



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport

Report pursuant to Section 17 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 for 2018/19

July 2019

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Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

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FOREWORD

I was delighted, on 23 May 2019, to take on responsibility for libraries policy in England. Libraries are a valuable asset, sitting at the heart of communities and contributing to their sense of place. They are valued and well used facilities; they bring people together, and they help people to help themselves and improve their opportunities. Libraries also help both central and local government achieve strategic priorities by delivering services in communities - whether related to health, social cohesion, information and digital literacy, or jobs and business support.

As Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, with responsibility for public libraries policy in England, I will be promoting the value of investing in libraries and what they deliver. Alongside the Libraries Taskforce I will work across local and central government to encourage a 'libraries first' to delivering services to communities, and to ensure that government at all levels recognise the valuable contributions that library services can and do make to their strategies and priorities.

In the coming months I will be meeting Steven Broomhead, the Chair of the Libraries Taskforce, and other library stakeholders to learn about the work they do to sustain and promote public library services.

I take seriously my department's role to superintend and promote the improvement of public library services provided by local authorities in England. Library services continue to face challenges to meet the needs of the people they serve within available resources. We are investigating a number of complaints about whether library services are meeting their statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, and we will take action if necessary.

During the period covered by this report, DCMS has continued to work with the Libraries Taskforce and its members to promote and support the work of public libraries. This report provides details of the specific activity undertaken relating to the superintendence, and promotion of the improvement of the public library service provided by local authorities in England. The report also notes the wider activity of the DCMS libraries team which is covered under a separate Annex.

Rebecca Pow MP - Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism

Introduction

This report covers the period April 2018 to March 2019.

This report should be read alongside the Libraries Taskforce [seventh](#) and [eighth](#) six month Taskforce reports to ministers, published in October 2018 and May 2019 respectively. These reports contain information on the work, activities and achievements of the Taskforce and also cover the activities of its individual member organisations.

Further and more detailed information on individual organisations' work in the library sector is set out in their most recently published Annual Reports:

[Arts Council England](#)

[The British Library](#)

[Libraries Connected](#)

[Local Government Association](#)

[The Reading Agency](#)

Government engagement with libraries

There has been significant engagement with the library sector by departmental ministers and officials.

Library visits

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, The Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP, visited Salisbury Library during Libraries Week in October 2018, and the British Library in January 2019.

DCMS ministers have undertaken a number of visits to libraries. From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, the previous Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism (MAHT), Michael Ellis MP, visited several libraries including Halifax Central, Selly Oak, and Story House Chester. He also:

- attended the launch of the Reading Well scheme for Mental Health at the Wellcome Trust on 5 June
- attended the launch of the Beano-themed Summer Reading Challenge launch on 10 July
- visited Wimbledon library in Libraries Week on 11 October to hear about the wide range of strategic outcomes it contributes to across the communities it serves
- attended the celebration of the Libraries: Opportunities For Everyone (LOFE) innovation fund at Fulham Library on 1 November

- visited the British Library to learn more about its Endangered Archives work and to visit the successful Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms exhibition on 30 January

Libraries events

Michael Ellis MP spoke at the launch of Libraries Week (8-13 October) at the Speakers' House. He attended the Summer Reading Challenge launch, the Annual Seminar of the Society of Chief Librarians (now Libraries Connected) at Warwick University, and an All Party Parliamentary Group on Libraries' roundtable. He recorded videos for various events he supported but could not attend, these were:

- the launch of the Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) branches in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- to mark the BIPC Start-Up Day at Northampton Central Library
- to mark the Start-Up Day events taking place across the BIPC network across England

Libraries organisations

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, met with Dame Carol Black (Chair) and Roly Keating (Chief Executive) of the British Library in January to discuss current and future plans.

Michael Ellis MP met with Professor Stephen Broomhead (Chair of the Libraries Taskforce); Nick Poole, Chief Executive, CILIP (The Library and Information Association); and with Lord Bird to discuss libraries and literacy. He also regularly met with Arts Council England, the development body for libraries.

Minister for Digital and Creative Industries, Margot James MP, visited the British Library, to visit the Alan Turing Institute (the national institute for data science and artificial intelligence) and for discussions with entrepreneurs at the BIPC.

Local authority library services

DCMS officials met with council officials in Essex, Kent, Northamptonshire and Somerset to discuss their future plans for library service provision and they continue to meet regularly with public library sector partners and those with an interest in public libraries. This includes Arts Council England, Libraries Connected, Local Government Association, CILIP, The Reading Agency and British Library.

Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964

The Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 (1964 Act) places a duty on local authorities to

provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. Councils fund and run public libraries and remain best placed to assess the needs of their local communities and design library services to meet those needs within the requirements of their statutory duty.

The 1964 Act also places a duty on the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service provided by councils in England and to secure the proper discharge of the statutory duties on local authorities.

DCMS takes the statutory responsibilities seriously and officials monitor and keep under review proposals by library authorities to make changes to their library service provision, providing advice to ministers accordingly. DCMS also considers any complaints made to the department on library provision where the council may be failing to meet their statutory duty on a case-by-case basis. [Further information](#) about the statutory duties on local authorities and the Secretary of State, and the department's consideration of formal complaints under the 1964 Act is available on GOV.UK.

The process of consideration of a complaint includes ministers making a decision indicating whether the Secretary of State is 'minded to' order a local inquiry, and inviting further representations before a final decision is made. Over the period of this report, ministers issued 'minded to' and final decision letters on formal complaints to DCMS about library services in Darlington Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council. The [letters are published online](#).

Other public libraries developments

Local authorities in England continued to invest in their library service with net expenditure in 2017 to 2018 totalling £616.1 million. There are numerous examples of councils investing in new libraries and the refurbishment of others to provide modern services and facilities. Some examples are:

- Glossop library (Derbyshire) - a new £2 million library officially opened in June 2018. The two-storey extension is attached to and located partly within an adult education building. The existing entrance and reception are used by both the library and the adult education service.
- Gosport library (Hampshire) - reopened in July 2018 following a 6 week, £700,000 refurbishment. Gosport Discovery Centre was remodelled and transformed into a community hub and includes a cafe, Citizens Advice, a wellbeing centre and a register office for births and deaths.
- Sutton central library (Sutton) - officially reopened in May 2018 following a major £700,000 refurbishment. The upgrades to the library facility include a family history centre, a children's library on the ground floor and new study spaces and quiet zones.

- Filey library (North Yorkshire) - officially reopened in July 2018. The £56,000 refurbishment included a new children's area and new mobile bookshelves, which allow the space to be used more flexibly for events. It was also redecorated, IT facilities were redeveloped and there is plenty of space for visitors to connect to the free wifi on their devices or book onto a library computer.
- Withington library (Manchester) - officially reopened in October 2018 following a substantial refurbishment. It now boasts 2 new meeting rooms and extended areas for children and teenagers, plus new furniture, computers and book stock. The project also involved extensive repair and maintenance work, including work to repair the building's roof, a full redecoration, plus the installation of new and improved lighting and shelving.

Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone innovation fund

This fund was announced in December 2016, alongside publication of the Libraries Taskforce's [Libraries Deliver: Ambition strategy document](#). In March 2017, DCMS and the Arts Council announced the 30 [successful bids](#) to receive £3.9 million to deliver libraries innovation projects in 2017 to 2018. DCMS and the Libraries Taskforce commissioned and funded the Office for Public Management to undertake an independent evaluation of the Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone programme. This [evaluation](#) was published on 8 November 2018, and a celebration event was held to bring project leads together to share learning from this work.

Libraries data

For a sixth consecutive year, DCMS provided around £43,000 of funding to enable the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to develop and publish a set of comparative profile reports for library authorities in England for 2017 to 2018. The reports enable a local authority to compare its service with a group of similar authorities, to allow it to consider like-with-like, and pinpoint areas where it could improve performance. These [reports](#) are publicly available through the CIPFA website.

CIPFA also published its annual library statistics for April 2017 to March 2018 in December 2018, using data provided by library services. This indicated that library services in England had total net expenditure of £616.1 million, with 194.6 million visits to, and 157.4 million book loans from, libraries in England and that at 31 March 2018, the total number of net library service points open 10 or more hours per week in England (including mobiles) was 2,853.

Other DCMS libraries work

The DCMS libraries team undertakes other activities relevant to the public library sector. This also includes sponsorship of the British Library, which the team assumed at the beginning of the reporting period.

British Library sponsorship

British Library is a non-departmental public body sponsored by DCMS. The Chair and members of the Board are all appointed by the Secretary of State, with the exception of one member who is appointed by HM The Queen. One member of the Board is appointed after consultation with Scottish ministers.

As a legal deposit library, the British Library is required by law to receive, preserve and maintain copies of all books produced in the UK. Since 2013, these legal deposit requirements have extended to maintaining copies of non-print works, including e-books, e-journals, and the UK web archive. The British Library is also the national repository for recorded sound, and it administers the Public Lending Right scheme on behalf of the government. Through this scheme authors receive payments from a fund to compensate them for the borrowing of their books from public libraries in the UK.

Although British Library is not governed by the Secretary of State's library superintendence under the 1964 Act, it does play an important and active role across the public libraries sector. It has a [network of Business and Intellectual Property Centres](#) based in libraries across the country, which provides entrepreneurs and SMEs across the UK with free access to databases, market research, journals, directories and reports worth thousands of pounds. There is a programme of free and low-cost events and workshops on a range of topics including business planning, marketing and intellectual property. British Library also supports public libraries through its Living Knowledge Network, a UK-wide partnership of national and public libraries. This [network](#) currently includes over 20 public libraries, the British Library itself, the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales.

Legal Deposit post implementation review

[The Legal Deposit Libraries \(Non-Print Works\) Regulations 2013](#) came into force on 5 April 2013. These extended the legal deposit scheme to cover non-print works. These are defined as works published in a medium other than print, including work published online (such as content from the internet, an e-book or an electronic journal) or work published offline (that is, published in a physical form other than print such as a CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or microfilm). The extension of legal deposit to non-print works was designed to ensure that the UK's non-

print published output (and thereby its intellectual record and published heritage) is preserved as an archive for research purposes, whilst also reducing the costs of legal deposit to publishers overall.

Alongside the introduction of the regulations there was a commitment to conduct a non-statutory post implementation review (PIR) after 5 years. The review was conducted for DCMS by the Joint Committee on Legal Deposit (JCLD), which is convened by the British Library and is composed of representatives of the legal deposit libraries and publishing trade associations. The PIR was finalised in August 2018 and [published](#) in April 2019.

Public Lending Right (PLR) Scheme

- Rate per Loan

Following a recommendation from the British Library and a public consultation undertaken by DCMS that closed on 29 October 2018, and subsequent ministerial approval, the rate per loan was revised upwards in December 2018 to 8.52 pence.

- Extension of PLR to include remote e-lending

The statutory instrument [extending PLR](#) to include remote e-lending came into force in July 2018. This means that authors of e-books and e-audiobooks lent remotely by public libraries are now eligible to receive payments from the PLR fund in the same way as they are for lending of physical books and audiobooks.

- PLR Scheme 1982 (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018

The PLR Scheme eligibility to register for the Public Lending Right previously required an author, at the time of application, to be a resident in an EEA State. As the United Kingdom will cease to be an EEA State, after EU exit day, DCMS introduced an [amendment](#) to the PLR Scheme on 15 August 2018 to ensure that authors resident in the United Kingdom could continue to be eligible to register for the PLR, alongside authors resident in other EEA States.

Library byelaws

Section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 enables local authorities to make byelaws regulating the use of library facilities run by each authority under the Act. The Secretary of State is required to confirm such byelaws before they can come into effect. Over the period of this report the department approved revised library byelaws for Lancashire.

Libraries Taskforce transition

The Libraries Taskforce (co-sponsored by DCMS and Local Government Association) is funded up to March 2020, and originally had a dedicated Taskforce team of 5 people providing a secretariat and delivering activities and actions agreed by the Taskforce. Although the Taskforce is an independent entity, the team was hosted within DCMS.

In March 2018 the Taskforce agreed to shift much of the work to support its activity across to Arts Council England (ACE) which is the development agency for public libraries. A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed to govern this move, including the creation of new roles within ACE, and the transition to the new arrangements was completed in November 2018. The Taskforce continues to provide practical support to the public libraries sector in England, including through masterclasses, publishing toolkits and other data and research, as well as advocating what libraries offer to decision makers across central and local government. DCMS remains an active member of the Taskforce, providing it with policy and advocacy support.



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