

Report under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 for 2012/2013

A Report presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 17 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

17th December 2013

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In October 2012, the Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee considered the issue of Libraries[[1]](#footnote-1). The Government response[[2]](#footnote-2) accepted the Committee’s recommendation to present a review of developments in the library sector at the end of 2014. In fact the Government has decided to fulfil that commitment a year early at the end of 2013, and to publish the report annually thereafter. This is the review of library activity during past 12 months.

During the past 12 months there have been a number of developments in library services, including a range of innovative approaches to the task of delivering a comprehensive and efficient service. Many changes have been made in response to the on-going funding environment to which all public services are making their contribution to savings. But many changes have also been made because individual authorities are looking at better ways of delivering a range of services so that they are fit for the present and the future.

The very real interest in delivering a service which reflects changing demands can often be distorted. The focus of debate should be about the essential quality of what the library service provides in any local authority area. There remain 3184 library service points open 10plus hours a week in England; these buildings are valued community and authority assets, in many instances delivering not only a public library service, but a range of integrated council and other services.

An example of cross-service delivery include a partnership between Bexley and Bromley councils, who merged their library services - including shared back office and management services - resulting in both Councils keeping all library buildings open.

Together with other public services, library authorities are rising to the challenge of delivering and developing the library service, with many reviewing and re-shaping their library offer. The changes have also seen increasing community involvement, and a growth in the number of volunteers. Whilst there have also been a number of library closures, it is difficult to get a definitive measure, but our estimate of static library closures, since the beginning of 2010, based on consulting a number of sources, is around 90.

Local authorities remain best placed to assess the needs of their local communities and design services accordingly, within the requirements of their statutory duty to deliver a service which is comprehensive and efficient. Local authorities invested over £780million in the library service in 2012/13. Local authorities have always funded and run their library service. Government’s relationship is through the Public Libraries & Museums Act 1964, which places a duty on the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport to superintend and promote this service. This duty of superintendence is exercised after careful consideration of relevant facts on a case-by-case basis.

During the past 12 months, the Secretary of State has given a final opinion on four library authorities: London Borough of Brent (September 2012), London Borough of Lewisham (April 2103), Isle of Wight Council and Metropolitan Borough of Bolton (May 2013) (links at **Annex A**). DCMS Officials continue to liaise and monitor the progress of library reforms and advise the Secretary of State accordingly, and local authority proposals to change library provision are kept under review by the Department.

Together with a rationalisation of their services, some authorities have also in the past 12 months completed some major new building projects for their library service. These new libraries are providing a major draw in terms of library services, wider cultural offer and integration with other council services. For example Liverpool Central Library has completed an ambitious £50million refurbishment with over 400,000 visitors since opening in May 2013; the Library of Birmingham, which opened in October 2013, recording 12,000 visitors a day in the first week; and the £31million Wakefield One Library, opened in November, housed in the new civic office building which is also home to Wakefield Museum, a café, and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council One-Stop-Shop. These are true civic buildings, with learning at their core, but offering a diverse range of cultural and wider public services.

**Joint Improvement Work**

Authorities themselves are regularly undertaking improvement work to establish more efficient and effective ways to deliver services. The Local Government Association (LGA) in partnership with Arts Council England (ACE) has during the past year hosted joint improvement activity for library portfolio holders, providing a platform to share the latest innovation and supporting them to lead transformational change locally.

In addition, ACE made available bursaries to support councils to commission bespoke peer support for libraries, with the LGA supporting five councils between May and September 2013/14.

As part of the sector-led improvement offer, the LGA also published in September 2013, *Meeting the Challenge: Culture, tourism & sport improvement offer*[[3]](#footnote-3). This publication for councillors and councils includes references to support material including a Self-Assessment tool for libraries (assistance in undertaking successful review and change programmes in library services), and an Outcomes Framework (an e-resource in the creation of local outcomes framework for culture and sport).

As a contribution to this work, in December 2012 the Department for Culture, Media & Sport funded the 2011/12 set of benchmark reports for all English Library Authorities, produced by CIPFA. Reports of 148 of 151 authorities were made publically available[[4]](#footnote-4) with their nearest family group, as defined by the [CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Model](http://www.cipfastats.net/resources/nearestneighbours/profile.asp?view=select&dataset=england), enabling communities and authorities to compare and contrast data. For 2012/13, authorities themselves are funding the reports, due to the benefit of last year’s data sets.

In addition to the central work of local government, a number of organisations invest in library development. During the past 12 months this has included:

**Arts Council England**

Arts Council England has been the development agency for public libraries in England since Oct 2011. It does this by collaborating with others to advocate, invest and develop. ACE’s new refreshed strategy, G*reat art and culture for everyone[[5]](#footnote-5)*, should bring benefits to libraries, including opening up some new strategic opportunities.  ACE invests in development activity and commissions others to do the same, including core funds for The Reading Agency (TRA) which supports work such as the Summer Reading Campaign, and project funding to TRA, the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) and others that support the SCL Universal Offers including: Books on Prescription, Information Skills and reading based activity (details below).

In September 2012, ACE announced an extra £6million in the Grants for the arts funding specifically for libraries, through to March 2015. To date, 40 projects have received funding totalling nearly £2million. Additionally, ACE made a number of Library Development Initiative (LDI) awards from February 2012 – March 2013. A full list of the LDI awards is at Annex B, but three projects (Books on Prescription, Library 21, and Digital Skills Sharing) have had a particular impact in the wider library community:

**The Public Libraries Health Group - Creating a national ‘Books on Prescription’ offer**

Launched in June 2013 with the support of the Department of Health, the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) and The Reading Agency (TRA), this brought together the various Books on Prescription schemes into a single national offer - Reading Well: Books on Prescription - to encourage take up and provide benefits to people with mild to moderate conditions with a consortium of library services from across England. Early evaluations demonstrate a positive contribution form the programme to wider well-being services.

**Library 21**

Thiswas a research and development project exploring how, in a digital age, the public library space can be the most exciting place for readers, and give the public access to an unprecedented range of digital content.

Supported by the SCL, leading publishers and ACE, the project was led by TRA, and looked at how librarians and publishers could partner with each other safely using digital content to develop audiences for reading, with copyright protected. With part-funding from ACE, SCL are now developing a framework agreement with JISC Collections for online reference materials which could save library services across England around £6million over a three year contract period.

**The Publishers Association - Publishers sharing digital marketing skills with libraries**

Again with LDI funding from ACE, the Publishers Association and TRAs innovative Digital Skills Sharing Programme launched in April 2012 and aimed to provide library services with new digital skills and the confidence to innovate. The overarching goal was to help librarians develop and enhance digital skills, enabling the library sector to amplify its work with existing audiences and develop new audiences in diverse ways, appropriate to a 21st century library service.

Delivery has been through the Reading Partners library/publisher consortium, run by TRA and involving 40 publishers and the UK library network, in creating successful and exciting events and activities for readers, has brokered this project. The project won the industry EDGE 2013 Virtual/Digital Award in March 2013.

**Envisioning the Library of the future**

*Envisioning the library of the future* was a major research project undertaken by ACE in 2012/13, underpinning four priority areas for future work:

1. place the library as the hub of the community
2. make the most of digital technology and creative media
3. ensure that libraries are resilient and sustainable
4. deliver the right skills for those who work in libraries

Earlier this year, in its response to *Envisioning the library of the future,* ACE set out its view of what a library is, what it is for and the benefits they bring to people and communities. This recognised that libraries contribution to the lives of people and communities is wide ranging across reading and literacy, skills, learning, heritage, creativity, health and democracy. *Envisioning the library of the future* provides the basis for ACE’s development work with partners on development activity, much of it highlighted in this report.

**Enterprising Libraries**

In February 2013, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, announced the Enterprising Libraries project. This is a £1.276million partnership between the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), and the British Library, with initial support from the Intellectual Property Office. The initiative brings together and develops existing business and intellectual property support in six Core City libraries (Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield) to be turned into new ‘innovation incubators’ and see them roll-out business support to towns and villages across the country.

The project has evolved with the announcement in October 2013 of £450,000 of ACE investment in 10 authorities[[6]](#footnote-6), again also supported by DCLG and the British Library. These libraries have been funded to work closely with the six Core Cities network to turn library spaces into incubators for business ideas by provide coaching, advice, meeting spaces, and IT support to people interested in developing a proposal and taking it to the market.  The projects are focused on fostering entrepreneurship by supporting budding business minds in the local community who are interested in becoming self-employed.

**Automatic Library Membership**

Working with the Department for Education and DCMS, ACE announced a pilot project in November 2012 to test automatic library membership cards for children and young people[[7]](#footnote-7). 22 pilot projects[[8]](#footnote-8) have been involved across England, and the aspiration is that it will lead to an increase in children, young people and families using their local libraries and stimulate more reading for pleasure. A final report on the projects is due in early 2014.

**Society of Chief Librarians**

The Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) is a local government association made up of the chief librarian of each library authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. With funding from the Arts Council, SCL launched four Universal Offers in January 2013, with partners including ACE, TRA, and the Department of Health, and rolled out nationally across public libraries in *Health,* *Reading*, *Information*, and *Digital*. Since then, SCL have been embedding the Offers across the library network, reaching over 500 staff – the largest workforce development programme since the roll-out of the People’s Network in 2000.

In September 2013, as part of the *Universal Information Offer*, SCL and the Tinder Foundation were successful in a £1million bid to NHS England to boost health literacy amongst UK citizens. In the £1million award to UK Online Centres, SCL will work in partnership with Tinder Foundation on a training network to help public library customers benefit from the opportunities of the digital revolution in health. Since then a Master class for 70 library managers has been held on the Assisted Digital Agenda and the potential next steps for libraries, delivered in partnership with the Tinder Foundation and with support from Government Digital Services.

The 2013 Summer Reading Challenge – a key programme within the Universal Reading Offer - was a huge success, with the highest recorded participation levels:nearly 800,000 UK children aged 4-11 participating, 44% of which were boys; just over 5,000 young volunteers supporting; and66,760 new library members.

The web statistics at summer.readingchallenge.org.uk were also greatly increased, with an additional 175,000 web visitors (a 43% increase); 311,778 visitor sessions (61% increase); and 179,200 books logged (102% increase). SCL and TRA recognise that placing the Challenge in the context of a strategic framework has increased its profile within local authorities.

As part of the *Universal Information Offer*,SCL has completed the skills audit, which demonstrated the level of confidence and skills of library staff in dealing with on-line information sources. SCL, with funding from ACE, has now completed an Invitation to Tender for companies to bid to put together training packages which can be used with library staff to ensure that they are fully skilled and confident to meet the challenges of the Assisted Digital agenda.

As part of the *Universal Health Offer*, the take up of Reading Well – Books on Prescription continues to grow. The full evaluation results will be available in the second half of 2014, but borrowing of the 30 core titles has increased by 145% since the launch in June 2013.

**Chartered Institute of Libraries & Information Professionals**

The Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals (CILIP) builds members’ professionalism by supporting the development of skills, knowledge and excellence. CILIP has launched a number of new offers to provide members with improved support to develop skills and expertise relevant to their sector and workplace.

In consultation with employers and learning providers, CILIP developed the Professional Knowledge & Skills Base, a skills map for the library and information profession. It outlines the range of skills required by people working in the profession and is designed to be used as an assessment tool to support Continuing Professional Development. In the coming year, CILIP plans to develop guidance and support for the professional expertise and broader skills required to work in a range of specific sectors.

CILIP’s new framework of Professional Registration (the new name for CILIP qualifications) launched in December 2013. Changes in the library and information profession mean new career pathways and entry levels are emerging and people are entering professional roles through very different routes. With professional qualifications and professional standards very much in demand, CILIP is committed to providing relevant support for skills development that reflects the changes in the profession.

**E-lending**

In September 2012, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport commissioned William Sieghart to undertake an Independent Review of E-lending in English Public Libraries. In his final Report in March 2013, William Sieghart set out a number of principles, including the extension of the Public Lending Right (PLR; the right of authors and other rights holders to receive payment for the loans of their books from public libraries) to on-site e-loans, with consideration further ahead to including remote e-loans. The 2015/16 Spending Round confirmed a flat cash settlement to extend PLR to on-site e- and audio books. We will consult on the relevant legislative changes shortly.

A further recommendation from the Sieghart Review was the testing of remote e-lending, based on one user, one copy, and that copy would deteriorate after an agreed number of loans. This pilot is being led by the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) in partnership with the Publishers Association and is being funded by a grant from the British Library Trust[[9]](#footnote-9).

**Community Libraries**

Whilst library authorities are at the heart of the design and delivery of the public library service, many are working directly with the community to deliver elements of the statutory service and supporting other interested groups in the provision of a library offer. There are a variety of approaches being taken, and it remains a challenging for the authorities and communities concerned.

In January 2013, ACE with the LGA published Community Library Guiding Principles, a report which presented the findings of new research about the different ways communities have been involved with their libraries. The report sought to identify factors which local authorities might find helpful when considering how best to design and manage library services. Primarily intended for local authority officers and members, the principles are relevant considerations for community representatives who are engaged directly with a local authority in the delivery of the statutory service, or a non-statutory library offer[[10]](#footnote-10).

Subsequent to this, in September 2013, the Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, supported by ACE and DCMS commissioned research on the rural impacts of changes to library services in England. The research project aims to specifically address the rural dimension, exploring the different challenges, issues and opportunities that rural library services are experiencing, as well as the responses and approaches that can be made. The eight areas included are Buckinghamshire, Cumbria, Devon, North Yorkshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Wakefield and Warwickshire.

These were selected in order to provide as wide a coverage as possible in terms of geography, types of rural area and rural issues represented, the approaches being taken around rural library services and stages of implementation.

The final report will be presented to Defra and DCMS ministers in spring 2014.

**Conclusion**

The library service is changing, and will continue to change. This re-appraisal has and is being used by library authorities as an opportunity to consider what a comprehensive and efficient library service should look like in the C21. This report highlights the extensive work which is being devised and delivered by Government, Local Authorities and the wider network of stakeholders to support the development and delivery of the public library service designed to meet the changing patterns of demand and use. The Department for Culture, Media & Sport will report on further developments at the end of 2014.

Annex A

**Final decisions by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport on the library provision in individual authorities**

**16 September 2102**

**Decision letter on local inquiry into library provision in the London Borough of Brent**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/120725/Libraries_Brent-170912.pdf>

**15 April 2013**

**Decision letter on local inquiry into library provision in the London Borough of Lewisham**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decision-letter-on-local-inquiry-into-library-provision-in-the-london-borough-of-lewisham>

**31 May 2013**

**Decision letter on local inquiry into library provision in the Metropolitan Borough of Bolton**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decision-letter-on-local-inquiry-into-library-provision-in-bolton>

**31 May 2013**

**Decision letter on local inquiry into library provision in Isle of Wight Council**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decision-letter-on-local-inquiry-into-library-provision-in-the-isle-of-wight>

Annex B

**Arts Council England Library Development Initiative projects February 2012 – March 2013**

***Fresh Horizons Community Enterprise, Yorkshire*** *- Creation of a volunteer managed and run community cinema within the community managed library in Kirklees, Yorkshire.*

This project will place the community managed library in Kirklees at the heart of the new community arts partnership through co-location of a new community cinema which will provide local film-making and showing opportunities - drawing upon the expertise of Open Cinema to grow engagement with excluded groups through community cinema provision.

***Bournemouth Libraries*** *- Placing QR codes in Bournemouth library buildings and locations around the city, linking cultural resources and activities together for the public via their smart phones.*

This programme will give learners skills in the new digital literacies and create exciting original content for cultural services.  Training workshops will be carried out in the library and via mobile phone companies to enable the public to understand and use QR codes. It aims to catapult Libraries and the arts to the forefront of new Smartphone technology, delivering and show casing services in a totally new and innovative way.

***Newcastle and Manchester Library Services*** *- Library services commissioning a universal integrated cultural offer*

This pilot project will test out how well two different metropolitan library services can broker access to a universal integrated cultural offer for vulnerable adults. Newcastle and Manchester City Councils and the independent arts sectors in the two cities wish to work together to develop a cultural commissioning offer for vulnerable adults (e.g. older people in need of care/external stimulation; adults with learning disabilities; refugees and asylum seekers). Both cities have residents (amongst the most vulnerable) who find universal services difficult to access. The project would work to move away from the provision of care through a network of Day Care Centres to a more creative approach using the universal cultural facilities that are available in each city.

***Cambridgeshire Library Service*** *- Developing community-led commissioning for arts and library services in rural deprived areas.*

This project aims to increase access for cultural activity in deprived rural areas through the development of the library spaces. It will use the community networks of local libraries together with an innovative mechanism to enable local communities to choose high quality cultural activities to take place within those spaces.

***Derby City Libraries*** *- Exploring the role of arts activities and libraries in supporting people who are in pursuit of employment.*

A partnership between Derby City Libraries and QUAD (an Arts Council NPO); The Shaw Trust; Derby Jobcentre Plus; and Action for Employment, to enable Derby libraries to provide customers with a series of sessions for Job Club attendees that will address their confidence issues.  Workshops will explore how they can best present themselves, and help with identifying the barriers they have to overcome to gain employment.

The project will show clearly how the arts can be used to as a tool to help address social and economic problems, such as unemployment. It is a new partnership between Derby City Libraries and QUAD which should develop and cement the reputation of the cultural sector in the city and provide enhanced services for local people.

***A partnership of the London Boroughs of Richmond, Kingston, Merton and Wandsworth*** *- Library service delivery of targeted arts interventions in four South West London Boroughs aimed at specific target audiences in each borough.*

This project will test how in practice the delivery of learning activities in libraries can incorporate structured artist-led activities to deliver key outcomes that commissioners in schools, adult social care and adult and community learning teams are seeking. It will establish an evidentiary base for the particular impact and benefits of running structured arts activities in libraries as opposed to other venues to provide the basis for future commissioning, and in doing so will also explore how the different emerging library governance structures affect the provision of arts activities in libraries and the interaction with commissioners.

***Writing West Midlands*** *- Integrating libraries and publishers’ activities in the West Midlands.*

Writing West Midlands will invite all library services in West Midlands to express interest in being part of the project, and will use appropriate criteria to shortlist 7 partner services to pilot a programme of integration between libraries and publishers in the West Midlands that encourages readers to get involved in the programming of writers and events in their local library. The library service partners include: Birmingham; Herefordshire; Warwickshire; Wolverhampton; Telford and Wrekin; Staffordshire and Shropshire.

The project will develop strong links between libraries, library users, and creators, while creating lasting relationships that libraries and their users can benefit from.  Writing West Midlands will provide the partner libraries with a range of free resources, including book stock, marketing materials and access to authors.

***Portsmouth Libraries*** *- Widening participation in a local literary festival through libraries’ community networks.*

A project to develop the Portsmouth literary festival, BookFest through library services to widen appeal and participation to a broader local demographic and change the way the library service interacts with the public and delivers services.

This project will work directly with local communities in a sustained and meaningful way to co-produce a library service and festival that is responsive and relevant to people's needs. It will push existing community engagement activity further than existing consultation models to real community activism. Funding will support an Apprenticeship in the library service. The project will focus on areas of the city that usually have low engagement in and access to cultural services.

***ASCEL*** *(Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians) - A national project to develop approaches for co-production of libraries’ reading offers together with young people.*

Young people can be a hard to reach audience for libraries. This project will work with local authorities across England to develop approaches to help libraries engage young people in designing and delivering their reading offer. ASCEL will partner with The Reading Agency and a wide range of library services to deliver this pilot project.

***London Boroughs of Camden, Islington and Hackney Library******Services*** *- A pilot to explore the outsourcing to a commercial provider and enhancement of a shared home library service across three London boroughs.*

This project focuses on creating efficiencies while extending the availability of the core public library home delivery service to more people. It will trial a number of new approaches to home delivery services, including premium book delivery services for those not eligible for the free home library service and possible models for subsidising the core home library service, which is likely to be increasingly heavily used as the population ages and the number of housebound people increases.

***Reading Partners*** *- Digital marketing materials from publishers for libraries’ reader development activities.*

Reading Partners will develop a digital platform where libraries can access digital support materials from publishers for reading services, such as author interviews, reading group guides etc. A digital platform will provide libraries with the tools and knowledge to amplify their digital reading offer; create personalised and bespoke digital reading campaigns which showcase the diversity, depth and range of their assets; build sustainable relationships with readers and develop a shareable and dynamic social reading experience.



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1. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmcumeds/587/58702.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm85/8535/8535.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/11463/Meeting+the+challenge-Culture+tourism+and+sport+improvement+offer/7ce53888-f582-4aed-b39b-0f9582d71152> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.cipfa.org/services/research-and-statistics/comparative-profiles/public-libraries/cipfastats-library-profiles-english-authorities> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Great_art_and_culture_for_everyone.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Devon Libraries; London Borough of Enfield; Haringey Libraries, Archives & Museum Service; Hull City Council Library Service; Cultural Community Solution London; Manchester City Council; Middlesbrough Libraries Norfolk Library & Information Service; Northamptonshire Libraries; Portsmouth Central Library [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://press.artscouncil.org.uk/Content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=1817&NewsAreaID=2> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Brighton & Hove, Bristol, Havering , Lewisham, Medway, Norfolk Library & Information Service and School Library Service, Northamptonshire, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Sandwell, South Gloucestershire, Staffordshire, Surrey, Thurrock, Waltham Forest, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, York [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Full details of the progress of this research which includes details of the authorities with running the pilot and timescales, can be accessed at: <http://www.goscl.com/e-lending-pilots/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Community_libraries_research_2013_guiding_principles.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)