

## Overview of WLHC Consultation

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### The Citizen's Panel: August 2009

The Worcestershire County and Worcester City Citizen's Panels were given the opportunity to comment on the project. The Panels are made up of self-selected residents who anonymously answer questions about the services provided in the County/City.

The initial response to the questionnaire indicated that more than 85% of Worcester City residents and over 57% of county residents would visit the new Worcester Library and History Centre.

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### Crown Gate Shopping Centre: 22<sup>nd</sup> May until 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009

A full display of the Galliford Try proposal was moved to the Crown Gate Shopping centre as part of the planning consultation. The Joint Project Team members and Galliford Try representatives were available throughout this period to meet the public and explain the scheme. The public were asked to leave their feedback on the comment cards provided.



## **Preferred Bidder Scheme Exhibitions:**

### **Guildhall, Worcester City Council:**

**9<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

The Exhibition was used as part of a Development Forum meeting, the first of its kind in Worcester. The general public had a further opportunity to view the final design of the new WLHC building and leave their comments.

### **University of Worcester:**

**6<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

The Exhibition was moved to the University of Worcester giving an opportunity for the University staff to see the display of the selected proposal and leave their comments.

### **County Hall**

**3<sup>rd</sup> April 2009**

WLHC Project Stakeholders were invited to view the chosen design prior to it being made available for the general public. The Stakeholders also had an opportunity to meet the team and leave their thoughts on the comment cards provided.

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009**

After the Cabinet approval of the Preferred Bidder, staff of Worcestershire County Council, Worcester City and the University of Worcester were invited to view the selected scheme and meet the Project Team members to ask any questions they had. Comments cards were available.

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## **Year 2008**

Throughout the year 2008 various interest groups and other WLHC Project Stakeholders were consulted on the proposals of the three shortlisted bidders. Because of the confidentiality required by this stage of the PFI process no formal public consultations could be held.

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## **Arts Workshop: March 2007**

The following are some of the themes taken from the day:

- Identify Worcester and it's Uniqueness
- Visual views across the city
- Outside spaces facing the City Centre
- Seeing the inside form the outside
- Quality of design – not art to decorate
- Importance of interior design

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## The Consultation workshops - What does Worcestershire mean to you?: February 2007



This event attracted 50 attendees, including SAF, Friends, Young Archaeologists, volunteers, attendees from race forum events, bio-diversity, students. They were required during the course of the day to produce their own A-Zs of Worcestershire; i.e. what the City and County meant to them in alphabetic terms. Also, they were asked how they thought it would be possible to design the County into the building, such as using interactive maps and local materials. The complete A-Z from the day and some of

the ideas from the afternoon sessions have been included in the Design Statement for the new building. The A-Z part of the day was also undertaken with four local schools.

Some of the things that represent Worcestershire as part of the A-Z:

- Asparagus and Almshouses
- Lea and Perrins
- Metalbox
- Pershore Plums
- Vesta Tilley
- Zebras at the Safari Park
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## The Consultation Workshops - The Children's Workshop: February 2007



The next consultation day had a rather younger audience, 24 children, aged 5-11, representing the School Councils of 6 Worcester primary schools. All the children had already talked about the New Library and History Centre within their school context and produced some ideas in advance about what they hoped for from the New Library and History Centre. On the day, the facilitators gave the children a number of tasks, such

as prioritising services and thinking about the needs of difference client groups and produced lists, diagrams and drawings related to the tasks given. It was a day thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The following are some of the themes taken from the day:

- A welcoming place
  - Clean light and airy
  - Somewhere safe to be outside
  - Adults available to ask for help
  - Clear direction so we can find our way around
  - Accessible for all
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### **The Consultation Workshops - Redefining Library Services: January 2007**

This session was led by the Head of Cultural Services at Worcestershire County Council and the Director of Information and Learning Services at the University of Worcester. The attendees came from a broad range of backgrounds such as local societies and other similar services in neighbouring counties. The day was intended to formulate ideas as to how future library services would or could develop and the synergies between the services being brought together. It was a very successful event, with all thoroughly engaging with the activities. A further exciting off shoot of the day was discussions on the 'wow' factor for the building and what it could offer.

The following are some of the themes taken from the day:

- Enthusiasm and support for the project
  - Wide range of environments within the building: silent space to vibrant, lively spaces, learning from retail
  - Comfortable seating spaces, a 'living room in the city'
  - Clear signage
  - Meeting differing needs of a broad range of service users
  - An emphasis on cultural activity within the building
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### **The Independent Consultation Report - July 2006**

In July 2006, it was agreed that the Market Research Company BMG should carry out formal consultation, building on the work already achieved. The purpose of this further consultation was to ensure that the new building was suitable for use by the public.

BMG carried out the following consultation activities, contacting 1,000+ people:  
Qualitative

- Student focus group
- Academic Staff online discussion forum
- Two Older People focus groups
- High School focus group
- 5 Current Teenage library users – paired depth interviews (these involved one BMG interviewer and two participants having a discussion following a topic guide and answering questions)
- 8 Black, Minority, Ethnic residents – paired depth interviews
- Headteachers' telephone interviews
- 2 Parent and Carer focus groups

## Quantitative

- Face to face questionnaires with users of the City Library, Customer Service Centre, History Centre branch of the Record Office
- Business online survey
- Partner college, special interest, partner heritage online survey
- Virtual workspace questionnaire with 14-19 year olds

The report showed a positive picture for the Project. Most people interviewed were excited about the development and pleased to be consulted. Common themes emerged across the groups. Here are some examples:

- Light and airy, natural light, modern feel is wanted, but sympathetic to surroundings
- A wide entrance/appearance of no door
- Clear visibility of all the floors from other floors eg: Selfridges
- Maximising the spectacular river view is suggested
- Bringing the outside view inside is suggested, with the Pompidou Centre being provided as an example.
- No desire for 'meeters and greeters' but 'floating' friendly and helpful and knowledgeable members of staff are desired
- Co-ordinating public transport with opening times is important
- Children should have a noisy area, well away from the quiet area
- More space needed between computers; need for private working space
- Disabled access is very important
- Toilets need to be spacious and continuously clean
- A mix of hard and soft seating is desired

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## The Crowngate Centre: July 2006

On 29 July, over 200 people visited the Library and History Centre project team to view outline plans and a graphical DVD of the new development. This event took place half way through the Outline Planning process.



The Project team were available to answer queries and promote this development and its contribution to the regeneration of the Butts area of Worcester.

The response was very positive with many visitors expressing their support for the project. Many suggested ways to

improve the current services and to ensure the building would be a success.

Some of the comments were:

- Would like website to track progress
- I hope there will be quiet areas for non students where they can work

- Longer working hours in Library, longer time on PCs
- Park and Ride timings must match the hours of the building opening
- I live in Pershore but I would use this as my weekly visit to Worcester
- How will I be sure that the books I need for studying will be available and not in use by the public?

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### **The Citizen's Panel: November 2005**

The Worcestershire County and Worcester City Citizen's Panels were given the opportunity to comment on the project. The Panels are made up of self-selected residents who anonymously answer questions about the services provided in the County/City.

These questions also appeared on the University of Worcester staff site and linked from the County Council's cultural web-pages to pick up the views of people not on the Citizen's Panel.

Some of the responses were:

- 'The proposed library centre is a superb project'
- 'It's highly commendable that you are engaging in a consultation process with the public. I really look forward to using the facilities in the new library and history centre'
- 'A new library complex would be an ideal situation for voluntary organisations to meet and promote their work'
- 'The Centre will be an excellent facility for students at the Worcester University' but concern about continuation of local County facilities if one new super-library to be built in Worcester City
- 'Am looking forward to the new Library and History Centre – hopefully I will still be alive when it opens! We have wonderful history on the doorstep and this should provide a unique celebration of local and British culture and history'
- The design 'must be in keeping with the general structure of Worcester itself'

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### **The Jigsaw Puzzle: September and November 2005**



People were invited to stop and see a large jigsaw puzzle in the Crowngate Centre, Worcester. They could scribble their views on the puzzle or on a postcard to send in later. The jigsaw was split into 9 separate sections; History, Exhibitions, Design Ideas, Meetings and Conferences, Food and Drink, Quiet Study, Children, Busy Zone, and finally, What Else? for anything we had missed.

More than 200 people visited over two days.

This same jigsaw puzzle appeared at the University of Worcester library and foyer over two days in November 2005 for staff and students to add views. The puzzle made a third appearance in Worcester City Library for a visit from Bishop's Perowne School Children in November

2005, who spent nearly an hour writing and drawing their ideas for the new building. Hundreds of ideas were written onto the jigsaw puzzle, with the most common theme being good quality IT equipment and comfortable seating.

A sprinkling of some of the ideas and feedback include:

- Bright, colourful children's area
- DVD viewing and music areas
- Coeliac friendly, diabetic, Halal food
- An in-depth history wall depicting local history
- Adjustable tables for wheelchair use
- Radical design and eco-friendly