

## Equality Impact Assessment – Template 4 – Summary Report

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| <b>Department:</b><br>Library & Information Service   | <b>Date:</b><br>12 June 2008 |
| <b>Completing Officer's Name:</b><br>Nick Coe (Equal Access Manager)  |                              |
| <b>Policy, Strategy, Service or Plan that was Impact Assessed:</b><br>National Year of Reading 2008   |                              |
| <b>Summary of findings:</b> (Full report attached)<br><br><p>The National Year of Reading (NYR) is a UK-wide initiative strongly supported by central government which every local authority library service will be keen to promote. It is aimed at encouraging people to adopt the reading habit, if they have not done so already, and to persuade existing readers to read more and to read more widely. Given the fundamental importance of reading and of improving literacy levels, the potential impact of NYR is very great and therefore the importance of ensuring a socially inclusive approach to planning NYR activity is correspondingly high.</p> <p>In Hampshire the planning process was underpinned at the very earliest stage by the need to maintain focus on Equality Impact Assessment. The NYR working party included a number of staff with a specialist background in equality of access to library services. Consequently a very strong programme of activities and events has been put together, ranging from small, one-off events to very large-scale, sustained activities like the Summer Reading Challenge, but all of them designed to attract the widest possible participation.</p> <p>Of particular note are the initiatives which specifically target equalities groups, including two which focus on the library service's 14 reading groups for visually impaired people. VIP reading groups were set up 10 years to mark the previous NYR and have proved to be a highly successful and sustainable venture. It is hoped that the Telephone Reading Group idea being launched in NYR 2008 will be as equally appealing and durable for its target group of housebound people.</p> <p>Given that library services to VIPs is a conspicuous strength of Hampshire's, it is ironic and regrettable that the book selected for the Hampshire Big Read was not available in alternative formats. This should have been researched at an earlier stage and steps taken to address the problem. However, at least a partial solution was found through linking up with Calibre Audio Library.</p> <p>The problems surrounding the visual accessibility of NYR's centrally produced publicity came to light only after the material had been printed. Hampshire made its views known along with other library authorities.</p> |                              |

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### **Summary of Recommendations:** (Action plan/s attached)

Not all the equalities groups have been well covered by the NYR programme. More consideration should have been given to the needs of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people. Nevertheless, contact has been made this year with the organisation Chrysalis which represents the interests of transgender people and ideas have already been discussed for how the library service can offer support. This needs to be taken forward.

**The completed impact assessment needs to be published.** Please send this to the relevant person in your department to ensure that it is up-loaded onto your departmental website.