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Inspire and improving access to libraries

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What we'll cover today…

- Outline of Inspire and WELCOME!
- Barriers to using (other) libraries
- How Inspire model can address the barriers
- How to get involved in Inspire (or similar)

What is Inspire?

- Out of the "Empowering the learning Community" report
- Aims to:

  "provide a seamless pathway to the information and inspiration library users are seeking, wherever it may be found."

- All libraries sign up to the "kitemark criteria"

Inspire Kitemark Criteria

- As a minimum, visitors will be allowed reference access to hard copy materials
- Service plans will be adapted to reflect commitment to co-operative working with Inspire partners
- Inspire will be publicised throughout the library/service and to the wider community where practicable
- Information on library collection strengths will be provided to be listed and promoted via the Inspire resource discovery web site
- A key contact or 'Inspire Advocate' will be appointed in each inspire library
- All staff will be briefed to ensure they have an awareness of the Inspire scheme
- Designated staff will receive in-depth briefing and have responsibility for cascading information about the scheme to other staff
- Inspire will be included in induction and on-going training programmes
- Qualitative and/or quantitative management information will be collected to assist in monitoring the impact of Inspire.

My take on the criteria…

- Allow reference access to hard copy materials (on your terms)
- Give Inspire a contact name and details of your library service
- Tell your staff about Inspire (and users / potential users if you want)
- Help Inspire continue by committing to co-operative working and gathering any information to show it's working
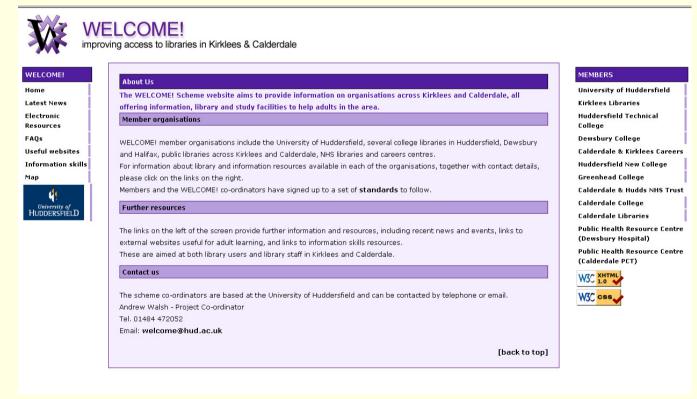
How does it work?

www.findit.org.uk

WELCOME! Kirklees & Calderdale

- Local version set up before Inspire

http://welcome.hud.ac.uk

A few WELCOME! figures

- Our website averaged just under 6,000 hits a month in the last 12 months
- Over 26,000 visits to University library last year by external users
- External usage up by around 25% since scheme established

Barriers to using other libraries

- What do you think?

My list of barriers - hard

- Opening Hours
- Borrowing Facilities
- Access to IT facilities
- Ability to gain entry
- Location of library

My list of barriers - soft

- Fear of the unknown
- Literacy & numeracy problems
- Lack of information retrieval skills
- Computer phobia
- Lack of confidence in using libraries
- Lack of awareness in using libraries
- Lack of awareness in what is available
- Lack of awareness amongst library staff (referrals)

What are the key reasons for choosing a library?

- Where the library is (including location, transport, parking, and proximity to home, work or place of study)
- The resources within the library (including books, journals, IT facilities and study space
- When the library is open.
- Who staffs the library (their knowledge, helpfulness and approachability).
- How the resources within the library are organised (how easy it is to find what you want).
- The general library environment.

What barriers does Inspire address?

- Mainly the "hard" barriers
- Key soft barriers are "lack of awareness"

Also, addresses some of the "key reasons for using a library" – by trying to provide a "mix" of libraries.

If Inspire removes some of the barriers…

- What sort of involvement with the local community might you get?

- What would your worries be?

Questions?

References

- Empowering the Learning Community (2000), Library and Information Commision

- Assessing the Potential for, and needs of, Cross-Sectoral, Local Collaborative Access Schemes in the Yorkshire and Humber Region (2006), [www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//A/Assessing_Your_Learning_Partnership__Word__9692.doc] or [http://inspirereport.notlong.com]

- Inspire project site – www.inspire.gov.uk