

# Telford & Wrekin Library Service Strategy 2018-2020



## Telford & Wrekin Library Service Strategy

Under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act all councils have a statutory requirement to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service'. Telford & Wrekin Council has always valued its libraries and the service that is offered to local residents and visitors.

Following substantial Government cuts to local authority funding the library service faced difficult decisions in 2016 about the nature and size of the library service moving forward. However our successful partnerships with Town and Parish Councils resulted in four libraries being 'saved' and run as 'Community Lead Libraries' by the town and parish councils and one School Academy. These libraries all remain a key part of the council's statutory offer and compliment the 5 remaining core libraries that are run and managed by the Council.

We no longer operate a mobile library due to low usage however our volunteers are growing along with our volunteer home delivery service.

2018 is providing us with the opportunity to regroup and plan ahead until 2020.

We have a new management team in place who are enthusiastic about the future and they have all contributed towards this strategy and action plan.

Our vision for Telford & Wrekin Library Service is **to provide safe hubs at the heart of the community. The service will continue to improve the well-being of residents and visitors by offering a free service that opens up inspirational opportunities for reading, information and discovery.**

We have seven objectives:-

1. To develop libraries as a cultural and leisure destination.
2. To promote both our core and community led library spaces as community focal points accessible to all.
3. To increase the number of people borrowing material regardless of the format.
4. To increase digital inclusion across the borough by developing ICT skills of our residents, ensuring access to new technology through our libraries.
5. To increase our income through successful bids, book sales and commercial opportunities.
6. To ensure that our new library services are successful and efficient.
7. To provide material, activities and spaces that support positive health and well-being.

These objectives help to support the following agendas.

- **Telford & Wrekin Council Priorities**, particularly Children & Young People, Education and Skills, Vulnerable Adults and Children, Health and Well Being, and Supporting Business.
- The Library Taskforce's 'seven outcomes' identified in the '**Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021**' document. This sets out their aspirations within the areas of Culture, Reading, Learning, Prosperity, Community, Wellbeing and Digital Development in library services across the country.
- The Arts Council's 4 **Priority Development Areas** for public libraries, which are; place the library as the hub of the community; make the most of digital technology and creative media; ensure that libraries are resilient and sustainable; deliver the right skills for those who work in libraries

- The Society of Chief Librarians six **Universal Offers** that embrace **Reading, Digital, Culture, Information, Health and Learning**.
- The Government's **Digital Inclusion Strategy**. This strategy sets out the 10 actions that government and partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors will take to reduce digital exclusion.

## **How we are addressing these Priorities and realising our Objectives**

### **1 To develop libraries as a cultural and leisure destination**

The Library Service sees its Library's as being pivotal locations to act as local cultural hubs where the public can learn, discover and be entertained. This may be through library service organised events or through local groups using our space to hold their own events and we see this as being key in enabling people to gather and meet other members of their community via these services in our locations.

We will continue to offer the public the opportunity to see authors, artists, performers and speakers so that they can experience a range of activities that are as unique as possible in the borough.

We will offer quality events and activities that bring people into our buildings and give a positive and welcoming impression to local people. We aim to contribute to the cultural fabric of Telford by offering events that others do not.

In order to support and engage with our local community and to build on the library's role as a community and cultural hub we will actively encourage local individuals and groups to set up activities to support particular interests and as a service support them where we can e.g. Bee Keeping Clubs, reading clubs, coding clubs, lego clubs, etc...

During 2018 the library service will play a key role to support Telford's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. This year our Summer Reading Challenge will be unique to Telford & Wrekin children and be themed around the anniversary, with locally designed and produced materials. We will be showcasing our future 3d printer offer by producing the medals for our challenge completers in house. Alongside that we will be hosting and supporting a range of activities and events for the community throughout the year and conducting outreach work on the key Telford 50 dates to connect with new local customers. In 2018 we will also ensure that every child in Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will be provided with a new Telford 50 Library card.

As part of our legacy contribution to the cultural health of Telford we commission Shropshire Archives to provide a service to Telford & Wrekin residents and we have a range of locally held services to offer. We have a dedicated Community History Centre at Wellington, a digital table with an extensive photographic archive at Southwater and online resources such as the digitised Dawley Observer/Telford Journal from 1963 – 1984. Customers can discover more about their personal family history and the heritage of their community.

### **2. To promote both our core and community led library spaces as community focal points accessible to all.**

We want to support Telford and Wrekin residents by offering them pleasant and accessible spaces. A place to come together as a community and for them to see their

local libraries as vital focal points where they can use our services in a relaxed and safe environment. We will do our part to combat social isolation by encouraging individuals and existing groups to use our facilities and maintain the long tradition of public libraries being free, open and judgment free spaces.

We see the library service as being key to Telford residents leading healthier lifestyles, both mentally and physically, and the library spaces themselves have the ability to offer residents the chance to come together in their communities to aid this. We will partner with community organisations and those within the authority to sign post the public to services they may be unaware of and encourage these groups to use our physical spaces wherever possible. We will engage with grassroots organisations and social enterprises to explore ways in which our facilities can support them in their continued operation and expand their reach.

We will ask our residents what they want from their community spaces and how we can support them in their goals, bringing them in as partners and ensuring that this side of our offer is locally led.

At the same time we will explore the new directions we can take and as we roll out our 3D printer offer we look at the viability of offering a maker space in Telford, giving access to existing technology in a new and exciting way.

Our Core libraries will retain their First Point services providing mediated access to many council services through reporting or requesting a service such as Disabled persons badges or reporting a missed refuse collection.

### **3. To increase the number of people borrowing material regardless of the format**

Telford & Wrekin Libraries has always maintained an excellent book stock. Customers can borrow books and audiobooks off our shelves as well as download e-books, e-magazines and e-audio from our website. In 2018 we will launch a new ebook service and promote and encourage this new expanded resource. Members can also use online resources such as Encyclopaedia Britannica and Ancestry.

We are conscious of the fact that some residents are unable to visit a library because they are either carers or have a disability. Volunteers help us provide a service to these customers and their role will be developed in the future to encompass new initiatives that reduce the isolation of vulnerable adults and their carers.

To encourage reading, staff run a variety of book based activities for all age groups as well as supporting book groups with multiple copies of books on an extended loan period.

Staff encourage a larger and more diverse range of customers to use library services by ensuring that they promote the diversity of the titles that we have available and that we have “something for everyone”. This is done through displays in libraries and via social media.

Training is provided to all staff in the library service so that they can become champions of reading and literacy who take every opportunity to engage with customers about their enthusiasm for the written word. The development team also offer advice and support to the community libraries and their volunteers.

### **4. To increase digital inclusion across the borough by developing ICT skills of our residents and ensuring access to new technology through our libraries**

We provide free access to computers in all of our core and community lead libraries and will continue to expand the range of equipment available as technology develops, such as 3D printers and Virtual Reality.

The Library Service will also lead the agenda for improving the basic ICT skills of residents across the Borough, through our library buildings, and working with other community partners.

In addition to this library staff will be the champions for Digital Inclusion, helping residents to gain online confidence through a range of activities. These include a basic introduction to using computers, drop in IT sessions on particular subjects such as sending and receiving e-mails, setting up a 'My Telford' account, downloading e-books, developing basic coding skills and using tablets.

The Library Service manages a range of web pages that provide information and encourage residents and visitors to use Telford & Wrekin Libraries. During 2018 we will be making improvement to our website so as to raise the profile of the Library Service and encourage more customers to use both our physical and online offer. This will be supported by an increase in our social media presence and a robust marketing and promotional campaign.

Library staff encourage customers to self-serve by offering them a warm introduction to our online services, and providing some initial support to enable them to channel shift and complete transactions online.

The Service will support residents to take part in national digital initiatives to improve digital inclusion within the borough, such as the Good Things Foundation's 'Learn My Way'. In 2018 we will start to offer those progressing out of our First Click sessions to participate in the Duke of York's 'Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award' (iDEA), an accredited national programme to develop digital and enterprise skills.

**5. To increase our income through successful bids, book sales and commercial opportunities.**

We have recently been successful in securing a number of external funding bids related to helping residents channel shift, learn about new technology, and engage with young people. We are also increasing the number of book sales that are being held across the Borough's libraries and encouraging more people to donate books that can be sold to generate income that goes straight back into our book fund to purchase new books. We remain committed to exploring other ways of increasing income coming into the library service in order to sustain the service longer term.

Although our service being predominantly free to all remains a core tenet we would like the service to explore limited commercial options to complement our existing offers. In the same way we charge customers printing we will offer the public access to a 3d printer so they can have their designs produced cheaply and quickly. We will also look at our physical spaces and options for bringing income into the service using those spaces.

**6. To ensure that our new structure is successful and efficient.**

With a smaller team we are looking at how LEAN techniques and NUDGE tactics can be used across libraries and how staff can be encouraged to suggest improvements. Targets will be set for each library to increase footfall, book issues and the take up of community activities. Improvements will be made to staff training so that they feel confident in taking on wider roles within the team.

Community Libraries will continue to receive support via the Library Management Team and we aim to increase the number of people volunteering to work with us.

**7. To provide material, activities and spaces that support positive health and well-being.**

There is evidence that nationally the public library service saves the National Health Service £27.5 million per year through the services it provides.<sup>1</sup>

We have an extensive collection of books on health and well-being in each main library. We also have several collections of titles in the Reading Well Books on Prescription series (where GP’s recommend books during their surgeries that the public can then come in and borrow from us). These cover a range of common mental health conditions such as how to live well with dementia, titles to support positive mental health in young people and titles to support those living with long term conditions.

One of the Library Service’s Development Officers is responsible for providing a service to vulnerable adults to enable them to live well with dementia through a range of activities in care homes and within the libraries.

The volunteering opportunities, Home Library Service, and range of activities that we provide within the community helps to reduce isolation and contributes towards the well-being amongst customers.

As discussed in Priority 2, we want our libraries to be pleasant and accessible to all, and given National Government has recently appointed a Minister for Loneliness and early UK research has demonstrated that lacking social connections has serious health implications the spaces themselves have a local part to play here. Recent research has shown that one in five young Mothers always feel lonely so through sessions like Bounce & Rhyme (mostly aimed at toddlers) we can win for a second time so no one needs to feel cut off from the world (and their community).

In order to realise our seven objectives we have created an action plan that covers the next 2 years. This demonstrates how the service will be taken forward and will enable us to monitor progress.

**Library Action Plan 2018 to 2020**

**1. Objective: To develop libraries as a cultural and leisure destination.**

Activity	Action	Date	Lead officer	Targets
Fun place to visit	To create fun places	Ongoing throughout the year with various activities listed.	Newport & Wellington Team Leaders/Adult Development Officer	60 people attend, 5 skills shared

<sup>1</sup> Fugiwara, D., R. Lawton and S. Murato. The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries. Arts Council England, March 2015, p7.

	To create Lego clubs	Jan 18 ongoing	Newport & SW Team Leaders	10 children attending each group.
	Improve the layout of SW library to make more accessible for stock and usable for activities linked to Telford @ 50 or destination Telford	Jan 18	SW Team Leaders with Telford @ 50 team and Destination Telford colleagues	
Community history and reminiscence	Increase the number of groups visiting the library to use the digital table for reminiscence	Ongoing	Digital Development Officer/Vulnerable Adults Development Officers	At least 1 group per month
	Hold regular reminiscence sessions in the library to support dementia offer	Autumn each year	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	Set up a monthly session. 8 attendees per session.
	Session to create memory books	October 2018	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	8 attendees
	Telford 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary	Whole of 2018	Library Development/Digital Development/CYP Development Officers/SW Team Leader	SW1 will open on 3 Sundays (April/May & July) to support T50 events in park and Southwater. SW, NT, MY, WN 3 events (1 every four mths). 2 events @ community libraries where possible. Attended by 150 people
	Commemoration of the end of WW1	Preparations for 2018	Digital Development Officer	Event in 2018 attended by 30 people
	Promote community history day	Day in March 2018	Digital Development Officer	100 attend day if held in library

**2. Objective: To promote both our core and community led library spaces as community focal points accessible to all.**

Activity	Action	Date	Lead officer	Targets
Libraries as community and cultural hubs	Building ties within the community by showcasing what groups have to offer.	Investigate groups initially	Madeley Team Leader	3 new groups using each library
	Links to other organisations such as job junction, CAB and healthy lifestyles with open days.	Ongoing starting with Madeley in October 18	Madeley Team Leader	30 people attend event
	Consult with the local community on what their wants and needs from their spaces.	2018 and again in 2019	Team Leaders/Library Service Manager	Engage with a broad range of residents in 2018 and 2019
	Promote the physical library spaces to a wide range of community groups and encourage the use of those spaces eg Bee Clubs, Coding Clubs, Scouts, Brownies, Lego clubs etc	Ongoing	Team leaders	Increase in groups using library branches as meeting points.
Investigate and develop new offers for future community resources.	Explore the potential for a makerspace in Telford to offer to the local community.	2018	Library Development Officer	Assess suitability and local demand.
	Regularly examine the use of our spaces and look for opportunities to listen to the public and develop our services around their needs.	Ongoing	Library Service Manager/Team Leaders	Regular walk rounds, invite and respond to community feedback.

Continue our discussions with Madeley Town Council regarding the future move of Madeley Library to be located within the Anstice Memorial Hall	Ongoing	Library Service Manager	Co-location of the library into this multi-purpose historic community building.
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**3. Objective : To increase the number of people borrowing material regardless of its format including e-books/magazines as well as those on our shelves.**

Activity	Actions	Date	Lead officer	Target
Organise reading development activities/programmes that increase book issues to adults/young people	Romantic Novelists Evening	July 2018 and 19	Adult Development Officer	40 attend
	Promote and encourage creation of new reading groups	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	3 new reading groups per annum
	Strengthening links with BBC	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	Loan figures from book club, comparison to previous. All copies issued with reservations.
	Implement selection volunteers for HLS to enable capacity for increased customers	April 18 onwards	Adult Development/Vulnerable Adults Development	Recruit 4 selection volunteers.
	Increase outreach of community collections	April 18 onwards	Library Development/Adult Development Officer/ Volunteers	To meet levels of demand
	Disability access day	March 2018 & 19	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	10 new members
	Programme of displays for adults	Ongoing	Adult Development	1 a month

			Officer/Branch Champions	
	Comic Con event @ SW	October 2018 & one in 2019	Adult Development Officer/SW Team Leader/Comms Team	Target number 200 people
Increase in book issues over next three years	Staff recommendations, events, social media, displays	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	2018/19 3% increase 2019/20 5% increase.
Provide support and advice to community library volunteers who want to organise adult activities such as reading groups		Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	To be determined at development meetings with partners.
Organise reading development activities/programmes that increase book issues to children and families	Bookstart	Ongoing	CYP Development Officer	120 engagements with parents/carers
	Summer Reading Challenge	June – Sep 2018 (Annual event)	CYP Development Officer	1000 children engaged over summer (941 2016) Total starters 1750 Total finishers at least 875 (50%) SW – at least 840 start at least 50% finish (approx. 70 extra) NT – start at least 277 at least 59% finish (approx. 22 extra) WN – start at least 384 at least 61% finish (approx. 30 extra) MY- start at least 119 at least 64% finish (approx. 9 extra) All increases are 8%. Have focused on finishers rather than starters. Book issues >22588
	National Libraries Week	October 2018 (Annual Event)	CYP Development Officer/SW Team Leader	Engage with 150 people through events including 30 new joiners.

	Bookstart	April 2018 onwards	CYP Development Officer	Increased picture book issues over next 3 years. 2017/18 remain as 2018/19 1% increase 2019/20 1% increase.
	Engaging with Home Educators	Autumn 2018 onwards	CYP Development Officer	Speak to our known home school families. 3 home educated children attending code club
	Children's holiday activities	Half term, Easter, Christmas	CYP Development Officer	SW 30+ children for holiday activities, NT, MY, WN 15
	Programme of displays for children	Ongoing	CYP Development Officer/Branch Champions	1 a month
Provide support and advice to community libraries where volunteers wish to run book based activities for children	Community lead volunteer days in community libraries		CYP Development Officer	To be established through development meetings with partners
Increase use of online resources	Veolia drop in sessions, targeted promotions	Ongoing	Digital Development Officer	Talk to Dave + Clinton Increase in usage of online resources. Engage with 20+ people at each drop in community sessions
	To market services using social media and outside events such as the food show	Ongoing		Increase in usage of promoted service.
	Email reminder to new joiners about e-services	October 2018		Notable increase in service usage
Replace or update our eBook & eAudio service.	Tender for supplier and roll out new service.	Spring 2018	Library Development Officer/Library Service Manager.	New service launched, promoted and an expanded range of stock offerings to the public.

**4. Objective : To increase digital inclusion across the borough by developing ICT skills of our residents and ensuring access to new technology through our libraries**

Activity	Actions	Date	Lead officer	Targets
Introductions to IT and enable people to channel shift and use services through My Telford in council and community libraries	Veolia money to provide capacity for additional IT sessions.	Began in 2017 and ongoing in 2018 and beyond.	Digital Development Officer	Create a list of interested customers ready to contact when dates are available. 10+ attendees at each community basic IT session. At least 2 sessions per month.
Supporting customers to self-serve and undertake online transactions	Operational Team to have training to enable them to understand the full range of council services that can now be undertaken online.	March 18	Operations Manager	Training completed by staff. Reduction in First point etc enquiries in libraries
Review online presence	Review, refresh and redesign the library webpages.	March 2018	Digital Development/Library Development Officer/Library Service Manager	Increased number of visits to website. (Google analytics)
	Review use of social media, to increase reach and engagement.	March 2018	Digital Development Officer/Library Service Manager	Increase number of individual Twitter followers, Facebook likes.
Ensure that ICT is fit for purpose and replaced if necessary.	Regularly evaluate ICT provision.	Ongoing	Library Service Manager/Operations Manager	Reduced number of complaints regarding ICT.
Extend digital coding education offer	Set up Pioneers groups for yp	Spring 2018	Digital Development Officer	Group created. 10 young people attend
	Deliver ACE funded Family Code Club project at Southwater, Madeley, Dawley	Apr 17 – Mar 18	Digital Development/Library Development Officer	48 families

	and Stirchley libraries			
	Digital Day in the library	June 18	Digital Development Officer	150 people
Contribute to and offer National digital initiatives.	Continue to offer Learn My Way to our First Click customers	Ongoing	Digital Development Officer	Increase in those without digital skills participating in sessions.
	Offer iDEA Award to customers moving beyond First Click	Summer 2018	Digital Development Officer/Library Service Manager	Get customers to sign up to iDEA and start working on completing badges to obtain their Bronze Award.

**5. Objective: To increase our income through successful bids, book sales and commercial opportunities.**

Activity	Actions	Date	Lead officer	Targets 2017/18
Raising income through books	Public book sales in every library	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	One sale a month in each library. £4000 total
	Use Ziffit	Ongoing		
	Nationwide Book buyers for stock that won't sell	Ongoing		
	Ask for donations	October onwards	Adult Development Officer	Increased number of public donations
Income generation through reservations/lost tickets	Implement when online payments sorted		Operations Manager	
Bid funding				
	APFOJ follow on	Ongoing 18/19	Lib Development Officer	Success!! (Current plans are for intergenerational bid also funding for additional capacity will be included)

Explore commercial opportunities	Develop 3D printer offer and promote as a chargeable service	2018	Library Development Officer	Roll out charging model and promote widely.
	Examine options for limited commercial opportunities of our spaces.	Ongoing	Library Service Manager	Have a clear idea of what spaces we can offer, who to and the charging model around that.

**6. Objective: To ensure that our new structure is successful and efficient. (This means working more closely together with other colleagues, residents and community libraries, as well as providing appropriate staff and volunteer training and monitoring performance.)**

Activity	Actions	Date	Lead officer	Targets 2017/18
Training	Staff to be given training on donations	Feb 2018	Adult Development Officer	All staff trained by April 18
	Staff training on stock and services	Ongoing	Library Development Officer/Development Team	All staff trained by April 18
	Staff training on the complaints process	Ongoing	Operations Manager	All staff trained.
	Review of Induction and ongoing development training programme	September – December 18	Library Development/CYP Development Officer/Operations Manager/Wellington Team Leader	Review completed and improvements recommended
	Staff to be given training to give individual support to the public	June 18	Digital Development Officer	All staff trained.
	Support team leaders in managing and promoting library accounts	Ongoing	Digital Development Officer	Team leaders to manage their library's social media twitter. Increased twitter followers

	Staff training on accessioning stock	April 18	Adult Development Officer	All staff trained.
	To maintain a regular programme of support for our community libraries.	Ongoing	Operations Manager/Adult Development Officer	Quarterly meeting with community libraries undertaken
Volunteers	To ensure shared reading is sustainable through recruitment of volunteers	October 2018	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	3 volunteers currently able to meet demand.
	Recruiting volunteers for HLS, (others)	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	To reach 100 volunteers by 2019
	SRC volunteers	Every May recruitment commences.	CYP Development Officer	38+ volunteers
	Develop year round Reading Hack volunteering offer	Jan 2018 onwards	CYP Development Officer	At least 15 young people regularly engaging with Reading Hack from Sep - June
	Managing IT and Community History volunteers	Targeted IT volunteer campaign June onwards	Digital Development Officer	Recruit more IT volunteers in Madeley
	Social media volunteer to improve Twitter reach	Started 2017 but ongoing	Library Development Officer	1000 followers achieved. Increase 'local' followers
Evaluation	To evaluate shared reading	2018 and 2019	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	Completed by November
Advocacy	Create friends groups	2018 and 2019	Adult Development Officer	First Group created

**7. Objective: To provide material, activities and spaces that support positive health and well-being.**

Activity	Action	Date	Lead officer	Targets
Promote Books on Prescription	Launch of long term conditions, promote mental health list with it.	July 2018	Adult Development Officer	At least 3 issues per title in 12 months.
	Promote shelf help to help with exam stress	April/May 2018	CYP Development Officer	Increased issues from 207.
Reading for health and wellbeing	Introduce a reading group for carers	2018	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	1 reading group with 8 carers
	To market shared reading	Ongoing	Vulnerable Adults Development Officer	2 new shared reading group venues
Use our library spaces as tools to enable people to feel less cut off from their community.	Activities targeted towards group interactions, reading groups, natter groups, Bounce & Rhyme	Ongoing	Adult Development Officer	Expansion of group activities, not always library service led but using our spaces.