

**INSPIRE COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS 2022:**

# **CANDIDATE MANIFESTOS**



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**

delivered by



**Inspire**  
Culture | Learning | Libraries

# Leon Dale



Reading and learning are personal passions of mine, libraries especially hold a place in my heart. Growing up libraries became my safe place, my escape, my resource. Whether I was there to borrow a book, access a PC, attend a fun event or print C.Vs. Libraries for me and many others offer us support, access to resources and most importantly a friendly face.

I believe I should be elected to the board of Inspire as I vow to:

Create and strengthen local partnerships – By establishing relationships with local partners this will provide Inspire with further reach of their offerings and increased collaboration.

Engage with local communities and those that represent them – By engaging with the local communities and listening to their needs, this will enable Inspire to create and diversify their offerings to increase the number of users and provide more community focused events.

Be actively involved with supporting Inspire – Inspire have so much to offer to the community with a number of different initiatives, by being proactively involved this will enable better communication, collaboration and advocacy.

Provide further business development and support – My background lends itself to business. I have established and ran my own companies, and I have also been heavily involved in various organisations throughout the years.

By leaning on this experience I will be able to provide Inspire with support and insight for fundraising, commercial strategies, understanding digital engagement and an understanding of how to engage with local businesses.

# Mark Dorrington



I am an archivist with almost 40 years' experience of working in libraries and archives. Currently I am an Associate Director in the University of Nottingham Libraries and Keeper of Manuscripts and Special Collections where I also have responsibility for the Museum of Archaeology. Previously I spent 10 years managing Nottinghamshire Archives and latterly also the County Local Studies service and publications programme.

I am a Council member of the Thoroton Society, a heritage advisor to Trent Bridge and a member of the steering group for The National Archives, Higher Education Archives Programme. Previously I chaired the East Midlands Regional Archives Council, was a founding Vice-Chair of the Nottinghamshire Heritage Forum and set up the Friends of Nottinghamshire Archives.

As I am retiring in the summer, I would now like to give something back to the community and it would be a privilege to be elected to the Inspire Board and contribute to their wonderful work in providing culture, libraries and learning across the county.

I feel I can bring to the role my extensive experience of the cultural heritage sector, both in Nottinghamshire and the wider Midlands, my more recent experience of working in higher education and my successful track record in fund raising.

During my whole professional career, I have been passionate about preserving and providing access to heritage and I hope you will entrust me with your vote to continue this with Inspire.

# Samantha Marshall



With 7 years experience in internal engagement, communication, building strategies and creating projects which support and grow moral whilst ensuring the message lands to all. Developing clear routes for feedback and hearing our customers/colleagues voice to guide the development of communication agenda's enabling company wide learnings and area's of improvement.

These experiences would support me in making sure I'm productive and proactive in achieving my aims and the group's aims to enhance Inspire while on the board.

## Aims

- Continue the work already taking place to start the connection with Inspire from an early age, by connecting with schools, early learning and community groups.
- As already takes place with our early years, working to ensure a similar offering and connection is made with the rest of our community, reaching out to community groups, social support and care teams to support learning, mental wellness and enhance the service for all.
- Engage and reach the wider community, making sure everyone is aware and has access to Inspire. Looking towards areas in the community which miss the opportunities within the Inspire offering due to not accessing the well known facilities, such as the libraries.

## Focus group – 18-30

- While focusing on reaching new customers, it's important to recognise and continue to engage and inspire our current customers with fresh, topical and fashionable content.
- This would all be supported by ensuring our Inspire team is the best they can be, by supporting them in their development and engagement.



# Diana Meale

I am a passionate supporter of INSPIRE and I know I can make a valuable contribution to its running.

A slow reader, I had difficulties at school, so books and libraries were not the places of refuge and learning they appear to have been for others. Since joining the library, I have realised how much more a library service can and could be. I especially welcome the lock-down initiative of online access to audio books.

I am a keen follower of the performing arts and am a Trustee of the Arts Council funded New Perspectives Theatre touring company. We work closely with INSPIRE and have the same ambitions to help people develop their creativity and enjoy the creativity of others.

INSPIRE is supporting the growing interest in heritage. I helped, as a member, at the stand of The Nottingham Women's History Group at INSPIRE's History Fair. The Fair was hugely successful at offering opportunities to network and inform the public. I want to help INSPIRE expand its reach to individuals and groups like New Perspectives and the Women's History Group, making connections and offering opportunities to reach more people.

Along with local connections, I have developed Board skills. I was an Executive Director of the region's development agency and served on the Boards of Lincoln University, West Notts College, and the Midlands Arts Council and serve on several local charities. I was a local authority Councillor for 8 years. I understand and will contribute effectively to INSPIRE's governance.

# John Pateman



I worked in public libraries for 44 years. I started my career as a Library Assistant in Bromley in 1978 and went on to become the Chief Librarian of Hackney, Merton and Lincolnshire in the UK and Thunder Bay in Ontario, Canada. I am now retired and living in Nottingham but my lifelong passion for public libraries remains as strong as ever.

I want to bring this passion to the Board of Inspire and be a part of its ambitious future. My vision for public libraries is that they are inclusive, diverse, equitable, democratic public spaces that are open to all, community led and needs based. The modern public library has so many roles to play in improving the lives of those who live, work and study in Nottinghamshire. The value and importance of libraries was demonstrated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Research has shown that libraries are the social glue that sticks communities together. They provide spaces where people from different backgrounds and cultures can meet to explore their shared interests, ambitions and concerns.

As a former Chief Librarian I am very aware of the pressures and constraints that libraries work under. In my governance role as a Board member I will use my skills, knowledge and experience to support the Chief Executive Officer and his staff as they continue to deliver high quality services while planning for the future. I have good strategic, financial and communication skills that can add value to the work of management and the Board.




# Claire Smith

My job is to write educational materials and books, with a focus on young and very young learners (often with English as an additional language), and it is my expertise in this area that I hope will be an asset to the Inspire Board.

I would like to see more events encouraging parents to engage with the learning to read process (perhaps in association with local schools), helping them to help their children become confident and engaged readers. As a reading volunteer in a local school, I have seen first hand the struggles of some children to learn to read and can really empathise with parents who simply don't know how to help them, or perhaps can't help them, for various reasons.

I would like to see an even greater focus on inclusivity, in a way that does not encourage 'othering' but allows children to see their own experiences and the experiences of others reflected in the cultural experiences and books presented to them. I have recently completed a course in Inclusivity in children's books and have realised that inclusivity is not simply a nice-to-have – it is essential.

Everyone must feel able to access the services Inspire is responsible for, and to feel welcomed, included and celebrated, especially in these times of social and mental fragility. With social isolation on the increase, Inspire must work hard to make sure that their services are accessible to all, bringing communities together, and I would love the opportunity to help them do this!



# Finbarre Snarey



I am a Beeston resident, proud father of two and I would love the opportunity to contribute my skills and experience to the Inspire team as a Community Director.

I am a keen supporter of inclusive access to libraries for all Nottinghamshire residents. I believe in the value of reading, regardless of age, and of treasuring libraries as a cultural hub.

I know first hand how local libraries provide a welcome break to families, a chance to socialise and to try something fun and new. I would particularly enjoy working with the Inspire team in the areas of technology and engagement.

The Covid pandemic has shown us all how digital exclusion can impact members of the community without access to computers and the internet. I want to volunteer my knowledge and expertise to assist with the exemplary digital services delivered by Inspire and help the community continue to have reliable access in a safe environment. I strongly believe in the promotion and access of e-resources for members who are not able to personally visit their library.

I am an IT professional with fifteen years of experience, specialising in customer service. I work at the University of Nottingham as a Senior Service Desk Analyst and I have previously worked for Nottingham Council as an ICT Learning and Development Officer for local libraries. I have run PC Doctor drop-in sessions to provide free advice and computer repair, and I have produced and delivered training sessions for library staff and the local community.

# Michael Young



I grew up in West Bridgford to the age of 18 and spent a lot of my childhood camped out in West Bridgford library looking for different books, I had a never ending thirst for knowledge and adventure !! I then left Nottingham and have worked all over the UK as well as spent 2 years in the USA and 4 years in Switzerland so I am a much travelled person with a unique perspective on life.

I am of mixed parentage and so would bring a diversity to the table which may or may not have been addressed thus far, it would be my personal challenge to encourage young people of a diverse background to engage with their local libraries. There is so much information in books that is undiscovered and it would be amazing to help unlock those thought processes to help people engage away from the other obvious distractions.

I would look to bring established authors from the London area and beyond to visit Nottingham and give a reading and share new ideas and thoughts on their books and hopefully inspire local talent to follow similar paths. If I can help to inspire the next Alice Walker or Toni Morrison and many more then I would have made a difference and touched many people's lives in Nottingham in the process and that's all one can look to do, do the very best one can do and make a difference.