policies.

## Local Studies

- Support and encourage the work of local cultural, heritage and historical groups in documenting and preserving the richness of the county's cultural heritage and memory.

## Marketing

- Develop public consultation techniques and channels in relation to formulation of policies and programmes.
- utilize the Council's network of community contact points such as local offices, community centres, and libraries.
- engaging with local and national media.

## Culture and Imagination

- Through the Public Library Service and Arts Programmes, the Council enriches the learning, cultural and artistic opportunities for communities. During the lifetime of this plan South Dublin County Libraries will enrich the developing cultural fabric of the County.

## Consultation Process

In preparing the Library Development Plan an extensive consultation process was undertaken. This process welcomed submissions from the public following a series of notices in newspapers and on the library website. Focus groups were conducted with non-library users throughout the County. Participants, in these focus groups, were drawn from the Clondalkin Traveller Development group, The Dolcain Community Development project, Tallaght Intercultural Action, An Cosán and Tallaght Youth Service.

Library staff and the Library Partnership group also made submissions. Recommendations made by these groups have been incorporated into this development plan.





## County Profile and Library Service

The administrative area of South Dublin covers an area of 223 km<sup>2</sup>. The population of the County stood at 246,935 in 2006, an increase of 8,100 (3.4%) over the previous four years. In South Dublin 29% of the population are 19 years or younger, 39% of the population under 25 years and a further 39% of the population range in age from 25-50 years. Some 11.5% of the population of the county is comprised of non-Irish which in itself presents interesting challenges for the development of services.

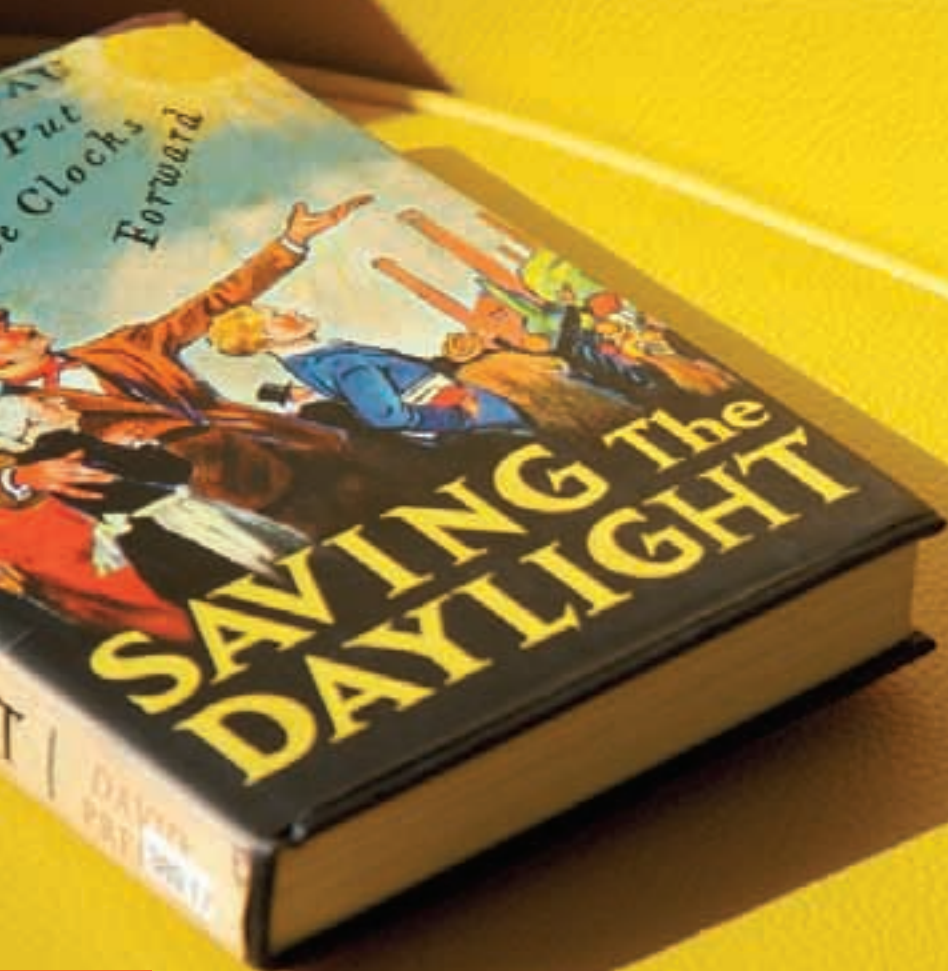
The Libraries together with Parks and Landscape Services form part of the Community Services of South Dublin Council.

There are full-time libraries at Ballyroan, Castletymon, Clondalkin, Lucan and (County) Tallaght, delivering 260.5 hours of service per week. Part-time libraries are at Whitechurch and at Stewart's Hospital, Palmerstown. Four mobile libraries traverse the County making 44 stops each month, visiting schools, community centres, day care centres and areas not currently served by a branch library.

Mobile Libraries also provide author visits to schools, arts and crafts events and story telling sessions. The Librarian at the Mobile Service is currently developing an advisory service to crèches in South Dublin. Mobile Library staff also co-ordinate the Home Library Service which visits over 60 housebound residents in South Dublin County on a monthly basis.

The School's Library Service seeks to promote and foster a love of reading amongst children in the County, working closely with its 99 primary schools. Staff are actively involved in the promotion of Family Literacy projects in a number of schools. A key objective is to raise the literacy levels of children and their families in the County.

Staff at the Libraries Department administrative headquarters are engaged in Strategic Planning; ICT and Service Development; Acquisitions and Reader Services Development and Resource Management. Support services to the branches are provided from Library Headquarters.



## Objective 1:

### Providing Welcoming Spaces: Library infrastructure

The current library service consists of five full-time libraries and two part-time libraries.

This is not adequate for the size of the county which covers an area of some 223 km<sup>2</sup> with a growing and diverse population. Many areas do not have easy access to a library building. An accessible, flexible and responsive library service point should exist at the heart of each community. Some of our existing branch libraries are constrained by their size and layout. This impacts on the levels of services and activities provided to customers. The plan addresses these issues and presents a blueprint for excellence in service development over the next five years. Flexibility will be of key importance in future planning and design.

In offering a plan which envisages the expansion of the number of service points across the County, South Dublin County Libraries acknowledges that constraints may be imposed by the availability of financial resources which could impinge on the delivery of the proposed action plan. Equally, adequate staffing is also crucial to the success of this plan.

#### Actions 2007-2011

- New library buildings/library hubs to be provided at: Adamstown, Clonburris, Liffey Valley, North Clondalkin, Palmerstown and the Rathcoole/Newcastle area.
- Existing library buildings in Tallaght, Ballyroan and Clondalkin will be extended to provide improved levels of service.
- The development of library collections and ICT provision in non-library buildings will be explored with the view to increasing access to library materials for citizens.
- The libraries will also explore opportunities to improve infrastructure which may occur during the life of this plan.

## Objective 2

### ICT – Service excellence through innovation

South Dublin County Libraries are widely recognised as innovative and cutting edge in the application of new technologies to service development. The Library service was the first in Ireland to introduce digital audio and e-books from its website [www.southdublinlibraries.ie](http://www.southdublinlibraries.ie). In recent years assistive technologies and improved software and hardware have been introduced across service points. RFID technologies are being implemented for improved customer service, Wi Fi has been installed in all the branch libraries and the mobile libraries now use 3G technology for service delivery. Continuing innovation in ICT service provision will be delivered through the following actions.





## Actions 2007 - 2011

- South Dublin County Libraries will future-proof ICT services to ensure flexibility in the implementation of all new technologies for enhanced service delivery and accessibility for staff and customers
- Communications infrastructure upgrade to build capacity for future development across all service points
- Three year cycle of hardware upgrade for all service points covering public and staff services
- Continuous upgrade of [www.southdublinlibraries.ie](http://www.southdublinlibraries.ie) to provide a website which serves as a virtual library providing access to a variety of online resources. The website will include the most contemporary version of the online catalogue, web pages for children, links to online databases and encyclopaedia as well as comprehensive programme and event listings for all library activities.
- Investigate the use of Web 2.0 for development of an interactive end user platform on the library website
- Download Zone for Children will offer children a range of books in many formats for downloading to a PC or portable device. This customized zone will be the first of its kind in Ireland.
- Continued development of the Library online catalogue with increased functionality and enhanced user interface
- Use of RFID technology interfaced with the library management system to deliver concise stock management services
- Move to next version of management information reporting to enable forensic analysis of activity statistics
- Digital Training Suite in the County Library will act as a centre of excellence for training in a range of ICT applications for staff and for library users. Training will range from basic skills to high end media design and development.
- Provide video conferencing facilities at the County Library to deliver webinar training facilities for library staff
- Digitisation of library in-house publications to incorporate them into Library digital collections.
- Access via library website to digital versions of business and political journals
- Enhanced levels of assistive technologies for customers with physical and intellectual difficulties
- Electronic Data Interchange rollout at Library HQ
- Overdue email alert to customers
- Detailed profiling of customers from registration data
- SMS texting of news items to customers
- Enhanced Wi fi solutions across all branches to offer added functionality for customers
- On line registration for customers from Library website
- Co-ordinated initiatives where appropriate with the South Dublin County Council's Connect project

## Objective 3

### Developing Inclusive and Equitable Spaces

Access and social inclusion are an integral part of “Connecting with Communities”, as outlined in the South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan 2004 – 2009. Measures to address poverty, exclusion and inequality are threaded throughout the plan.

South Dublin County Libraries provide a welcome and inclusive space for all citizens of the County.

Much has been achieved in the recent past to streamline access for citizens of the County. Membership and Internet access are free in South Dublin County Libraries and an ongoing refurbishment programme of has greatly improved physical access. Library opening hours are the longest in the country, multi lingual brochures and multi lingual collections are in place, assistive technologies expand access to ICT and hearing loops are in place in all branches.



## Actions 2007 - 2011

- Improved signage and guiding across all service points
- Install tactile markings in the libraries
- Improve the scope of the home library service
- Implement layout changes in the libraries to increase accessibility
- Wheelchair access to all areas of the branch libraries
- Wheelchair access to all large mobile libraries
- Provision of transit wheelchairs in branch libraries and height adjustable desks
- Explore the installation of library collections in non-library buildings
- Expand the amount of material available on-line
- Continue the digitisation of local studies materials
- Support the Changing Libraries initiative of the Library Council.
- Introduce on-line registration
- Increase and improve the provision of assistive technologies
- Review all aspects of improving access on a regular basis.
- Host "Getting Started Computer Training Programmes" for older people
- Universal design in all new library buildings and extensions.
- Increase awareness of services currently available through better promotion
- Encourage usage of services by engaging with community groups
- Continue to deliver English language classes in all branch libraries





## Objective 4

### Service Excellence: Resources

South Dublin County Libraries acknowledges that a quality library services can only be delivered by enthusiastic, motivated and trained staff. The Library service currently employs one hundred staff. The knowledge, experience and expertise of staff is a critical element in advancing the vision of this plan.





## Actions 2007-2011

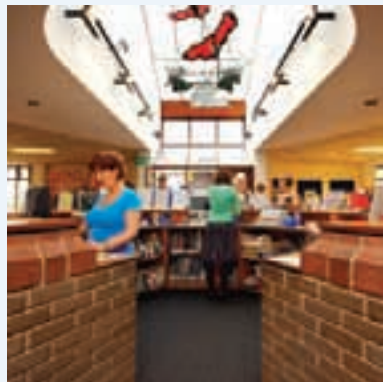
- South Dublin County Libraries will work in co-operation with the Human Resource Department of South Dublin County Council to ensure that the strategic objectives of this plan be progressed by ensuring staffing levels are maintained and improved as current and future services are delivered
  - The library service will continue to progress the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System to enhance work performance, deliver excellence in customer service and ensure the delivery of the Council's Strategic objectives.
  - Recognising the importance of the Public Library Staff Education Scheme, South Dublin County Libraries re-iterates its commitment to the professional education and development of its staff. Staff will continue to be encouraged to pursue professional education. Support will also be given to those members of staff who choose to pursue an educational qualification through distance learning.
  - South Dublin County Libraries will commence the roll-out of Frontline an e-learning training programme for library staff to the entire staff in conjunction with An Comhairle Leabharlanna and Opening the Book.
  - Staff will be facilitated and encouraged to participate in Workplace Partnership to progress the management of change
  - The Libraries will continue to ensure all staff are conscious of Health and Safety obligations through the regular delivery of education and training.
  - In further promoting social inclusiveness, South Dublin County Libraries will continue to work with relevant agencies to provide work experience opportunities for people with disabilities
- Adequate financial resources are crucial to the implementation of this Development Plan. Funding of library services to the highest national and international standards will be achieved by:
- availing of all capital grants for the library building programme and new services development from central government
  - effective financial planning to ensure adequate funding for revenue expenditure.
  - the library service will continue to improve expenditure on library stock, provision of I.C.T and opportunities for lifelong learning for all our customers
  - effective and efficient use of library budgets to ensure value for money in service delivery
  - sourcing of goods and services to achieve value for money objectives
  - planning, in budget preparation, for new services and developments

## Objective 5

### Developing Collections: Holistic Reader Centred Services

South Dublin County Libraries existing stock policy which is informed by the IFLA/ UNESCO Public Library Manifesto and CILIP Guidelines states:

*“The policy must ensure that the library community have access to a variety of materials in a variety of formats and to ensure that materials are available as speedily as possible”*





## Actions 2007 - 2011

- Provide a broad based and varied stock appropriate to each library's size and in accordance with users needs.
- Stock in each branch will serve to enrich the culture and heritage of the county.
- Provide a comprehensive stock in alternative formats. Large Print, Audio Books and Digital Audio Books
- Continue to build on our existing stock of film on DVD, which currently stands at 5,000 titles. This will include classic films, foreign language titles, children's films and T.V. programmes.
- Build on our existing stock of downloadable titles to include ebooks, audio books, film and music.
- Continue to support and promote the Irish language by the provision of a comprehensive and relevant collection of Irish language material.
- Children's services will provide core collections designed to encourage both independent readers and children with reading difficulties.
- Materials will be purchased specifically for children with reading difficulties. Where possible our Schools Library Service staff will identify these reading schemes and provide written guides to accompany them.
- Continue to provide reading material to book-clubs, both library based and independent groups
- Establish book-clubs specifically for children, teenagers and the active-aged.
- Build on our foreign language collections to provide for our new communities
- Develop a training course on stock management for all library staff.
- Each library will carry out a stock audit to ascertain gaps, weaknesses or overstock in the collections.
- Continue to support adult literacy programmes
- Review the layout of the stock in the branches and establish if new designs encourages greater usage of library materials



## Objective 6

### Centres for Learning and Exploration

South Dublin County Libraries are centres for learning and exploration for adults and children across the County. Libraries offer customers a safe place to explore the world of knowledge and information while stimulating discovery and research. Over the next five years South Dublin County Libraries will strive to provide more effective learning opportunities to all citizens of the County through:





## Action Plan 2007 - 2011

- Working with other agencies and schools to support the formal learning frameworks across the County
- Identify informal and return to learning initiatives and resource and support these as appropriate
- Create new learning opportunities for customers using the ICT resources of the new County Library
- Provide life long learning programmes that reflect the diversity of learning styles and learning needs across the County
- Develop a Family Learning Programme targeted at parents of young children to improve learning outcomes for all



## Objective 7

### Local Studies – Preserving the County's Memory

In our Local Studies Collection, South Dublin County Libraries hold the memory of the County. Our role is to ensure that this memory is available for dissemination to all citizens of the County both now and into future generations. Many items have already been digitized and the libraries publish, in partnership with local authors, a number of new titles each year. Development of this service centres around the digitization of material, for ease of access, and the creation of Local Studies web pages through which this material will be freely accessible.



## Actions Plan 2007 - 2011

- Establish a Family History Centre
- Continue to provide Local Studies resource packs to schools when requested
- Strive to improve efficiency and service delivery by developing appropriate performance indicators and measurement techniques for Local Studies services
- Ensure that all materials are preserved in the best possible condition, and handled appropriately.
- Establish a publications grant scheme.
- Continue to promote Local Studies in South Dublin by developing and promoting new initiatives and by hosting high-profile exhibitions, talks and lectures
- Establish a Local Studies Prize for the best school project
- Host a Local Studies day for South Dublin Local History Societies and/or establish a Federation of South Dublin Local History Societies.
- Digitisation will be continued as a means to improve access to Local History materials for library users, teachers and school children, remote users and for the preservation of rare and valuable material.
- Historic maps of South Dublin dating back to the 16th century will be made available on the web
- Establish a Podcasting facility for oral history, continue to collect oral histories and look at establishing a local studies blog to facilitate hosting new material and to inform users about Local Studies events and activities
- Ensure library exhibitions are made available in electronic form.
- Make existing publications available via the library website site as e-books or Audio e-books
- Host a Junior Oidhreacht Photographic Competition and an oral history / video competition.
- Collect Traveller History especially Traveller Oral History





## Objective 8

### Children's and Schools Services

South Dublin County Libraries have invested much time and resources into creating a high standard of library provision for the children of the County. There are children's sections in each of the branch libraries and on the mobile libraries. The School's Library Service provides a service to ninety nine primary schools across the County. An extensive development programme is delivered each year, which encourages and fosters reading and promotes the greater use of library services.







## Actions 2007 - 2011

- Each library serving children should be bright and welcoming and where possible be designed to be child-friendly and mindful of children and teenagers with special needs.
- All service points will hold core collections designed to encourage readers of all abilities.
- Librarians purchasing stock for children will ensure that it reflects the needs of the community that they are serving.
- Where demand dictates, service points will support homework clubs in the provision of study space and junior stock.
- The introduction of Family Learning and Family Literacy projects will foster literacy amongst parents and children.
- Communication between librarians and their community will continue to be developed through ongoing liaison with teachers and agencies who deal with children.
- The hosting of a Readers Day for children or related to children reading will be investigated.

- All local primary schools and crèches will be contacted on an ongoing basis and reminded of library facilities.
- A reading project for Traveller children will be developed in association with the County Education Network.
- The libraries will liaise with other departments in South Dublin County Council to improve integrated delivery of children's services.
- A children's website will be developed.
- Talks to inspire a love of reading and promote the library services will continue for children, parents and guardians and teachers.

The Children's Service Development Policy 2006-2009 will be implemented via the Action Plan and delivered through the Children's Services Committee.

## Objective 9 Marketing and Promotion

In today's complex information environment there is an urgent need to market the library service, both to users and non users. Work with Focus Groups in South Dublin County indicated that many potential customers are unsure of what is available from a contemporary public library. During the course of this Development Plan the Marketing and Promotion strategy will seek to use marketing techniques to understand the needs of potential users and to plan effectively to meet those needs.





## Actions 2007 - 2011

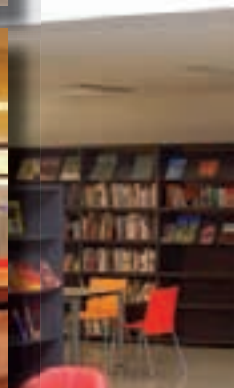
- Decide what the objectives of the marketing strategy are.
- Draw up a marketing plan for the Library Service
- Introduce branding with distinctive logos to ensure that all library material is easily identifiable as belonging to South Dublin County Libraries.
- A concerted effort will be made to contact and talk to non-users
- Community profiles will be drawn up to establish how best to engage the public around each library.
- Re-design user application forms to gather more information on the needs of our users.
- Make greater use of ICT to promote events, including the use of SMS to alert library users to new services and events.
- Utilise survey results to plan, develop and improve the library service.



## Objective 10

### Customer Focused Service

South Dublin County Libraries adhere to the customer care charter of South Dublin County Council. South Dublin County Libraries strive at all times to offer excellent customer focused service delivery.





## Actions 2007 – 2011

- Pilot Frontline an e-Learning training course for all frontline staff across the service. Frontline is an online training course in the basic theory and practice of customer care and reader-centred work in the library.
- Aim to identify and work to eliminate barriers to accessing services for people using those services.
- Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and minimum delay
- Provide clean, accessible public libraries that comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.
- Treat all our customers equally.
- Take an active approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of.
- Continue the drive for easily understood forms, information leaflets and procedures.
- Establish and maintain a well publicised, accessible, transparent and simple to use system of redress for customers who are dissatisfied with quality of services.
- Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.
- Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access to choice of service delivery.
- Provide quality services through Irish
- Foster a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.
- Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted. Continued support for the Partnership model will be maintained.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their role in the promotion of customer care

## Objective 11

### Enriching the Cultural fabric of the County

South Dublin County Libraries are hubs of cultural and artistic activity across the County and gateways to local arts and cultural activities. Each year over two thousand cultural and artistic events are organised by library staff. Arts activities, film, local studies, music, storytelling, exhibitions, literary events as well as a range of inter agency activities with national cultural and artistic agencies are programmed throughout each year.





## Actions 2007 - 2011

- To support and promote an arts programme of residencies in conjunction with the South Dublin County Council Arts Office.
- Promote programmes that understand & celebrate cultural diversity in the county.
- Create linkages between the County Library, the County Arts Centre and the Civic Theatre to create a vibrant Cultural Quarter in Tallaght.
- To continue to provide opportunities for learning through art appreciation programmes and to work in partnership with other agencies towards the co-hosting of lecture series and seminars of cultural interest annually.
- Use libraries as springboards to foster and develop community identity
- Using the arts and art agencies to create an environment which fosters pro-social behaviour
- To continue to provide opportunities for learning through programmed events and lecture series covering all areas of artistic life and experience