

# Bexley Library Service Needs Assessment – September 2020

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

In response to changing customer needs and the challenging financial climate, and as a direct response to the requirement to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, a fundamental review of the library service is being undertaken. The aim of the review is to look at new delivery approaches to ensure the continued provision of a modern service, which complies with statutory requirements and continues to meet the needs of the borough's residents.

This process included undertaking a Needs Assessment to inform any proposed changes, thereby ensuring that the needs of residents have been fully considered and that the changes proposed are in keeping with the Council's statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" library service.

### **Compliance with the Council's statutory duty**

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes it the duty of a local authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for the benefit of local residents. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has indicated that the judgement of what constitutes a "comprehensive and efficient service" is, in the first instance, for the local authority to make.

The Secretary of State has expressed the view that decisions about local issues should be taken by democratically elected local representatives. The Secretary of State also notes that the local authority is entitled to take account of resources in deciding whether a proposal is efficient.

The following factors have been put forward by the DCMS as considerations when deciding whether to intervene in proposed Local Authority service changes to libraries:

- Whether there was any doubt or uncertainty as to whether the Council is complying with its legal obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient service
- Whether the Council appears to be acting in a careless or unreasonable way
- Whether the Council has failed to explain, analyse or properly justify its proposals

- Whether the local proposals are likely to lead to a breach of national library policy
- Whether substantial further investigation is needed
- The number of Council managed libraries which would remain open
- The proportion of active borrowers using the libraries which would remain open
- Opening hours at the libraries which would remain open
- Mitigating factors which could offset the effect of library closures
- Consultations held with local residents
- Distance to libraries which would remain open, travel time, car ownership and public transport options

## **Assessment of Need**

To ensure that the Council is compliant with its statutory obligation and acting in line with the advice provided by the DCMS set out above, a full assessment of the available information and data has been produced to ensure that the Council’s definition of a “comprehensive and efficient” library service has taken into consideration the key information available about need in the community. This assessment has considered:

- Community profiles for each library
- Information from [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) about transport links in the area
- CIPFA Children’s Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2017
- CIPFA Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2019
- CIPFA Archive Service Survey
- Library Management data – including membership statistics, issues, visits, use of People’s Network computers, etc.
- Comparisons with other authorities – ‘near neighbours’ and London generally
- Current national research documents (Arts Council England, etc.)
- Census 2011 data
- Equalities Impact Assessment

This review of information and data sets the context within which the proposed service change options have been formulated.

## **Proposed Service Change**

The key options that have been proposed are as follows:

### **Option 1 – Reviewing opening hours at the Council managed libraries**

It is proposed that a review of the opening hours at Council managed libraries take place to allow for changes to be made to the regular opening hours of each library. The options considered are as follows:

- a) Two half day closures, or a whole day closure would be introduced for each library, with the intention that these closures take place when each library is normally least busy. Accessibility for residents would also be considered with an aim to ensure

(where possible) that if one library is closed, the next nearest Council managed library would be open – providing residents with a reasonably located alternative.

- b) Late (evening) opening hours are currently offered at five of the Council libraries. Use of the libraries in this evening period is comparatively low and it is proposed that these evening opening hours are ended.
- c) Currently Central Library opens from 10am to 1pm on Sundays – use of the library on this day is low compared to other days during the week. Ending Sunday opening hours would save money and bring Central Library’s opening hours in line with the other Council managed libraries.

### **Option 2 – Operating for part of the day with self-service facilities and appropriate security, and with staff for the rest of the day.**

All libraries have self-service technology in place which allows for customers to borrow and return books, book computers and search the library catalogue without needing interaction or assistance from staff.

It is proposed that each library would operate on a ‘self-service only’ basis for part of each day with staff not available for assistance during this time. While a security presence would be required on site to safeguard the premises and visitors, the reduced presence of staff would allow for savings to be made in staffing costs. Although the lack of staff on site would limit the range of services available to customers, further options to enhance self-service functionality could be explored to improve this.

### **Option 3 – Events and Activities**

Volunteers play an important role in the running of Bexley’s libraries. At present many library events are delivered by staff with support from volunteers. This option proposes that the number of events and programmes delivered by staff are reduced while continuing to run established volunteer run programmes. New ways to deliver and fund activities and events would be explored.

### **Option 4 - Local Studies and Archives Centre, Central Library Bexleyheath – introduction of appointment system for specialist staff help**

The Local Studies and Archive Centre is located at Central Library, Bexleyheath. It provides access to a wide range of archival and other materials that relate to the history of the borough. The collections are used for many purposes including by people researching their family or local history.

This option, if progressed, would mean that access to the Local Studies and Archives reading room area at Central Library would remain open to all customers. Staffing of the department would, however reduce, meaning that should customers wish to access specialist materials from the collections or be supported with research tasks or with use of online resources such as Ancestry, then such help would be available through a pre-booked appointment system. This approach would ensure customers can continue

to get the help they need, whilst reducing operating costs, as the facility would no longer need a specialist staffed presence at an enquiry desk at all times.

### **Option 5 - Community Managed Libraries – reducing or ending of Council grant funding**

There are six Community Managed Libraries in Bexley. The libraries are not part of the Council's core offer. The concept of community management commenced in 2012 and all six have been community managed since April 2016. The Community Managed Libraries are:

- Bexley Community Library
- Blackfen Community Library
- Bostall Community Library
- North Heath Community Library
- Slade Green and Howbury Community Library
- Upper Belvedere Community Library

The Council supports these libraries with grants that are made up of a mixture of cash, seconded staff, book purchasing and maintenance services. This support is valued at £200,000 for all six libraries in total.

This option suggest that the current arrangements for these libraries, (including current levels of agreed support and funding for each), come to an end in March 2021. If progressed, this option would mean that Council support for the Community Managed Libraries would either be reduced or come to an end. If this support was reduced or withdrawn, there may still be an option for these libraries to raise funds from other sources such as charity grants to continue operating but a key source of current revenue would be removed, which may have a significant impact on their ability to continue to operate. If unable to operate without the same level of Council support, the Council would seek an alternative community provider.

If progressed, this option would save money by reducing or ceasing grant payments and other forms of support that have a financial implication to the Council.

### **Option 6 – Do nothing**

The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges from the increasing pressure to protect, and meet rising demand for essential services, such as adults and children's social care. The Coronavirus pandemic has also impacted negatively on the Council's financial position. Reducing the costs of the Library Service, whilst continuing to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, is one option which the Council must consider. In light of the Needs Assessment data the Council believes the options under consideration will result in savings but will not impact on the Council's duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient service, and that options will also build on new digital opportunities and support changing patterns of usage.

## Option 7 – Other ideas

We would welcome suggestions for any other ideas on how the Council can either reduce the cost of the Library Service or generate additional income from its library assets to offset costs.

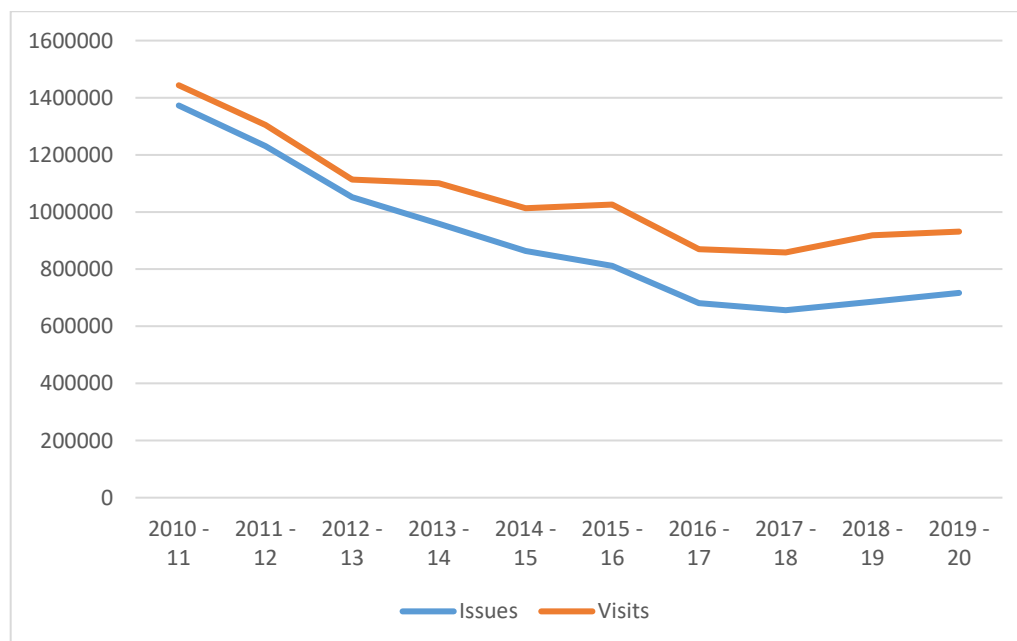
### Rationale for reviewing Council library provision based on assessment of need

Usage of libraries has declined nationally over recent years. For example, in 2005/6, 48% of adults surveyed by DCMS reported that they had visited a library within the past 12 months. By 2013/14, this had declined to 35% of adults. In the most recent survey in 2018/19, this figure had fallen to 33% of adults. In contrast though, virtual visits to libraries have increased. In 2005/6, only 8.9% of adults surveyed reported that they had visited a library website, but by 2013/14, this had increased to 14%. In 2018/19, 16.8% of adults surveyed had accessed library services online in the past 12 months.

The trend of decreasing usage nationally has accelerated over the past few years. CIPFA statistics show that in the UK, issues from libraries (i.e. loan of books) declined by 39% between 2011/12 and 2018/19. Physical visits declined by 26% in the same period, while the number of active borrowers declined by 34%.

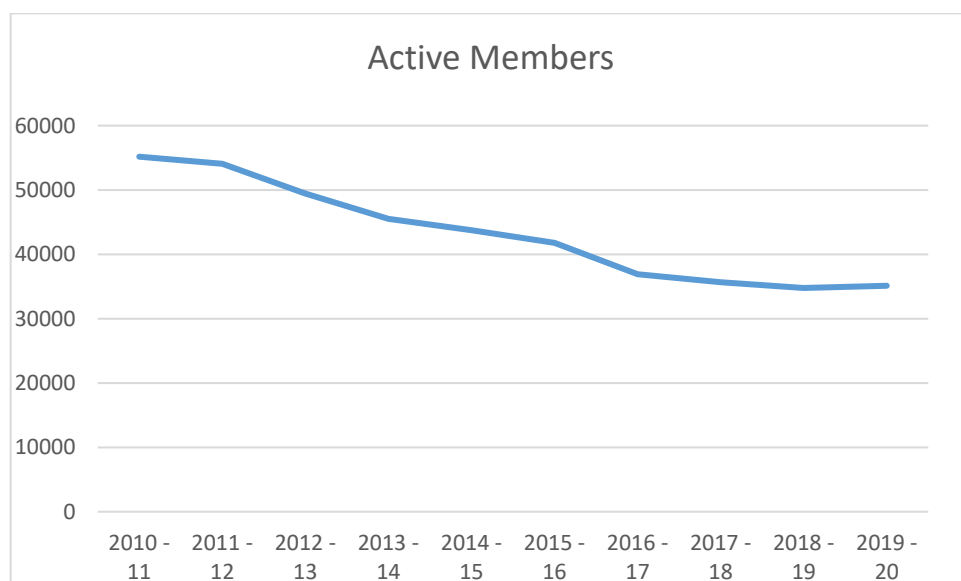
This pattern has also been identified in Bexley over a longer period, although in recent years the decline has slowed and levelled off. The following graphs show the decrease in numbers of visits, issues and active members over the past ten years. Active members are defined as users who have used the library service at least once in the past twelve months.

#### Bexley Library Service - Issues and Visits – 2010 - 2019





## Bexley Library Service - Active Library Members – 2010 - 2019



Factors which may have contributed to this decline in the usage of libraries nationally are shown below:

- Changing reading habits, with more customers switching to e-books rather than traditional physical books.
- Increased opportunities to purchase books at low cost from best sellers stocked in targeted ranges within supermarkets and from online stores such as Amazon, which have exhaustive catalogues.
- Changing frequency of physical visits to libraries as more customers take advantage of the improved facilities for remote access to libraries – including online reference resources, online reservations, online and telephone renewals of existing loans, etc.
- Reduced demand for information from libraries as more customers have access to PCs and broadband so they can “Google” their information requests at home instead of visiting a library.
- Reduced demand for People’s Network computers in libraries, as more customers get their own PCs and broadband at home, as well as using personal devices, such as mobile phones, to access the internet and applications.

Clearly, the way in which libraries are being used has changed over the last decade. The proposals to remodel the library service reflect this overall change in demand by customers for libraries.

## **Rationale for options proposed for a review of the Library Service in 2020/21**

Prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, local government had to adapt to significant reductions in funding due to discretionary cuts in government spending by

three consecutive governments from 2010. During the pandemic, the Council has delivered an entirely new range of services from scratch and at pace as directed by the Government to support our staff, businesses and residents. This, in addition to a significant impact on the income streams upon which the Council relies, has come at a cost to our finances. This savings proposal is part of the package of proposals that will help the Council to reduce spending and to balance its budget by driving out efficiencies, making savings and transformational changes and by adapting our services and how we provide them in order to protect customer facing front line services to the most vulnerable and those services most important to residents.

Bexley’s library service currently costs Council Tax payers £4.393m a year (including corporate recharges). Over a number of years the number of people borrowing books has, overall, fallen and online services have become more popular. In view of this, it is proposed that a review of the Library Service is undertaken to identify options to reduce its cost, whilst ensuring that an effective service is still delivered to residents and that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations for library provision.

In the six years since 2014, when significant changes were last made to library provision, the ways in which customers have used Bexley’s library services has changed, as the following data demonstrates:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Physical Issues</b>	<b>Digital downloads</b>	<b>Digital downloads as a % of total issues</b>
2015-16	815,744	11,365	1.37%
2016-17	767,209	18,700	2.38%
2017-18	722,703	21,531	2.89%
2018-19	732,622	39,930	5.17%
2019-20	729,360	68,330	8.57%

In 2016, six libraries were transferred to community management, leaving a Council managed Library Service of six larger libraries. The options put forward for a review of the library service in 2020 do not reduce the number of Council managed libraries.

Of the active members of Bexley Libraries, 91% are registered at one of the 6 Council libraries. These six libraries are highly accessible with good transport links and are predominantly based in town centre locations. Sidcup and Thamesmead Library are due to be replaced in coming years by state of the art new library buildings.

Amended opening hours with new half/whole day closures and self-service only periods will reduce staffing costs, allowing savings to be made without permanent closure of any of the six libraries. The introduction of self-service periods will still provide access to the core services of the library – access to a considerable collection of books and materials, as well as usage of free IT facilities. The introduction of an appointment system for specialist help in the Local Studies and Archives reading room would have a similar effect as the staff would only need to be at the desk for appointments – reducing operating costs, whilst preserving the service. The approach outlined for events and activities allows for a programme that meets community needs to be developed over time through adopting new approaches to delivery.

A steadily expanding digital offer has been developed over a number of years, providing residents with a service that is not impacted by opening hours, staffing numbers or locations. The growth in uptake of digital services shows that changes to physical library access and provision do not prevent people from using the service or accessing a wealth of digital content online, though the total digital stock is still a small proportion of overall book stock (2.85%). The digital services being provided have been taken into account when considering the options for changes to Council- Managed Libraries.

It should also be noted that the needs assessment has been undertaken with the Community Managed Libraries taken into consideration. They help to strengthen the existing library offer in Bexley in addition to the services provided by the Council libraries. Reducing or withdrawing Council support would allow the Council to reduce expenditure – it is expected that the groups managing these libraries would need to raise funds from other sources to compensate for this loss of revenue. If the current providers are unable to operate without the same level of support of the Council grant, the Council would seek an alternative community provider. It is possible that without a grant these libraries may cease to operate. The rationale for the inclusion of this option is that these libraries have been deemed to be outside of the Council's statutory library provision and as such the option to reduce costs could be pursued without impacting on the core six library offer that has previously been deemed as suitable for meeting the statutory duty and local need. If this option were progressed and the Community Managed Libraries were to close, the geographical spread of the six Council Managed Libraries and the range of services they will offer (even if all current proposals are progressed), ensures that the Council will continue to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service, and meet the established demand for services across the borough.

A Home Library Service is also available, which provides services to those residents who are temporarily or long term home bound due to circumstances beyond their control such as ill health. Supported by volunteers, this service operates across the borough, as required. It is proposed that this vital service continues and is outside of the scope of the proposed changes.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the proposed service changes, if made following full public consultation, will meet existing and predicted community need for libraries. The six Council libraries will be maintained and these are located within 1.5 miles of 98.5% of resident's homes, be located close to key areas of deprivation, be accessible to almost all residents, and be open at times when they will be most used.

The six Council Managed Libraries will provide library services which meet the requirement for a comprehensive and efficient service (such as a wide range of books and materials for loan and free to use ICT facilities). This remodelled service will enable the Council to realise the significant cost saving required, whilst remaining 'comprehensive and efficient' through its ongoing provision of a service that has been designed to meet the needs of those who live, work and study in Bexley.

## **1. Introduction and purpose of document**

In common with local authorities across the country, the Council is having to make significant savings to balance its budget and protect essential services. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the council's finances has significantly increased these budget pressures.

Bexley's library service currently costs Council Tax payers £4.393m a year (the net controllable budget is £2.91m). Over a number of years the number of people borrowing books has, overall, fallen and online services have become more popular. In view of this, it is proposed that a review of the Library Service is undertaken to identify options to reduce its cost, whilst ensuring that an effective service is still delivered to residents.

This document sets out the basis upon which a range of options have been proposed to reduce the cost of the Library Service, whilst continuing to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service that meets local needs.

The purpose of this report is to provide a full assessment of local needs in relation to library services and to explain how the Council will meet these needs to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all residents, as well as those who work and study in Bexley, who wish to make use of it.

## **2. Description and overview of service**

The vision of the Library Service for 2014-19 was:

*'Bexley Library Service – Engaging communities, enriching and improving lives.*

*The Library Service will work efficiently, providing accessible and flexible spaces with relevant services, promoting reading, access to digital services, information and advice and lifelong learning for residents and communities in Bexley.'*

The Council library service is statutory under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and is funded and provided by the London Borough of Bexley.

Bexley Library Service currently operates six core libraries across the borough.

These libraries provide direct access to:

- Books for adults, teens and children including fiction and non-fiction
- Audio-visual material (DVDs, books on CD and MP3)
- Free IT access via desktop PCs and WiFi, as well as IT training and support
- Information services including enquiry handling, access to resources (online and hard copy)
- Community events, activities and informal learning opportunities
- Outreach services (including those to housebound readers)
- A wide range of events and activities for children and families including the Summer Reading Challenge, Toddlertimes and reading groups
- Access to Council services from Library Contact Points including parking permit provision, school admissions help, waste collection services and other services

Public access is available to library services electronically at any time from any computer with internet access, via the library website –

<https://arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/bexley>

The Local Studies and Archives Service, which is located at the Central Library in Bexleyheath, is responsible for the preservation and promotion of the records, history and heritage of the Borough and for providing public access to these records.

In addition to the Council library service, volunteers provide additional services in libraries, such as the Home Library Service, Computer Buddy sessions and helping with regular and one-off events.

There are also six Community Managed Libraries – Bexley Community Library and Bostall Community Library are managed by Bostall Library Community Group. Blackfen Community Library is managed by New Generation Community Trust. North Heath Community Library, Upper Belvedere Community Library and Slade Green Community Library are managed by Eco Communities. All six libraries receive support from the Council.

### **3. Scope of the review and drivers for change**

The review of Bexley Library Service includes all Bexley Libraries. Of these, it is proposed that the six current Council managed libraries will continue to provide the Council library service. A range of options to reduce expenditure whilst maintaining six council managed libraries have been proposed.

The review is required due to a need for all council services, including libraries, to reduce their expenditure, in line with the Council's financial strategy and current financial pressures on Council budgets. It is essential that the library service remains

relevant to residents and this review is being undertaken as part of an overall strategy for libraries that seeks to ensure the Council is delivering a modern, fit for purpose library service that meets statutory obligations of being both comprehensive and efficient.

## **4. Previous Consultation and changes already implemented**

In 2010, the Council responded to growing concerns about the economic climate and Local Government financial settlement by announcing a far reaching review of services that sought to achieve efficiencies Council wide with projected savings of up to £35 million.

The Council launched its consultation on its Strategic Review on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and it continued through to 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Proposals for changes in the Library Service were consulted on from 10<sup>th</sup> January to 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011. These included changes to opening hours, the closure of the Mobile Library Service, an option to move up to three of the smaller libraries in the borough to community management and a Shared Service for back office functions with Bromley Library Service.

### **4.1 Opening hours and staffing levels**

Following consultation feedback, a range of changes were proposed including reducing the number and length of late evening openings, half day closures at each library and the cessation of lunch time closures. The revised opening hours came into effect on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

### **4.2 The Mobile Library Service**

The review process initially sought to achieve cost neutrality of the Mobile Library Service by making an annual charge to schools, residential homes and other agencies that used the service and who may have wished to continue receiving visits from the mobile libraries.

By the 1st June 2011, there had been very limited interest in purchasing visits from the service. As a result of the poor take-up and the good provision of static libraries across the borough, the decision was taken in July 2011 to cease the mobile library service and this was implemented in early September 2011. The Home Library Service continued to provide an outreach service to those unable to visit a library branch due to being homebound.

### **4.3 Community Management of Libraries**

As part of the consultation process in early 2011, the community was encouraged to express their interest in the community management of some of Bexley's libraries.

Following a selection process and Cabinet Decision, Greener Bexley took on the management of Bexley Village library (now known as Bexley Community Library) from 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

In addition to the community management of Bexley Village Library, proposals for the new community facilities in Slade Green (including a multi use games area (MUGA), a community centre and library) were developed to include community management, utilising the process established in 2011/12 to appoint a partner operator. The preferred bidder (a joint partnership between Eco Communities & Greener Bexley) began operating the site in October 2014.

## **4.4 Remodelling of the Library Service 2016**

In 2014, a consultation was held on the remodelling of the library service to make significant spending reductions, in response to reductions in public funding and the need to deliver vital services for the borough's residents. The library service remodelling was part of the Council's planned and strategic response to the very challenging financial climate.

It was proposed to reduce the number of libraries managed directly by LB Bexley to six Council libraries:

- Central Library, Bexleyheath
- Crayford Library
- Erith Library
- Sidcup Library
- Thamesmead Library
- Welling Library

It was proposed that opening hours at the six Council libraries would be increased by reinstating the half day closure at each branch which was introduced as part of the changes implemented from September 2011.

The Council's preferred option was for the remaining libraries to be community managed through arrangements that are supported by the Council. Following the consultation and a Public Cabinet decision being taken, a process was followed to identify operators for the community managed libraries and the following management arrangements have been in place since April 2016:

- Bostall Library – Bostall Library Community Group
- Blackfen Library – New Generation Community Trust
- North Heath Library – Eco Communities
- Upper Belvedere Library – Eco communities

In addition, in 2016 the following arrangements were put in place following the withdrawal of Greener Bexley from pre-existing community management arrangements:

- Bexley Village Library – Bostall Library Community Group

- Slade Green and Howbury Community Library – Eco Communities

## **5. Compliance with the Council's statutory duty**

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes it the duty of a local authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for the benefit of local residents as well as those who work and study in the borough.

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (and other ministers on their behalf) has a duty under the Act to:

- superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service provided by councils in England
- secure the proper discharge by councils of their functions as library authorities

The Act also provides the Secretary of State with the statutory power to intervene and call a local inquiry when a library authority fails (or is suspected of failing) to provide the required service.

DCMS advise that the Secretary of State does not seek to prescribe how councils discharge their statutory duty nor to defend the status quo just by virtue of it being the current provision. A wide range of approaches are open to councils when deciding how to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.

DCMS state that a council must be able to evidence the link between the design and delivery of its library service and identifiable local need. They:

- will already hold much of the data on local needs that they can use in considering their statutory compliance
- need to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (and the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share certain protected characteristics and those who do not), which will involve an analysis and assessment of the equality implications of the proposals
- should engage with the community when designing the library service to meet local needs within the available resources

DCMS also advise that there should be consultation on proposed changes to library services that impact on the public. A consultation needs to:

- occur when proposals are formative and still at an early stage
- clearly define the scope for stakeholder input, which must be meaningful
- give sufficient information about the proposals to ensure that those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses
- give adequate time for consideration and response
- factor in the time taken for the different stages of local processes

Responses to consultation should be taken into account when finalising any proposal and an explanation given of how these responses have informed the proposal.



## 6. Library Review – proposed options in relation to local need

### 6.1 Background Information

#### 6.1.1 Declining usage

Usage of libraries has declined nationally over recent years. In 2005/6, 48% of adults surveyed by DCMS reported that they had visited a library within the past 12 months. By 2013/14, this had declined to 35% of adults. In the most recent survey in 2018/19, this figure had fallen to 33% of adults. In contrast, virtual visits to libraries have increased. In 2005/6, only 8.9% of adults surveyed reported that they had visited a library website, but by 2013/14, this had increased to 14%. In 2018/19, 16.8% of adults surveyed had accessed library services online in the past 12 months.

This pattern has also been identified in Bexley. Figure 1 shows the decrease in numbers of visits and issues for the period 2010-2019. Figure 2 shows a decrease in the number of active members over the period 2010-2019. Active members are defined as users who have used the library service at least once in the past twelve months.

Bexley appears to be following the national trend, albeit with some levelling off of the trend in recent years.

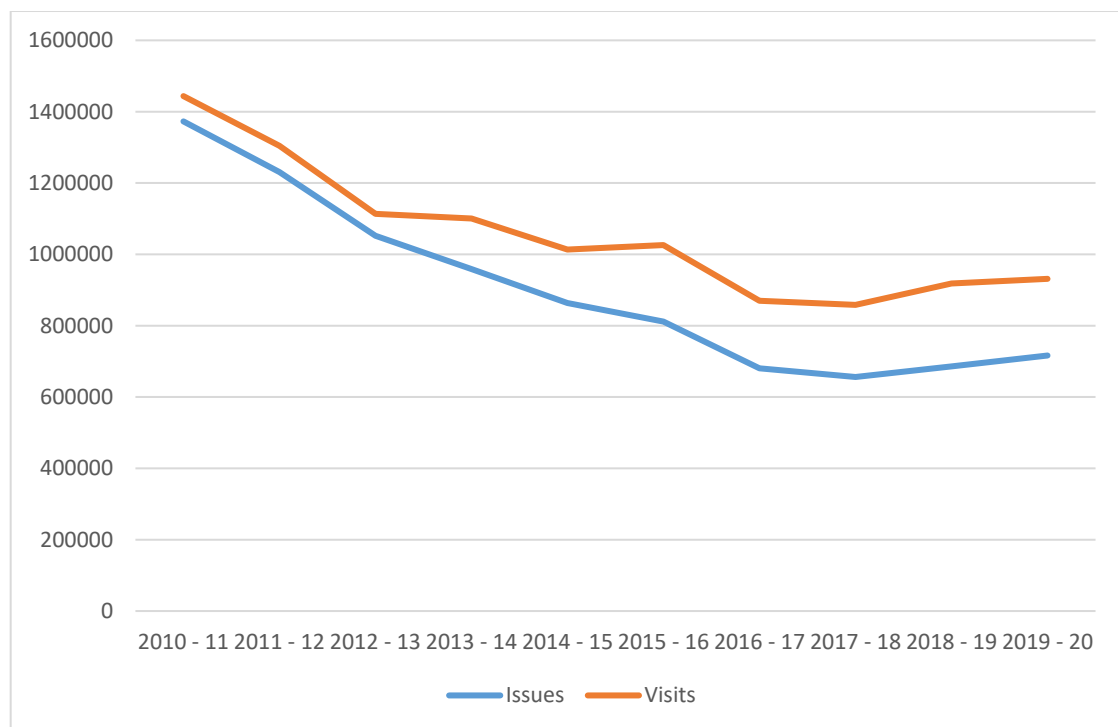


Figure 1. Bexley Library Service - Issues and Visits - 2010 - 2019

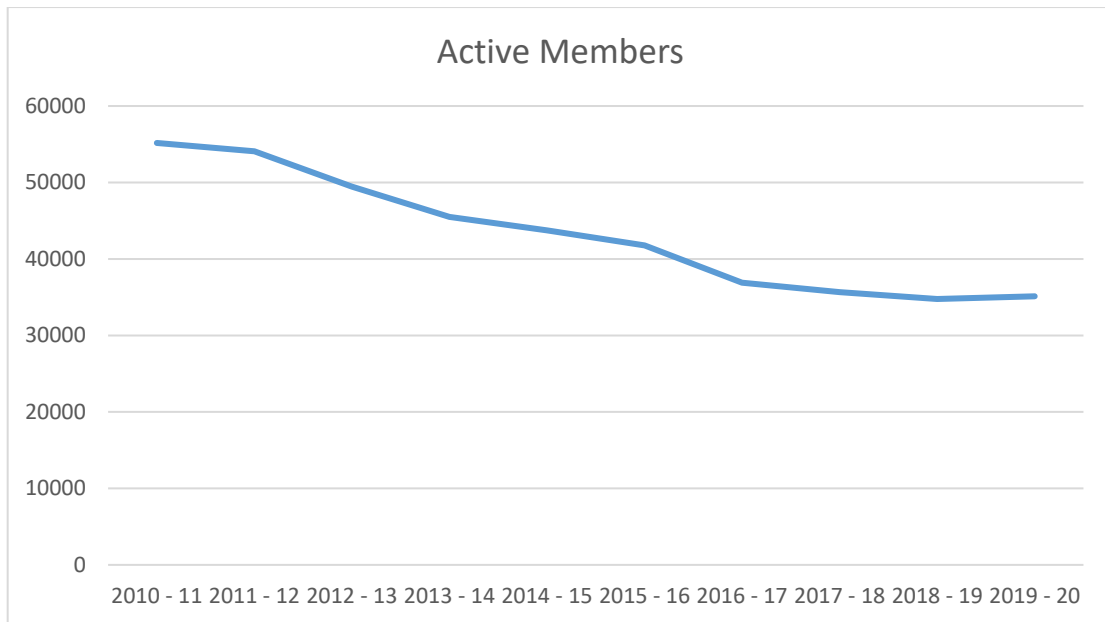


Figure 2. Bexley Library Service - Active Library Members – 2010 - 2019

Factors which may have contributed to this decline in the usage of libraries nationally are shown below:

- Changing reading habits, with more customers switching to e-book readers rather than traditional physical books.
- Increased opportunities to purchase books at low cost from best sellers stocked in targeted ranges within supermarkets and from online stores such as Amazon, which have exhaustive catalogues.
- Changing frequency of physical visits to libraries as more customers take advantage of the improved facilities for remote access to libraries – including online reference resources, online reservations, online and telephone renewals of existing loans, etc.
- Reduced demand for information from libraries as more customers have access to PCs and broadband so they can “Google” their information requests at home instead of visiting a library.
- Reduced demand for People’s Network computers in libraries, as more customers get their own PCs and broadband at home, as well as using personal devices such as mobile phones to access the internet and applications.

Clearly, the way in which libraries are being used has changed over the last decade. This Library Review aims to address these issues and to ensure that the service responds to

changing demand and continues to meet the future needs of residents and users of the service.

### 6.1.2 Comprehensive coverage

The locations of the six libraries give the majority of residents (98.6%) access to a local library within 1.5 miles of their home. This will need to be taken into consideration when reviewing opening hours – even if a library is closed, residents are still able to access the next closest library.

There are good transport links from all areas of the borough to one or more of these six libraries. A full summary of transport links between libraries can be seen in Appendix 7. It should be noted that bus prices within the borough are currently a fixed cost for any length of journey. In addition, the borough has high levels of car ownership (outlined further on in this document).

The Home Library Service can provide services to those residents who are unable to visit a library (due to being homebound) and operates to all locations across the borough where it is required.

A dimension of the comprehensive coverage provided by the Council is the provision of digital services as a modern way of delivering library services during a time when there is less demand for traditional book borrowing. Figure 3 shows that there has been a gradual decline in the borrowing of physical books. Figure 4 highlights the increase in the issues of eResources.

Since 2010 the Library Service has also gradually expanded their online offer to include eBooks, eAudiobooks, eComics, eMagazines and eNewspapers. Uptake of these services have gradually increased.

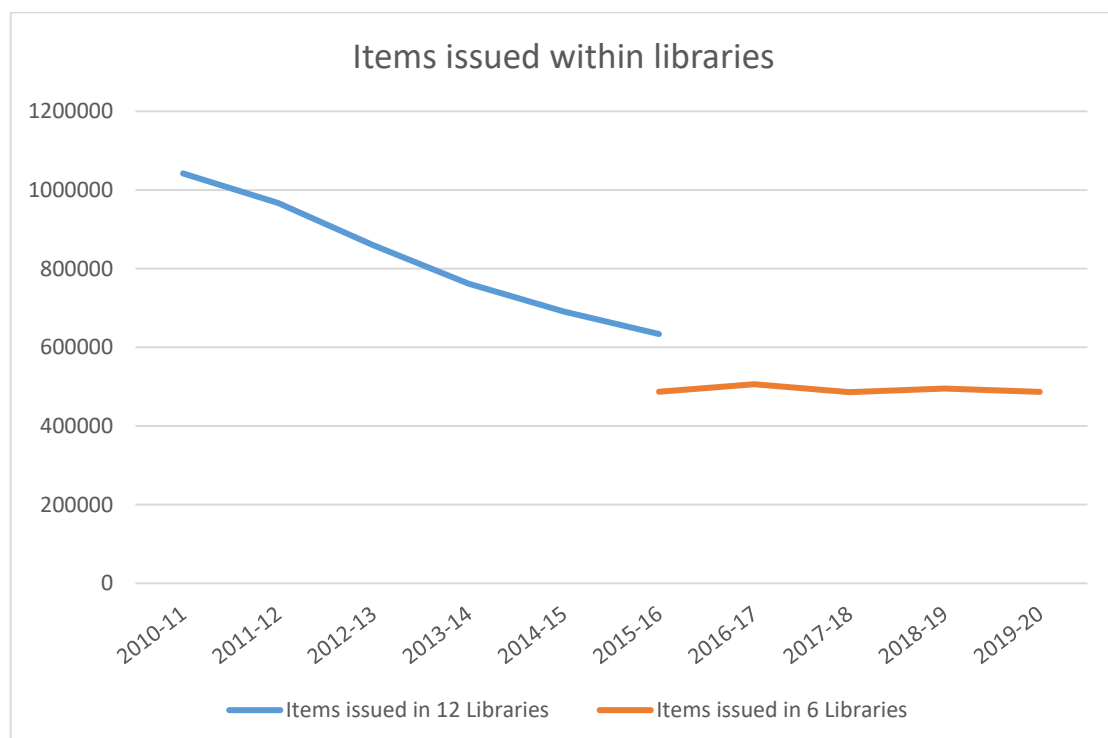


Figure 3. Bexley Library Service – Items issued within libraries – 2010 - 2019\*From 2015/16, 6 libraries became community libraries and ceased to be managed by the Council. Statistics for these libraries have not been included from 2015/16 onwards.

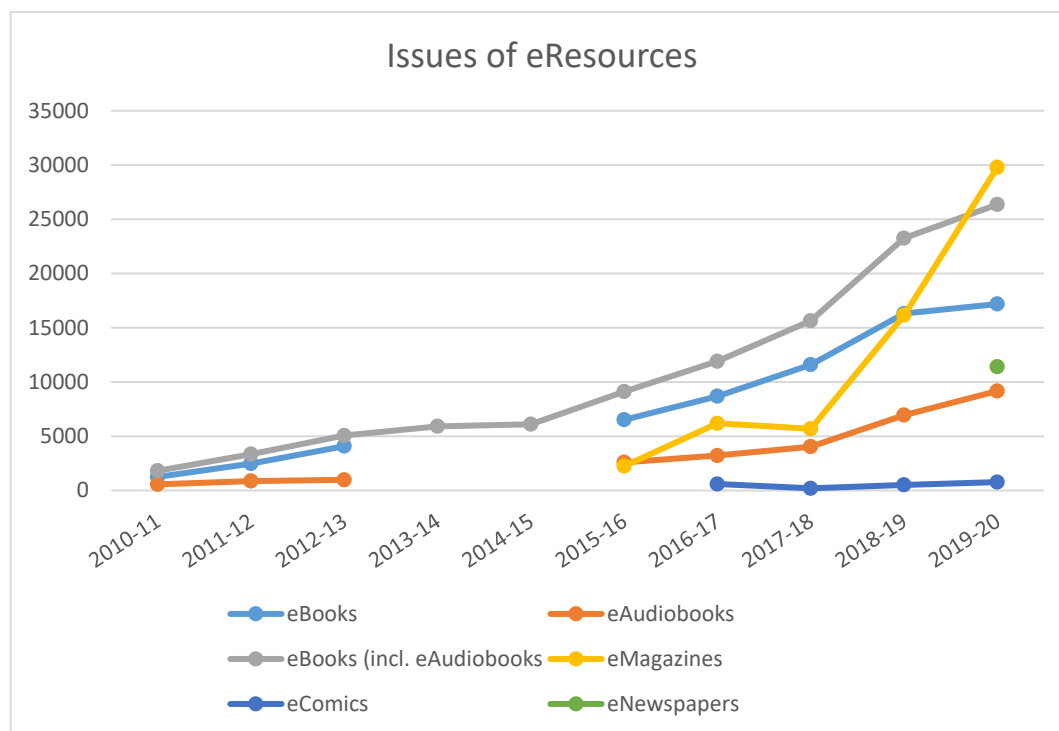


Figure 4. Bexley Library Service – Issues of eResources – 2010 - 2019

\*Separate figures for issue of eBooks and eAudiobooks are not available for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The increase in issues of eResources will help to mitigate the impact of reduced opening hours as customers access these resources online – they do not need to come into a library to borrow these items. Further details about the existing digital offer can be viewed in Appendix 13.

## 6.2 Option 1 Revised opening hours

The proposed options are:

- One closed day OR two half days at each library
- Ending late evening openings that happen once per week at five libraries
- Ending the opening of Central library for three hours each Sunday.

### 6.2.1 Closing each library for one day OR two half-days per week, when they are normally least busy

While Bexley has not seen a marked decline in library use in the last few years, there appear to be differences in when each library is most and least busy. Table 1 shows a

breakdown of each Council Managed Library's least visited full day, morning and afternoon over the period July to November 2019.

Table 1. Visits to Council Managed Libraries from July to November 2019

<b>Library</b>	<b>Least visited whole day</b>	<b>Least visited morning</b>	<b>Least visited afternoon</b>
<b>Central Library</b>	Saturday	Thursday	Saturday
<b>Crayford Library</b>	Saturday	Saturday	Saturday
<b>Erith Library</b>	Saturday	Thursday	Saturday
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	Saturday	Thursday	Saturday
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	Wednesday	Wednesday	Saturday
<b>Welling Library</b>	Saturday	Saturday	Saturday

The data shows that Saturday is when each library is visited least, with the exception of Thamesmead Library which has its lowest number of visitors on Wednesday. All libraries recorded their afternoon visits as lowest on Saturdays, with Crayford and Welling Libraries also recording Saturdays as their morning with the lowest number of visits. The least visited morning at Central, Erith and Sidcup Libraries is Thursday, with it being Wednesday at Thamesmead Library. In each library, the least visited morning/afternoon equalled 4-8% of weekly visits for that library. Introducing closure while taking these times into account would help to reduce the impact on customers while achieving the aim of reducing costs. It will not be entirely possible to have closures occur when each library is quietest though as this needs to be balanced against accessibility for customers. To minimise the impact on customers, we will aim to ensure, where possible, that if one

library is closed then the next nearest alternative will be open. Full visitor patterns data for all libraries can be viewed in Appendix 12.

Table 2 shows the proposed dates of closure for each library with options for half day and full day closures. These suggested closed periods will be reviewed following feedback from the public consultation.

Table 2. Proposed half-day and full-day closures at Council Managed Libraries

<b>Library</b>	<b>Option 1</b> Proposed am and pm closures	<b>Option 2</b> Proposed whole day closures
<b>Central Library</b>	Monday am Friday pm	Friday
<b>Crayford Library</b>	Wednesday am Thursday pm	Saturday*
<b>Erith Library</b>	Thursday am Wednesday pm	Thursday
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	Thursday am Monday pm	Monday
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	Friday am Saturday pm	Wednesday
<b>Welling Library</b>	Wednesday am Tuesday pm	Tuesday

\*At Crayford Library self-service facilities would be provided as the post office would remain open on Saturdays.

If this proposal was progressed, the suggested whole day or two half-days of closure for each library has taken account of the times of least usage, i.e. mainly Saturdays, but

footfall has also been considered in conjunction with the following principles, in order to ensure a balanced and accessible library service is retained for all residents:

- No two libraries geographically close to each other would be closed at the same time
- Some Saturday opening is maintained to ensure people who work and are unable to visit during the week still have access to the service
- Whole day closures would be spread across the week

This option, which would see each Council managed library being closed for one full day, or two half days a week would result in a reduction in staffing and premises costs of approximately £0.150m per annum.

*[Please note that all savings figures quoted in this document are indicative at this stage. They have been provided to assist in quantifying the financial savings that would be generated from each option, to help inform the consultation / decision making process. Final savings levels will depend on the combined options selected.]*

### **6.2.2 Ending the late evening opening hours currently offered once a week at five of the libraries (Central Library, Crayford Library, Erith Library, Sidcup Library and Thamesmead Library)**

Currently five of the six Council managed libraries have one day per week where they open until 7pm. Data shows that use of these evening periods is low compared to daytime use of libraries and it is proposed that if this option is progressed that these evening open times are ended. Low evening usage is consistent across all libraries which have a late night opening. Welling Library does not have a late night opening.

Table 3 is based on statistics relating to the average number of visits during any given time period over a four month period in 2019 – 2020. The number of visits during the late evening opening hours has been shown as a percentage of the daily visits for that day during the week. The library is open from 9.30am – 7.00pm (9.5 hours) on days when it is open in the evening. If visits were spread evenly throughout the day, visits during the late opening hours (5 – 7pm) should account for 21% of the visits during that day. From the data, only Erith and Thamesmead Libraries achieve this proportion of visits during the evening session. It should also be noted that both Sidcup Library and Thamesmead Library’s records start from 10.30am and do not have figures for the first hour – which will have impacted/inflated the figures below. The percentage breakdown for each library can be viewed in Appendix 12.

Table 3. Average percentage of visits during late evening opening hours

<b>Library</b>	<b>Average % of visits during late evening opening hours</b>
Central Library	15.38%
Crayford Library	11.06%

Erith Library	21.71%
Sidcup Library	17.12%
Thamesmead Library	21.41%
Welling Library	N/A

Ending these late evening openings would result in a reduction in staffing and premises costs of approximately £0.035m per annum.

### **6.2.3 End Sunday morning opening at the Central Library Bexleyheath**

Currently Central Library opens from 10am to 1pm on Sundays. Visits on Sunday accounted for just 5% of weekly visits at Central Library during the surveyed period.

All libraries currently offer weekend access on Saturdays. If this option is progressed then Sunday openings would cease, bringing Central Library, Bexleyheath in line with the opening hours at all other libraries in Bexley.

Data showing daily visits for all libraries as a percentage of weekly visits can be viewed in Appendix 12.

If progressed this option would reduce staffing and premises costs by approximately £0.015m per annum.

## **6.3 Option 2 Self-service only periods**

All Council libraries have had self-service technology in place for many years. The introduction of a self-service only period at each library would mean that there would be no staff available to assist with customer requests during this time. The only staff available would be in the form of a security presence whose purpose would only be to safeguard the premises and ensure visitors feel safe.

This operational approach has already been utilised in Bexley on a temporary basis as part of the Council's approach to restoring library services following their closure from March to July 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, libraries have been available for book borrowing only during the mornings from 9.30am-12.30pm daily.

If this model is adopted for the longer term for part of each open day in the Council managed libraries, it is proposed that a limited offer would be available to customers on site though this offer would comprise access to the most popular and high volume services that libraries offer. At present, self-service elements for the following services are available at all libraries:

- Issue/renew/return of books
- computer booking (and subsequent use of a computer)
- catalogue search terminals



Data shows that the majority of book related transactions (borrowing and returning of items) already take place via the self-service kiosks. For customers who use this already, the introduction of a self-service period would present minimal disruption provided they do not have any other queries which require staff assistance. Extending use of this technology would get best value from a facility that customers are already familiar with. The percentage of book loans and renewals at each library that is processed through a self-service kiosk is shown in table 4.

Table 4. Percentage of issues that were made through self-service

<b>Library</b>	<b>Self-service issues as % of total in 2019-20</b>
Central	70.68%
Crayford	58.70%
Erith	52.55%
Sidcup	65.21%
Thamesmead	46.66%
Welling	57.40%

It should be noted that while only a reduced range of services will be available in branches to customers during self-service hours, there are several channels through which services can be accessed. Services which will not be available during these hours within the libraries are shown in table 5.

Table 5. Services which will be unavailable during self-service opening

<b>Service</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Account related transactions and queries e.g. overdue fines, unblocking accounts, joining the library, reservation of books, etc.	It is possible to pay fines, join the library and make reservations on the website or library app.  Customers can telephone the Council to discuss and resolve a range of library account issues.  Plans are in place for card payment facilities on kiosks in libraries to enable payments to be made to clear account blocks on the spot.
Printing	Payment and release of prints can only be done by staff at present. New

	technology is being considered to enable this to be offered as a self-service facility.
Information/in depth queries	A dedicated phone in the library allows customers to contact the Contact Centre for queries which are related to Council services.  An email address is also available for any queries related to tourist information.
Events and Activities	All events and activities have been temporarily suspended in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also been proposed that events and activities are to be run/led by volunteers in the future – see 6.3.
Sale of items e.g. caddy bags	These services are non-core library functions, and are generally available via other channels as an alternative.
Use of meeting rooms	Use of meeting rooms have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic. Self-service functionality would not prevent these taking place in the longer term as the operational model utilises Hall Keeper staff to manage bookings.

The Council's Library Service is constantly looking to develop its offer in line with changing customer expectations and emerging developments. If a self-service only period is implemented, options to enhance the offer during these periods could be investigated such as the introduction of self-service payment options for overdue charges and self-service printing. The data available on uptake of digital services supports this move as such services enable customers to access library stock and services without needing to interact with staff. The steady increase in the uptake of digital services shows that customers are diversifying the ways they access the library service and rely on physical visits to libraries less as the digital offer improves. Further details about the uptake of digital services can be seen in section 11.1.

It should also be noted that the Council has recently (2019-20) installed new self-service kiosks in all Council libraries, so the technology is up to date and reliable.

If this option is progressed, then plans would be put in place for each library to operate on a 'self-service only' basis for part of each day. This would mean that:

- Whilst staff would not be available to assist, there would be an appropriate security presence to ensure visitors feel safe.
- Where possible self-service functionality would be enhanced, for example through the introduction of self-service payment options and self-service printing.
- Cash payments would not be taken.

Suggested options for the 'self-service only' periods are:

- 9.30am – 12.30pm – at the start of each day **OR**
- 2.30pm to closing time – at the end of each day

If progressed, and depending on which other options might also be progressed, this option could reduce staffing costs by approximately £0.150m.

## 6.4 Option 3 Events and Activities

Currently many library events are delivered by staff, often with volunteer support (for example Toddlertimes). It is proposed that the number of events and activities delivered by library staff is reduced, but that established volunteer run programmes could continue, and that we will continue to look for new ways to deliver/fund activities.

The events programme for each library can be viewed in Appendix 14. It should be noted that this is only related to regular events and does not include other one-off or annual events, e.g. Summer Reading Challenge which is largely delivered by volunteers.

Table 6 shows the number of regular events held at each library (occurs at least monthly) and how many of these are events supported by volunteers.

Table 6. Breakdown of staff and volunteer events in Council Managed Libraries

Library	Events run by staff only	Events run by staff and volunteers	Events run by volunteers only	Total number of events
Central Library	8	4	3	15
Crayford Library	2	1	9	12
Erith Library	4	4	8	16
Sidcup Library	8	1	14	23
Thamesmead Library	0	0	5	5
Welling Library	5	1	17	23

It is clear from the data that all libraries would be impacted differently by this proposal with the impact being less noticeable at libraries where few events are run by staff.

Under this proposal, already established volunteer run events would continue to be offered to the public. Volunteer run events currently account for half/more than half of all regular events offered at all libraries except Central Library – these events would not be impacted. Volunteers play an important role in the running of Bexley’s libraries, in 2018/19 a total of 156 volunteers contributed 5660 hours of volunteering across the 6 Council libraries.

If volunteer uptake is not sufficient to operate the events and activities programme, then some events and activities may be discontinued. If progressed, the Library service would prioritise working with volunteers and partners on the provision of those events and activities where there is an identifiable positive impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Whilst there may be an initial drop in the number of events offered at libraries, the long term impact of this proposal would depend upon whether new ways to deliver/fund activities can be identified and developed for long term use.

If progressed, the Library service would prioritise maintaining provision of those events and activities where there is an identifiable positive impact on groups with protected characteristics.

The level of savings generated from this option would depend on which other options are progressed and the resulting staffing structure that is implemented.

## **6.5 Option 4 Local Studies and Archives Centre, Central Library Bexleyheath – introduction of appointment system for specialist staff help**

The Local Studies and Archive Centre is located at Central Library, Bexleyheath. It provides access to a wide range of archival and other materials that relate to the history of the borough. The collections are used for many purposes including by people researching their family history. While located in the same building as Central Library, staffing is managed separately as staff for this department need to have an in-depth knowledge of the specialist materials which can be accessed here.

This option, if progressed, would ensure that access to the Local Studies and Archives reading room area at Central Library would remain open to all customers, but with reduced staffing. This would mean that customers wishing to access specialist materials from the collections, needing support with research tasks, or wanting to use online resources such as ‘Ancestry’, would access such help through a pre-booked appointment system. This approach would ensure customers could continue to get the help they need, whilst reducing operating costs, as the facility would no longer need a specialist staffed presence at an enquiry desk at all times.

Figure 5 shows the visitor numbers to the Local Studies and Archives Centre throughout the year from 2015/16 to 2019/20. There is a significant increase in visitors each month between 2018/19 and 2019/20, this was caused by a policy change

which meant that students and other customers were allowed to use this reading room. Prior to this, only customers with a Local Studies related purpose were allowed to use this reading room.

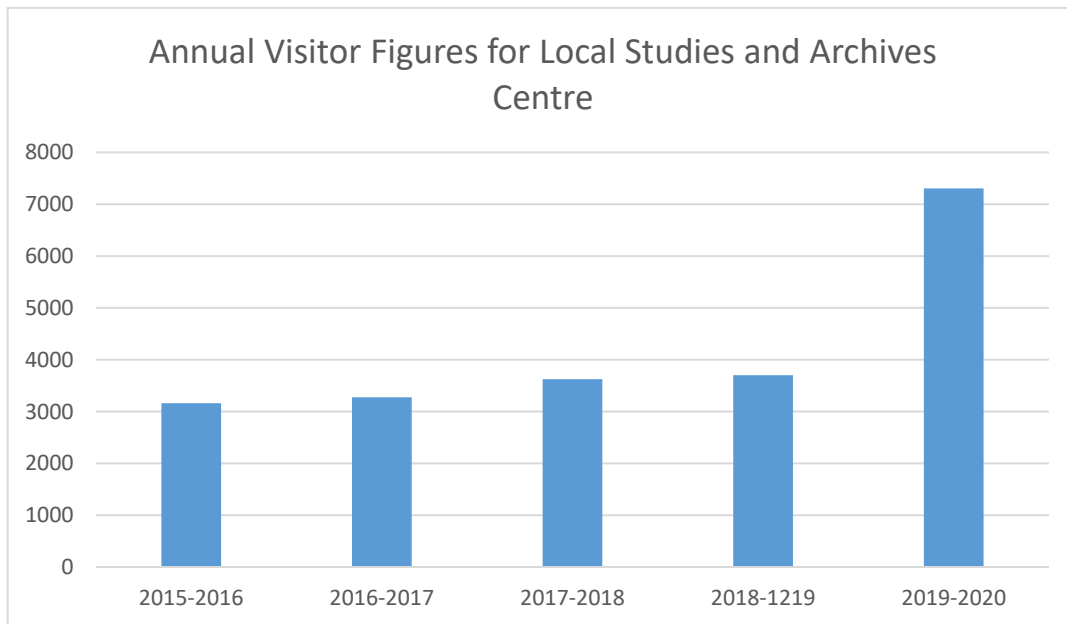


Figure 5. Annual visitor figures for BLSAC

It should also be noted that a proportion of Bexley archival records can now be accessed online via the Council website or contractual commercial providers – FindMyPast and Ancestry. Figure 6 shows user visits to these online resources and is based on data from the annual CIPFA Archive Service Surveys.

While there is no clear increasing or declining trend, the large increase in use in 2017/18 shows that there is clear capacity for greater use of these records – this spike in use was likely caused by customers making use of the resources for projects commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

To minimise any impact caused by this proposal, a campaign to raise awareness of the digital records would be carried out. The possibility of digitising more records would also be explored as this allows customers to access these records from any location without needing help from specialist staff.

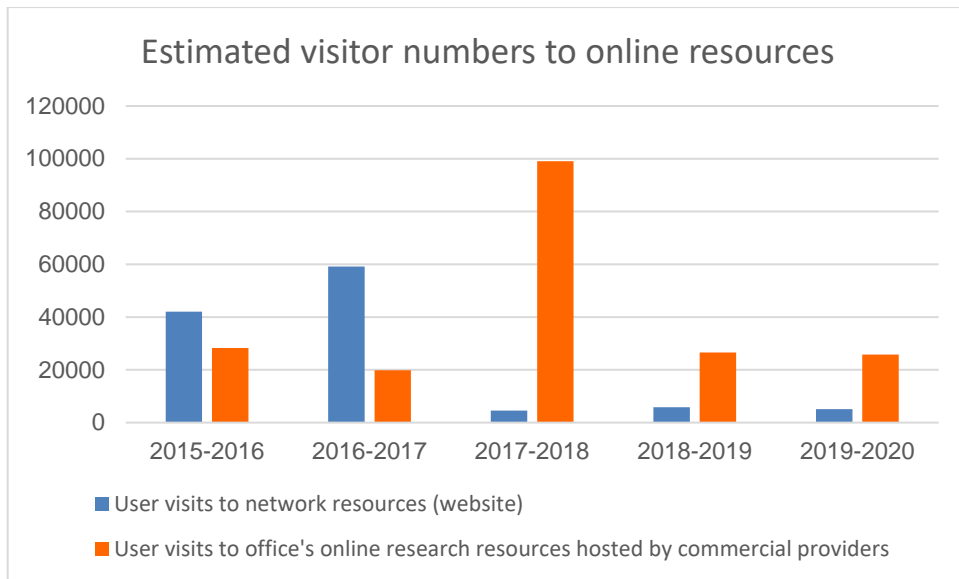


Figure 6. Estimated visitor figures to Bexley archival resources online

It should be noted that an appointment only service is likely to be implemented during the Coronavirus restore period.

The level of saving from this option would depend on the detailed system developed – but could be in the region of £0.030m - £0.040m.

## 6.6 Option 5 Community Managed Libraries – reduction of OR ending of Council grant funding

There are six Community Managed Libraries in Bexley which are not part of the Council’s core offer. The Community Managed Libraries are:

- Bexley Village Library
- Blackfen Library
- Bostall Library
- North Heath Library
- Slade Green and Howbury Community Library
- Upper Belvedere Library

The Council supports these libraries with grants that are made up of a mixture of cash, seconded staff, book purchasing and maintenance services. This support is valued at £0.200m per annum for all six libraries in total.

This option suggests that the current arrangements for these libraries, (including current levels of agreed support and funding for each), come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, future arrangements for funding these libraries could be reviewed. If progressed, this option would mean that the Council’s financial support for the Community Managed Libraries would either be reduced or cease. If Council financial support is reduced or withdrawn, there may still be an option for these libraries to raise

funds from other sources such as charity grants, to continue operating but a key source of current revenue would be removed, which may have a significant impact on their ability to continue to operate. If unable to operate without the same level of grant support, the Council would seek an alternative community provider, who is able to operate with less, or no, financial support from the Council. If no other community provider were to step forward, this could ultimately result in closure.

If progressed, this option would save money by reducing or ceasing grant payments and other forms of support (such as seconded staff) that have a financial implication to the Council.

The level of saving from this option would be up to £0.200m per annum, depending on the level of financial reduction.

These libraries are deemed to be outside of the Council's statutory provision. The basis for this was set out in a previous Needs Assessment, published in 2014, that looked in detail at the demographic and other data available to deem that the six Council managed libraries are sufficient to meet local need. It should be noted that reducing or ending the funding for these libraries will not necessarily necessitate their closure – the future management of these libraries will depend on the groups finding alternative funding or potentially new providers being found. Such a change process is in keeping with the established position that these libraries are outside of statutory provision and as such a flexible approach to their future management arrangements can be taken in order to secure the most favourable outcome.

## **7. Demographic information**

Bexley Library Service is available to all who live, work or study in Bexley and to all visitors, however brief their stay. As a result, stakeholders in the service include everyone in these groups, whether or not they are currently library users. Appendices 2 and 3 present full comparative data regarding the use of all libraries and should be referred to for a detailed understanding of the way libraries are currently used.

### **7.1 Population of the London Borough of Bexley**

All residents of the London Borough of Bexley are stakeholders in the Library Service – whether or not they currently use the service. A review of the demography of the borough has been used to help assess need.

Evidence about the population of the London Borough of Bexley has been taken from the 2011 Census. A detailed breakdown of these statistics can be found in Appendix 1.

Notable statistics from the 2011 census are as follows:

- The total population of Bexley is 232,000
- Of this, 48% are male and 52% are female
- Just over 58% of the population are of working age (20 to 64 years)
- 16% of the population are aged 65 and over

- 19% of the population is of school age (5 to 19 years)
- 6.6% of the population is aged between 0 and 4 years
- Bexley has a minority ethnic population of 18.1% (excluding White Irish and White Other)
- There are 13 other main ethnic groups, of which the largest group is Black, Black British or African
- In terms of disability, 16% of residents consider themselves to have a limiting long term illness
- 62.1% of residents describe themselves as Christian
- 2.4% of residents are Muslim
- 1.84% of residents are Sikh
- 1.5% of residents are Hindu
- 24.1% of residents have no faith
- 71.6% of the borough's residents are described as economically active
- 1.7% of the population are classed as long term unemployed
- 3.2% of the population have never worked
- 73.3% of homes are owned, while 25.8% are rented
- 76.3% of households have access to at least one car or van

## **7.2 Library community profiles**

More specific information for the stakeholders in the immediate vicinity of the libraries can be found in the community profiles prepared for each Council managed library. The information for these profiles is taken from Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) data and each community profile covers a radius of 1.5 miles from the library, based on the rationale outlined above that this is a reasonable travel distance to visit any library.

Information in the community profiles can be used to assess need in the areas where a change to library provision is being considered. A summary of findings from the community profiles for each of the Council libraries can be found in Appendix 5.

The community profiles show that:

- Central and Sidcup have a higher than average number of older residents.
- Both Thamesmead and Erith have higher than average numbers of residents for children below the age of 11.
- Christianity is the dominant religion that residents identify with across the borough. This is most noticeable in Thamesmead.
- Erith has a Sikh population that is more than double the borough average proportion.
- Thamesmead has a higher than average proportion of larger households (Five or more persons).
- Welling is the only location to have a lower than average proportion of one person households.
- Crayford has a higher than average proportion of economically active residents.



- Sidcup and Welling both have a higher than average proportion of households with four or more cars/vehicles.
- Thamesmead has the highest proportion of households that do not own a car or a van.

Deprivation Indices can also be used to determine need within the borough. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019) combines 38 indicators covering different aspects of deprivation into a single deprivation score for each small area in England known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA). This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation.

There are 32,844 LSOAs in England. The LSOA ranked 1 by the IMD 2019 is the most deprived and that ranked 32844 is the least deprived i.e. the higher the rank; the less deprived an area.

The different indicators cover:

- Income
- Employment
- Health and Disability
- Education
- Skills and Training
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment
- Crime.

These are weighted and combined to create the overall IMD 2019 score.

Figure 7 shows the IMD 2019 scores for the LSOA's within Bexley and has been produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in collaboration with the University of Sheffield. The darker the colour, the more deprived the area.

# English Indices of Deprivation 2019

## BEXLEY

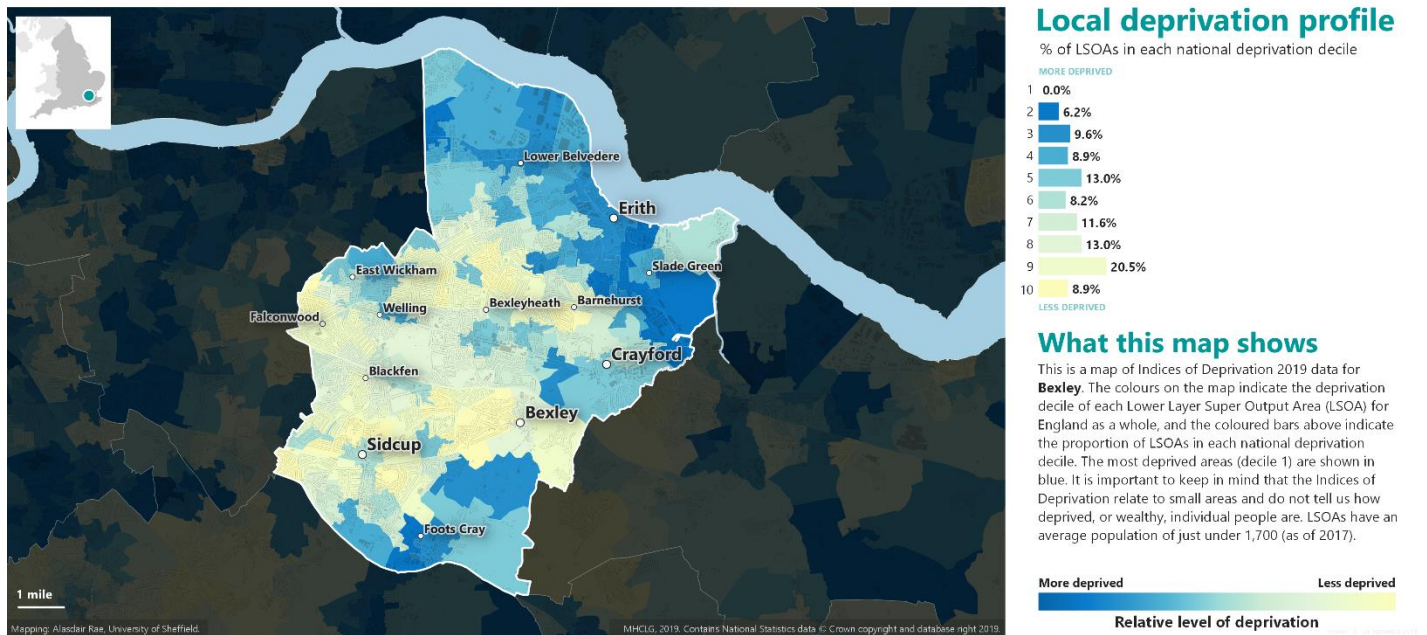


Figure 7 – LSOA's within London Borough of Bexley

There are no areas in Bexley that are in the most deprived 10% (nationally) of the country. There are, however, areas that are in the least deprived 10% of the country.

There is a clear strip of deprivation across of the north of the borough, and an area in the south of the borough (and to a lesser extent two areas in the east and the west).

The most deprived areas in the north of the borough, include and are close to Erith and Thamesmead library. Both libraries would be impacted by the proposed changes.

While there aren't any libraries located in the area of highest deprivation in the south of the borough, Sidcup library would be the closest library to this area that is being considered for changes.

### 7.3 Library users

An analysis of the current use of Bexley Libraries, particularly usage of those libraries where a service change is being considered, can also be used to help assess need.

Evidence about those stakeholders who are currently users of Bexley Library Service has been taken from the CIPFA surveys of public library users and also from management information from the Library Management System.

Statistics from the Library Management System show that Bexley Libraries had a total of 35,116 active members in 2019/20.

Of the 35,116 active library members in 2019/20:

- 12,616 members were registered at Central Library (35.93%)
- 3,640 members were registered at Crayford Library (10.37%)
- 5,576 members were registered at Erith Library (15.88%)
- 6,059 members were registered at Sidcup Library (17.25%)
- 2,045 members were registered at Thamesmead Library (5.82%)
- 4,770 members were registered at Welling Library (13.58%)

A CIPFA Public Library User Survey (PLUS) was carried out in Bexley Libraries in 2019. In addition, a Children's PLUS survey was carried out in 2017. These surveys measure the demographic profile of library users (age, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital and civil partnership status, etc.) as well as user satisfaction with the Library Service.

A detailed breakdown of the demography of library users from the CIPFA surveys can be found in Appendices 2 and 3. The CIPFA Public Library User Surveys show that:

- Children under the age of 7 and adults aged 65 - 74 make greater use of Central Library and Sidcup Library than any other age groups.
- Children under the age of 7 and adults aged 26-44 make the greatest use of Crayford Library and Welling Library.
- Children under the age of 7 and between 7 and 11 and adults aged 26-44 make the greatest use of Erith Library.
- Children between the age of 7 - 11, and adults aged 26 - 44 make the greatest use of Thamesmead Library.
- Welling Library has the highest proportion of adult female library users.
- Erith Library has the lowest proportion of customers with mobility conditions.
- Only Central Library and Sidcup Library have an above average proportion of customers who identified their ethnicity as "white".
- Welling Library has the lowest proportion of customers who identify as having a disability or health condition.
- Thamesmead Library has the highest proportion of customers that are unemployed.

## **7.4 Purpose of visits to libraries**

Nationally, libraries have seen a great change in the way that they have been used over the past few years – a trend that is mirrored in Bexley. Traditional book borrowing has fallen, largely due to the fact that the substantial reduction in the cost of purchasing

books over recent years has made books more affordable and also to the introduction of e-books.

Linked to this is the rapid evolution of the internet, which most people now have access to from work, home or mobile devices. The use of the internet has clearly had an impact on visits to libraries for reference and information purposes.

Changing leisure patterns and the increase in flexible working are also impacting on the use of the Library Service, as libraries have to compete with an increasingly vast range of activities, entertainment and media.

The CIPFA surveys can provide information about the reasons that people visit libraries. The CIPFA PLUS survey of 2019 showed that:

- 41% of customers visited Bexley Libraries to borrow books
- 27% of customers visited to use a computer
- 28% of customers visited to find information

\*Some customers visited for more than one purpose, so does not add up to 100%

The reasons why customers chose to visit the six Council libraries where a service change is being proposed can also be found in the CIPFA PLUS results.

Table 7 – Percentage of visits to libraries for the purpose of borrowing books

Library	Yes	No	Number of cases	Response rate
<b>Borough average</b>	41%	59%	1,925	93%
<b>Central Library</b>	43%	57%	370	88%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	39%	61%	337	94%
<b>Erith Library</b>	29%	71%	366	95%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	53%	47%	360	92%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	44%	56%	131	93%
<b>Welling Library</b>	42%	58%	361	95%

Table 7 shows that four libraries are above the borough average in terms of usage for the purpose of borrowing books, and Crayford library just falls below this borough average. This shows there is still a strong demand for books – these customers would still be able to borrow books via the self-service.

Table 8 – Percentage of visits to libraries to use a computer

Library	Yes	No	Number of cases	Response rate
---------	-----	----	-----------------	---------------

<b>Borough average</b>	27%	73%	2,045	98%
<b>Central Library</b>	23%	77%	415	98%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	24%	76%	355	99%
<b>Erith Library</b>	43%	57%	377	98%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	22%	78%	383	98%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	50%	50%	139	99%
<b>Welling Library</b>	19%	81%	376	99%

Table 8 shows that with the exception of Thamesmead Library and Erith Library, a lower proportion of customers than average visited the other four libraries with the intention of using a computer. From this it can be seen that the use of public computers is a service that is accessed on average by a minority of customers. The impact on customers will therefore be limited if the proposed changes are implemented and staff are not available to assist with computer related queries for part of the day.

Table 9 – Percentage of visits to libraries to find information

<b>Library</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Number of cases</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
<b>Borough average</b>	28%	72%	2,029	98%
<b>Central Library</b>	26%	74%	414	98%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	27%	73%	355	99%
<b>Erith Library</b>	33%	67%	368	95%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	26%	74%	378	97%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	36%	64%	139	99%
<b>Welling Library</b>	26%	74%	375	98%

Table 9 shows that a lower proportion of customers than average visited four of the libraries to try to find information. The only two libraries which had an above average number of visits corresponded with those which also saw above average use of the library computers.

The Library Management System used in Bexley Libraries is able to provide statistics on the number of members of Bexley Library Service, including the number of members who have actively used their library ticket in the past 12 months as well as statistics on issues of library items.

Other systems used in Bexley Libraries are able to provide details of the number of visits made to Bexley Libraries and information on usage of the People's Network of public PCs in libraries.

Detailed breakdowns of these statistics of library usage can be found in Appendix 4.

## 7.5 Partners

Bexley Libraries have many partners who are also stakeholders. Examples include:

- Age UK hearing aid clinics are offered from Crayford Library
- The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), who operate their services from Central and Sidcup Libraries
- The Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA), who have an office in Sidcup Library
- Inspire Community Trust – all Bexley Libraries work in partnership with Inspire to provide a Blue Badge application service to local residents
- The Metropolitan Police, who have contact points in Central, Crayford and Sidcup Libraries
- Bexley Councillors, who hold surgeries in most libraries
- The MP for Old Bexley and Sidcup, who holds regular surgeries at Welling Library
- The MP for Erith and Thamesmead holds monthly sessions in Erith Library
- Kent County Council Registration Services offer their services via an appointment system at Central Library.
- The Post Office is situated within Crayford Library.
- The Welling Workary is a co-working space available for hire located within Welling Library.
- KeyRing Living Support Networks hold weekly meetings (Community Hubs) at Sidcup and Erith Library.
- Solace Women's Aid, who have an office in Central Library.

## 7.6 Schools

Libraries work closely with local schools, hosting class visits to local libraries and delivering promotional visits to schools to promote the Summer Reading Challenge.

Table 10 lists the schools that regularly visit libraries.

It is expected that schools will continue their relationship with their local library and that schools access can be arranged around any changes to opening times or any potential change to the management of the Community Managed Libraries.

The Council Library Service would continue to work with all possible schools to promote the Summer Reading Challenge and promote library services in general:

Table 10 – Schools which currently visit Council managed libraries

School	Library currently visited
Alphabet Tree Preschool	Sidcup
Benedict House School	Sidcup
Brampton Primary Academy	Central
Bursted Wood Primary School	Central
Cleeve Meadow School	Sidcup
East Wickham Primary School	Welling
Foster's Primary School and Nursery	Welling
Gravel Hill School	Central
Holy Trinity Lamorbey CoE Primary School	Sidcup
Hook Lane School	Welling
Hope Community School	Sidcup
Jacqueline's Gems pre-school	Erith
Merton Court School	Sidcup
Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery	Sidcup, Welling
Orchard Primary School	Sidcup
Peareswood Primary School	Erith
Pelham School	Central
Premier Lodge Day Nursery	Sidcup
Shenstone School	Crayford
Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup	Sidcup
St Paulinus School	Crayford
St Stephen's Primary School	Welling
Upland Primary School	Central
Willowbank Primary School	Thamesmead

## 8. Data considered in assessing need

The following sources were used to gather data for the consideration of need, in relation to the proposals for Bexley Libraries:

- Community profile for the borough overall
- Community profiles for each library
- Information from [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) about transport links in the area
- CIPFA Children’s Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2017
- CIPFA Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2019.
- CIPFA Archive Service Surveys
- Library Management data – including membership statistics, issues, visits, use of People’s Network computers, etc.
- Comparisons with other authorities – near neighbours and London generally
- Current national research documents (ACE etc.)
- Census 2011 data

## 9. Community engagement and consultation to be undertaken for the proposed service remodelling

The Council is consulting the public, as well as stakeholders and partners, on changes to the library service – the consultation will be available in libraries and online. The indicative timetable for the consultation is as follows:

Stage	Date
Consultation begins	28 September 2020
Consultation ends (survey closes)	19 December 2020
Consultation outcome reported to Public Cabinet meeting and decisions taken	25 January 2021
Implementation of changes to the library service	Late spring/early summer 2021

## 10. Equalities impact of proposed changes

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to show how the proposed review of the library service will affect each of the protected equality strands.

See Appendix 10 for the full EIA document.



## 11. Findings and assessment of how needs of the residents (existing and predicted) can be met (or will be affected by the change)

The proposed Library Review options put forward are a significant service change.

The Council managed libraries are the largest and include those recently refurbished, in new buildings and in a good state of repair. They also reflect a good geographical spread across the borough within 1.5 miles of over 98% of residents and will continue to serve areas of deprivation in the borough. However, the proposed changes will affect how libraries are accessed and used and as such consideration of how need will be met with this remodelled approach is important.

### 11.1 Current library usage

Nationally, people are using libraries in a different way – traditional book borrowing has declined, as people purchase more books and switch to e-book formats. The use of libraries for reference and information purposes has also declined as people increasingly find the information they need on the internet. In addition, there is an increase in the other electronic resources being provided by libraries that provide access to information and materials other than e-books, indicating digital library use that is not tied to the opening times of library premises, is on the rise.

Evidence of how library users will be affected by the proposed changes can be found by looking at current usage of the library service.

Table 11 shows key statistics for 2019-20 and compares them with the previous two years, showing the percentage change over the period. While there has been a growth in the number of visits to the libraries, this has not been reflected proportionately in the number of items issued in the library. This reflects the change in use of the library with events and activities and meeting room hires also bringing in visitors. There has been significant growth in the use of eResources which reflects people’s changing attitude to how they read or borrow items from the library.

Table 11 – management information provided by the Library Management System (LMS) in use in Bexley Libraries

Item	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change from 2017-18 to 2019-20
Visits	858,356	918,420	929,825	8.3
Issues within libraries	485,976	495,062	486,660	0.1

<b>Issues of online eResources*</b>	20162	39930	68330	338.9
<b>New Members</b>	10,791	11,618	13,635	26.4
<b>Active Members</b>	35,657	34,768	35,116	-1.5
<b>Available IT time</b>	302,714	290,935	273,566	9.6
<b>Use of ICT time</b>	38%	38.5%	37.5%	-0.5

\*includes eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, eComics, eNewspapers

Table 11 shows that the use of e-Resources has risen dramatically (over 338%) since 2010. The breakdown of usage for each type of e-Resource can be seen in Figure 4.

Factors which may have contributed to these changes include:

- Changing reading habits, with more customers switching to e-book rather than traditional physical books
- Increased opportunities to purchase books at low cost from best sellers stocked in targeted ranges within supermarkets and from online stores such as Amazon with exhaustive catalogues
- Changing frequency of physical visits to libraries as more customers take advantage of the improved facilities for remote access to libraries – including online reference resources, online reservations, online and telephone renewals of existing loans etc.
- Reduced demand for information from libraries as more customers have access to PCs and broadband so they can “google” their information requests at home instead of visiting a library.
- Reduced demand for People’s Network computers in libraries, as more and more customers get their own PCs and broadband at home, as well as using personal devices such as mobile phones and smartphones to access the internet and applications

Visitor numbers for all libraries are shown below in Table 12.

Table 12 – Library Visitor numbers during 2018/19 and 2019/20

Item	2018-19	2019-20	% change

<b>Borough Total</b>	918,420	929,825	1.2
<b>Central</b>	279,571	296,939	6.2
<b>Crayford</b>	167,548	186,310	11.2
<b>Erith</b>	161,162	147,194	-8.7
<b>Sidcup</b>	147,267	149,703	1.7
<b>Thamesmead</b>	44,308	38,158	-13.9
<b>Welling</b>	118,564	111,521	-5.9

NB – it should be noted that since late 2018 Crayford Library has been co-located with a Post Office – this has increased footfall to the premises, but some visits will be for the purpose of using the Post Office and not using library services. It is not currently possible to disaggregate such uses.

Notes on the table:

- Between the last two full years, the Library Service recorded an overall slight increase in usage, though the figures for Crayford Library include Post Office usage.
- Thamesmead Library is in temporary premises and usage has declined due to the wider area around the library being subject to intensive demolition and redevelopment that has made public access more challenging than in previous years.

## **11.2 Daily and Hourly Use of Libraries – footfall study July to November 2019**

A footfall study was carried out within all six libraries from July to November 2019. From this study we can identify the daily/hourly usage of each library including when each library is often busiest or when it is generally quietest. The daily records of the footfall study can be viewed in Appendix 12.

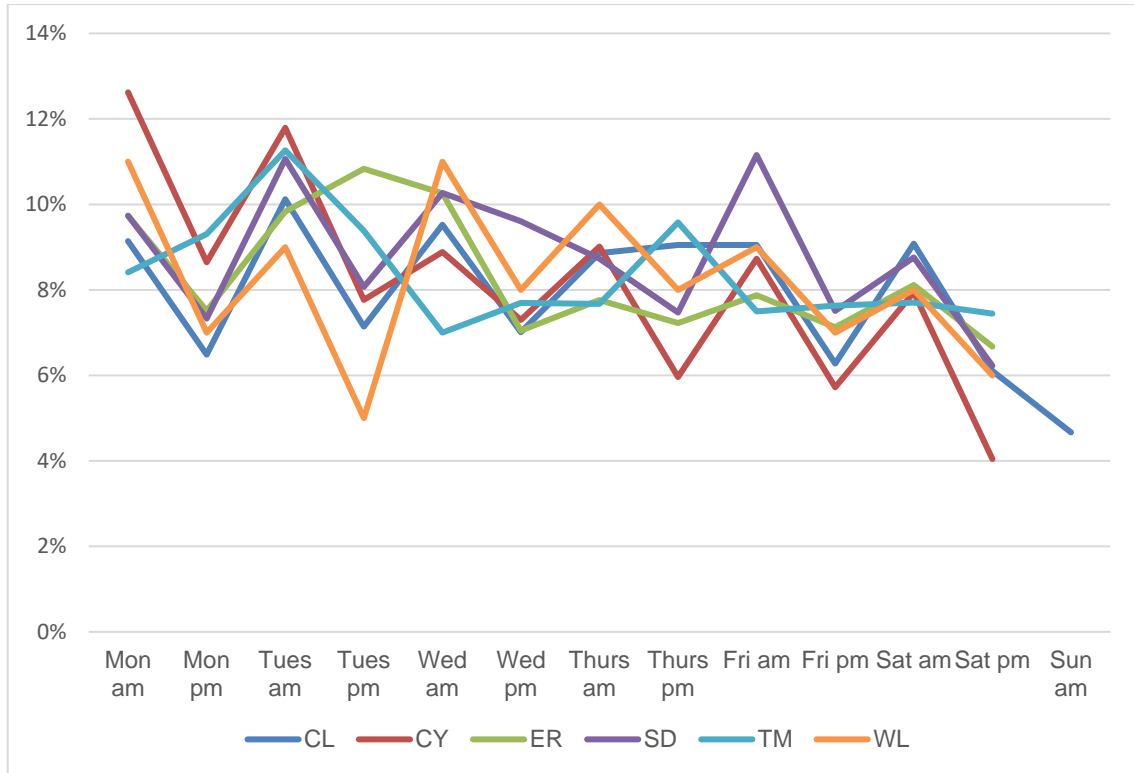


Figure 8 – Average footfall throughout the week for libraries

All libraries appear to follow a similar pattern with many peaking and dipping at similar times. The main exception appears to be Welling Library during the mid-week period where they experience a peak while many other libraries have a dip in footfall numbers.

The full footfall data can be viewed in Appendix Twelve.

### 11.3 Issues and active members

Table 13 shows the number of items issued at each branch in the last two years.

Table 13 – Loans of library items

Library	2018-19	2019-2020	% change
<b>Borough Average</b>	495,062	486,660	-1.7
<b>Central</b>	183,022	183,113	0.0
<b>Crayford</b>	60,893	62,322	2.3
<b>Erith</b>	50,286	48,314	-3.9
<b>Sidcup</b>	105,555	102,748	-2.7

<b>Thamesmead</b>	21,824	16,978	-22.2
<b>Welling</b>	73,482	73,185	-0.4

Notes on the table:

- Reductions in issues across the service over the last two full years have continued the trend of decline noted earlier in this document.
- Issues at Crayford Library have increased – but not to the same extent that footfall has increased considering its dual function as a Post Office.

Table 14 - Number of new members and active members of all libraries during 2019-2020

<b>Library</b>	<b>New Members 2019-2020</b>	<b>Percentage of borough total</b>	<b>Active Members 2019-2020</b>	<b>Percentage of borough total</b>
<b>Central</b>	5,233	38.38	12,616	35.93
<b>Crayford</b>	1,703	12.49	3,640	10.37
<b>Erith</b>	2,500	18.34	5,576	15.88
<b>Sidcup</b>	1,866	13.69	6,059	17.25
<b>Thamesmead</b>	593	4.35	2,045	5.82
<b>Welling</b>	1,740	12.76	4,770	13.58
<b>Other (North Heath, Slade Green and Upper Belvedere)</b>	Not available	Not available	410	1.17
<b>Borough total</b>	13,635	Not applicable	35,116	Not applicable

(Active members are defined as those who have used their library ticket to borrow an item or access the People's Network of public PCs, in the past 12 months)

Another important area of usage for public libraries is access to computers and the internet. The Office for National Statistics carried out a survey of internet access for households and individuals in 2020. This survey revealed that 96% of all households had internet access, up from 93% in 2019 and 57% in 2006 when comparable records began.

## 11.4 Computer Use in libraries

Uptake of computer use in libraries can be used as an indicator of the extent of computer ownership and broadband access at home. The CIPFA PLUS survey of library users in 2019 asked whether or not customers intended to use a computer in the library. For respondents who answered “yes”, that they intended to use a computer in the library, the weighted total for the borough as a whole was 27%.

However, this proportion is lower in four of the six libraries which would be impacted by the proposed service changes:

- Central Library – 23%
- Crayford Library – 24%
- Sidcup Library – 22%
- Welling Library – 19%

Uptake of available IT time has remained above the borough average at Central Library and Erith Library for the last 3 years, as shown in Table 15. Only Central Library has seen an increase in the uptake of available IT time, with all other libraries experiencing a fall in uptake. This would suggest that demand for computer use in libraries is slowly decreasing as more residents have access to computers and internet at home or on personal devices.

Table 15 – uptake of computer use in Bexley libraries

Library	Use of available IT time 2017 -18	Use of available IT time 2018 - 19	Use of available IT time 2019 - 20	% Change between 17/18 to 19/20
<b>Borough total</b>	39.6%	39.8%	39.3%	-0.3
<b>Central Library</b>	40.1%	48.4%	46.8%	6.7
<b>Crayford Library</b>	32.4%	26.4%	26%	-6.4
<b>Erith Library</b>	45.2%	44.3%	44.4%	-0.8
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	26.5%	26%	26.2%	-0.3
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	35.3%	36.5%	32.6%	-2.7
<b>Welling Library</b>	45.9%	34.2%	33.6%	-12.3

## 11.5 Uptake of self-service facilities

Table 16 shows that self-service transactions now account for more than 50% of book related transactions at all libraries except Thamesmead library. There is a strong correlation between the uptake of self-service and the total number of items issued which suggests that in busier libraries there is a higher level of engagement with technology (possibly due to fewer staff being available/longer queues at the counter).

Table 16. Breakdown of self-service issues

Council Libraries	Issues/ renewals via self-service	Issues/ renewals via counters	2019-20 total	Self-service as % of total
Central	129,424	53,689	<b>183,113</b>	70.68
Crayford	36,580	25,742	<b>62,322</b>	58.70
Erith	25,388	22,926	<b>48,314</b>	52.55
Sidcup	67,002	35,746	<b>102,748</b>	65.21
Thamesmead	7,922	9,056	<b>16,978</b>	46.66
Welling	42,011	31,174	<b>73,185</b>	57.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>308,327</b>	<b>178,333</b>	<b>486,660</b>	<b>63.36</b>

## 11.6 Satisfaction Surveys

Satisfaction with Bexley Library Service was also measured in the CIPFA PLUS Survey of public library users, carried out in 2019. In answer to the question, "Taking everything into account, what do you think of this library?" of the 2,036 customers completing the survey:

- 54% rated the Service as very good
- 40% rated the service as good
- 6% rated the service as adequate
- 0% rated the service as poor

Satisfaction rates for individual libraries are detailed in Table 17.

Table 17 – from CIPFA PLUS survey of library users 2019

Library	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	no. of responses
Central Library	54%	40%	6%	0%	0%	417
Crayford Library	55%	39%	4%	1%	0%	356

<b>Erith Library</b>	52%	42%	6%	0%	0%	369
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	57%	37%	6%	0%	0%	381
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	54%	36%	11%	0%	0%	138
<b>Welling Library</b>	49%	47%	4%	0%	0%	375
<b>Weighted total</b>	54%	40%	6%	0%	0%	2,036

Notes on the table:

- Satisfaction with the library services provided at all libraries was overwhelmingly positive with the vast majority of respondents rating each library as very good or good.
- Variations in satisfaction, considering the sample size, are minimal between library branches, though it should be noted that results at Thamesmead may have been affected by the ongoing construction works surrounding the area and the location of the library in a temporary building.

Satisfaction amongst children who use Bexley Library Service was also measured in the 2017 Children's PLUS Survey. Table 18 gives a full breakdown of scores. Of the 1,481 children completing the survey:

- 91% rated their library as good (score of 8 – 10)
- 9% rated their library as ok (score of 4 -7)
- 0% rated their library as bad (score of 1 – 3)

Table 18 – from Children's PLUS survey of library users 2017

*Customers were asked to rate their library with a score between 1 and 10.*

<b>Library</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Survey response rate</b>
<b>Weighted total</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	6%	18%	30%	43%	94%
<b>Central</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	7%	22%	27%	40%	95%
<b>Crayford</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	6%	13%	32%	46%	92%
<b>Erith</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	5%	17%	24%	50%	93%
<b>Sidcup</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	15%	39%	41%	93%
<b>Thamesmead</b>	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	8%	18%	27%	45%	93%
<b>Welling</b>	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	6%	18%	30%	43%	98%



Notes on the table:

- Over 40% of customers at each library rated the library with a maximum score of 10 which suggests that overall satisfaction with the service provided is extremely high.

## 11.7 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Digital Library Usage

As mentioned previously, Bexley has gradually increased its digital offer since 2010. Demand and use of this service has grown steadily as evidenced in Figure 4.

Following government announcements on the COVID-19 pandemic, all Council libraries closed from 20 March 2020, individual branches gradually reopened in late July 2020.

As the only service still available, borrowing of eResources increased significantly during this quarter, expanding at a much higher rate than it had done previously.

Table 19 compares issues of items during the April-June period in 2019 and 2020.

Table 19 – Total issues of eResources for April - June during 2019-2020 and 2020-2021

eResource type	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019	April-June 2019 Total	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	April-June 2020 Total	Percentage difference
eBooks	1,317	1,370	1,220	3,907	3,276	4,213	4,233	11,722	200.0
eAudiobooks	596	646	656	1,898	1,470	1,325	1,011	3,806	100.5
eMagazines	2,390	2,634	2,110	7,134	3,237	2,890	3,085	9,212	29.1
eComics	75	36	43	154	219	110	28	357	131.8
eNewspapers (PressReader)	0	0	0	0	9,243	11,575	12,552	33,370	

From the data it can be seen that while the libraries were closed (no lending alternatives available), items also available to borrow in the library (books, audiobooks and comics) all had at least a 100% increase in the number of issues compared to the same period last year.

More data will be necessary to see if use of eResources will fall back to pre-COVID-19 levels following the reopening of libraries as other alternatives become available again.

## 11.8 Transport links to the six Council libraries

Under the review proposals for the Library Service, the majority of Bexley residents (98.6%) will live within 1.5 miles of one of the six Council Managed Libraries.

The CIPFA PLUS survey of 2019 asked library visitors about their primary method of travel to the library. Table 20 shows the responses for the six Council Managed Libraries which are being considered for a service change.

Table 20 -- Methods of travel to the library (from 2019 CIPFA PLUS survey)

Library	Private transport, e.g. car, motorbike	Public transport, e.g. bus, train	On foot	Bicycle	Other	No. of Responses
Borough Average	31%	31%	36%	1%	1%	1,878
Central Library	21%	50%	26%	2%	1%	367
Crayford Library	51%	14%	35%	1%	0%	333
Erith Library	32%	31%	34%	1%	1%	354
Sidcup Library	32%	25%	41%	1%	1%	350
Thamesmead Library	44%	15%	39%	2%	0%	125
Welling Library	21%	25%	53%	1%	0%	349

\*May not add up to 100% due to rounding

This table shows that:

- A higher than average number of customers use private transport to get to all of the libraries apart from Central Library and Welling Library.
- Only Central Library and Erith Library have a higher than average or average number of customers using public transport to visit.
- While walking is the most popular method of travel across the Borough, the percentage of customers using public or private transport combined is more popular for all libraries except Welling Library.
- For all libraries, except Welling, close to at least 60% of their customers travelled by public or private transport to the library. If opening hours were amended, these customers would be able to use the same method of transport to visit another branch. This may be more difficult for customers if they are used to travelling on foot.

Statistics of car ownership for households in areas where service changes are being proposed are shown in Table 21. The statistics have been taken from the community profiles for each branch and are calculated on a radius of 1.5 miles around each library, with data derived from the 2011 census.

Table 21 – Number of cars or vans per household

No of cars or vans per household	Borough Average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
None	23.7%	20.8%	24.7%	32.4%	23.8%	40.5%	17.8%
1 car or van	45.4%	46.3%	46.8%	46.1%	43.8%	42.7%	45.8%
2 cars or vans	23.4%	25.2%	22.4%	16.5%	24.2%	13%	27.4%
3 cars or vans	5.6%	5.9%	4.7%	3.6%	6.1%	2.8%	6.6%
4 or more cars or vans	1.9%	1.8%	1.4%	1.2%	2%	0.9%	2.5%

This table shows that:

- 76.3% of households within the London Borough of Bexley have access to at least one car
- Car ownership in Thamesmead is the lowest in the borough and well below the borough average.
- Car ownership in Sidcup is most in line with the borough average.
- At least 55% of those living close to each library own at least 1 car/van.

In addition, there are very good public transport links within the borough, giving residents of those areas where a service change is being proposed access to their nearest Council library. Full details of public transport links to the six Council libraries can be found in Appendix 7.

(Evidence of public transport links within the borough has been taken from [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).)

- The cost of a return journey is currently as follows; Adults - £3.00 if using an Oyster card (£1.50 each way)
- Children under 11 - free
- Children aged 11-15 - free when using an Oyster 11-15 card.
- Children aged 16+ - free using an Oyster 16+ card
- Children aged 18+ in full time education - £3.00 if using a 18+ Student Oyster photo card (£1.50 each way)
- Senior Citizens - free with a Freedom Pass

Road safety statistics show that Bexley has a relatively low number of road casualties compared to other London boroughs. Full details of road casualties per borough in 2018 can be found in Appendix 11.

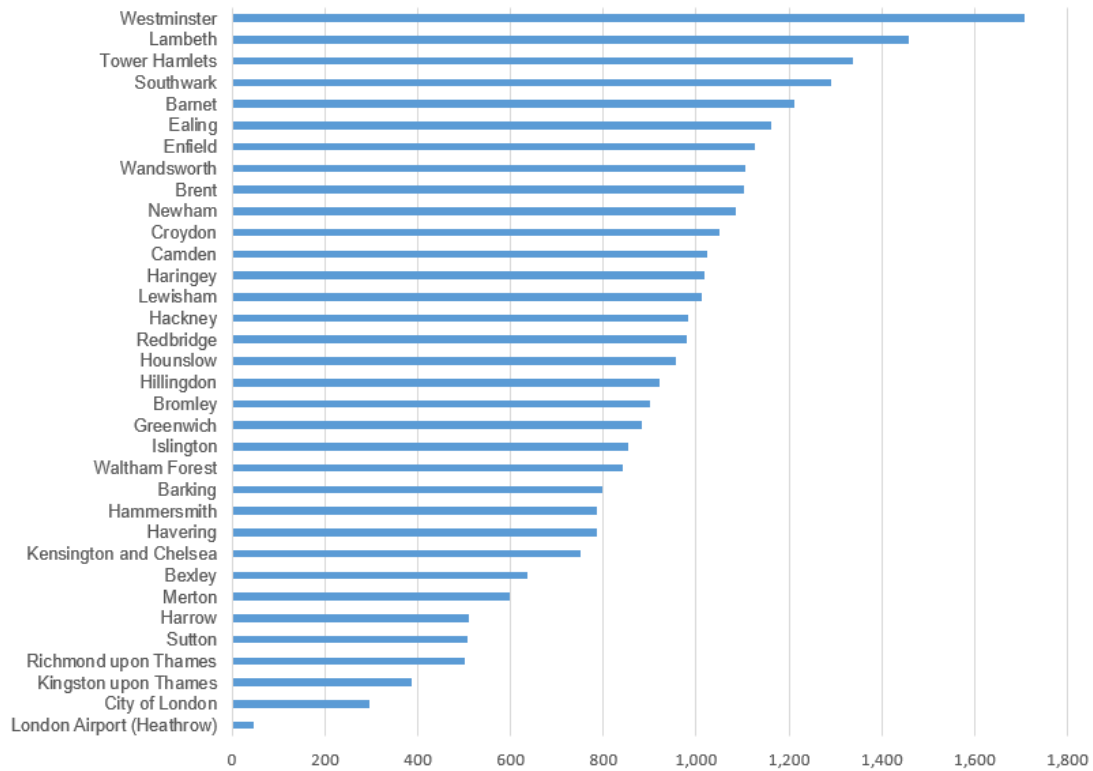


Figure 9 – Total number of reported casualties of road accidents in 2018 in London Boroughs

## 11.9 Comparison of Bexley Library Service with other London boroughs

As mentioned earlier, the Council has a requirement to provide a statutory level of library service. A comparison with the number of libraries in other London authorities, linked to population, is an indicator of the level of service that should be provided.

(The CIPFA UK Actuals statistics 2018-19 used to compile this graph can be found in Appendix 9)

Figure 10 shows Bexley’s position (shown in red) compared to other London authorities, with 12 service points in place – including the six Community Managed Libraries.

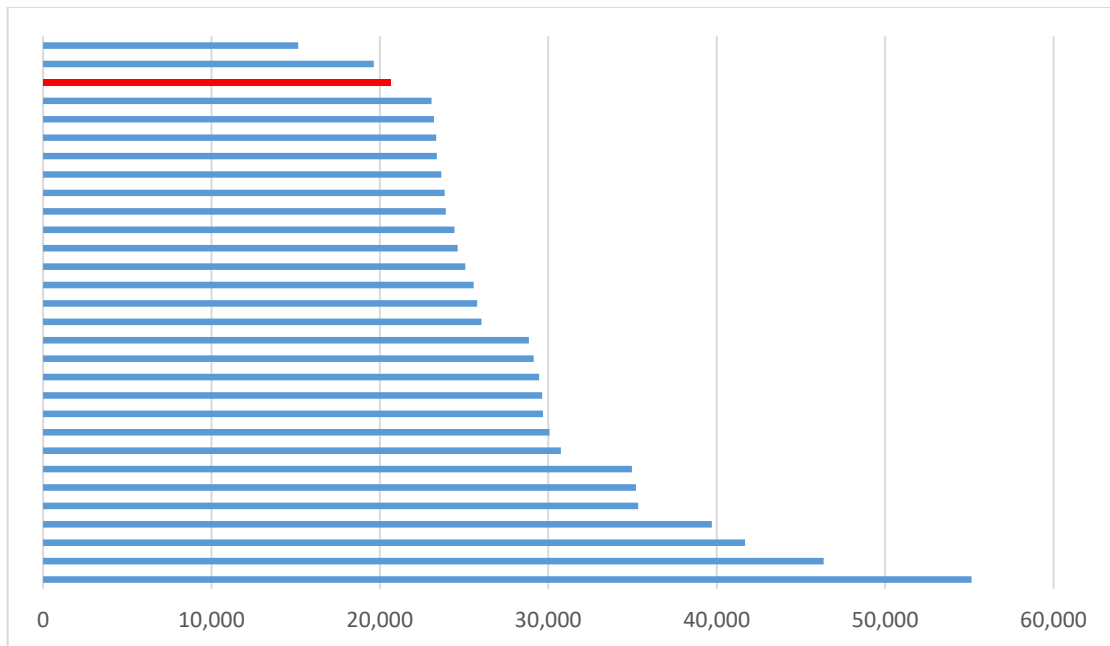


Figure 10 – population per service point - based on CIPFA UK Actuals 2018/19

Figure 10, showing the number of libraries (in 2018-19) provided in Bexley, highlights that Bexley has a high number of libraries per resident compared with the other London Boroughs – with the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest provision across London, when including the Community Managed Libraries. This position allows scope for some remodelling of the service to a reduced number of service points while maintaining an acceptable level of provision in comparison with other London Authorities.

At present there are three other London Boroughs that have a total of six Local Authority run libraries. A comparison of the opening hours can be seen in Table 22.

Only Brent has libraries that are open for more hours than our current service. Both Harrow and Kensington & Chelsea have a similar number of Local Authority run libraries but are open for less hours. This would suggest that there is scope to reduce the number of opening hours to bring Bexley in line with other London Authorities.

Table 22 – Opening hours for London Local Authorities with 6 LA run libraries

Local Authority	Open 60 hours and over	Open 45 - 59 hours	Open 30 - 44 hours	Open 10 - 29 hours	Total service points open 10 hours or more per week
Kensington & Chelsea	-	4	-	2	6
Bexley	-	6	-	-	6
Brent	4	2	-	-	6
Harrow	1	-	5	-	6

## 12. Possible impacts of the change on each of the various equality strands and mitigation for adverse impacts

The EIA presented in Appendix 10 highlights the possible impacts on the various equality strands and suggests how any negative impacts may be mitigated. The data that forms the basis for this judgement, as well as the assessment of need presented in this document overall is presented fully in the appendices of this document.

## 13. Encouraging residents to use libraries

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires that Library Authorities 'encourage people to use libraries' and in response to declining issues and visits to libraries, the Library Service has undertaken a detailed and robustly managed project in 2014/15 to investigate opportunities to improve the use of libraries.

The learning from this project has led to good practice being adopted across the service in terms of stock management, marketing, customer engagement and broadening uses of libraries. The impact of these efforts can be seen in the levelling off of the decline in issues and visits, as well as the high satisfaction ratings that libraries have.

## 14. Conclusions

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires all English local authorities to provide "comprehensive and efficient" Public Library services. The terms "comprehensive and efficient" are not defined within the Act. The Act requires library authorities to provide people who live, work or study in their area access to books and other printed materials in line with their needs and requirements. The Act specifies that no charges should be made for the use of these services, although there are some exceptions for the notification of the availability of reserved items and library overdue charges. Charges for the hire of audio visual materials are also permitted.

## **14.1 Existing and predicted library needs**

Usage of libraries has changed dramatically over the past ten years – traditional book borrowing has declined, largely due to purchase of books becoming more affordable and the introduction of e-books and other digital resources. The evolution of the internet and the proliferation of access to broadband connections at work and at home have impacted on usage of libraries for reference and information purposes. Changing leisure patterns and an increase in flexible working arrangements have also impacted on the use of libraries, as libraries now have to compete with a vast range of activities, entertainment and media.

Based on existing and predicted patterns of library use, there is a need for the library authority to provide the following services for residents of the London Borough of Bexley:

- Facilities to borrow books for adults and children
- Facilities to borrow media items, such as e-books, audio books and DVDs, for adults and children
- Access to information resources both printed and online
- Access to newspapers and magazines
- Access to public computers and the internet
- Events for children and adult audiences

## **14.2 Meeting existing and predicted library needs**

The library authority proposes to meet the library needs of residents in the London Borough of Bexley using a combination of delivery methods - the provision of professional library services from the six Council managed libraries with opening times that ensure good levels of access across the borough are retained, the growth of the digital library offer to meet the increasing demand for access to the service in this new form and the provision of the Home Library Service for housebound readers.

In addition, the Council will look at options to sustain the non-statutory community managed library offer in relation to the proposal to reduce/remove the funding of the management organisations.

## **14.3 The Council managed libraries offer:**

- Books for children and adults
- Media items – including audio books on CD and DVDs
- Newspapers and magazines
- Printed reference resources
- Online reference resources
- Study and homework facilities
- Free internet access and computer facilities
- Events for children and adult audiences
- Photocopying facilities

- Access to certain Council services

This scope of offer will be sustained in relation to the implementation of any options that are progressed as a result of the Library Review.

## **14.4 Online Library Service**

The library service provides a range of online library services accessible through its website at <http://arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/bexley>.

These services include:

- Downloadable e-books and eAudiobooks (via Overdrive or the Libby app)
- Downloadable eComics, eMagazines and eNewspapers via RBDigital and PressReader.
- Online renewal of borrowed books and media items
- Online reservations of books and media items
- Online catalogue searching
- Online reference and local and family history resources
- Online subscriptions to newspapers and magazines and eReference resources
- Online payment of fines on borrower accounts.

This online Library Service offer is constantly developing and expanding.

## **14.5 Home Library Service**

The library service offers a Home Library Service for residents who are unable to access the physical library due to being homebound due to mobility issues or health problems. This service is delivered by a team of volunteers.

## **14.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the proposals made will meet existing and predicted library needs. The six Council libraries will offer services which meet the requirement for a comprehensive and efficient service. The proposed changes to the service will still enable good levels of access to core library provision at times that customers most want access. The proposals will preserve this access and scope of service whilst reducing staffing overhead to reduce costs, avoiding Council library closures.

The six Council libraries are geographically spread throughout the borough so that the majority of residents (98.5%) are within 1.5 miles of a Council library and these libraries are the larger libraries, located in highly accessible locations and, in the north of the borough, close to key areas of deprivation. Most residents have access to a car and for those who do not, there is a very good public transport network providing transport to all six Council libraries. Online services will bring library services into people's homes and will be available 24/7 and this is a key growth area where the Library Authority must direct some of its available resources to ensure this need and demand is met. The Home Library Service will offer library services to those customers who are unable to get to a library.



## 15. Monitoring and review arrangements.

Item number	Monitoring	Review due
1	Needs assessment to be reviewed annually	Sept 2021

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Population statistics for the London Borough of Bexley from the Census 2011

#### 1.1 Age

Age	Males	Females	Total	% of total population
0-4	7800	7400	15200	6.55%
5-9	7100	6900	14000	6.03%
10-14	7600	7400	15000	6.46%
15-19	8000	7800	15800	6.81%
20-24	7300	7600	14900	6.38%
25-29	6800	7300	14100	6.03%
30-34	6900	7600	14500	6.25%
35-39	7200	7800	15000	6.46%
40-44	8300	9400	17700	7.63%
45-49	8700	9300	18000	7.76%
50-54	7700	7800	15500	6.68%
55-59	6100	6300	12400	5.34%
60-64	6200	6600	12800	5.51%
65-69	4700	5200	9900	4.26%
70-74	3900	4800	8700	3.79%
75-79	3300	4200	7500	3.23%
80-84	2400	3500	5900	2.54%
85-89	1200	2200	3400	1.46%
90+	400	1300	1700	0.73%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>111,600</b>	<b>120,400</b>	<b>232,000</b>	

\*Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## 1.2 Ethnicity

Ethnic group	Number	% of total population
White British	179,250	77.26%
Irish	2,596	1.1%
Other White	7,492	3.22%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	624	0.26%
White & Black Caribbean	1,676	0.72%
White & Black African	983	0.42%
White & Asian	1,369	0.59%
Other Mixed	1,367	0.58%
Indian	7,047	3.03%
Pakistani	730	0.31%
Bangladeshi	777	0.33%
Other Asian	4,175	1.79%
Caribbean	2,381	1.02%
African	15,952	6.87%
Other Black	1,291	0.55%
Chinese	2,514	1.08%
Arab	303	0.13%
Other ethnic group	1,470	0.63%

\*Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## 1.3 Ethnic breakdown in Bexley compared to London as a whole

Ethnicity	Bexley	London
White groups	82%	61%
Black groups	8%	13%
Asian groups	7%	18%
Mixed groups	2%	5%
Other groups	1%	3%

## 1.4 Faith

Religion	Number	Proportion of total population
Christian	144,093	62.10%
Buddhist	1,377	0.59%
Hindu	3,547	1.52%
Jewish	234	0.1%
Muslim	5,645	2.43%
Sikh	4,156	1.79%
Other religion	724	0.31%
No religion	55,995	24.13%
Religion not stated	16,226	6.99%

\*Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## 1.5 Religious breakdown in Bexley compared to London as a whole

Religion	Bexley	London
Christian	62%	48%
Buddhist	1%	1%
Hindu	2%	5%
Jewish	0.1%	2%
Muslim	2%	12%
Sikh	2%	2%
Other religion	0.3%	1%
No religion	24%	21%
Religion not stated	7%	8%

\*Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## 1.6 Health

Description of health status	Total Percentage	Description of health status
Very good	48%	Very good
Good	35%	Good

Fair	12%	Fair
Bad	4%	Bad
Very bad	1%	Very bad

### 1.7 Household Size

Size of household	Total Percentage
1 person in the household	27.8%
2 people in the household	31.0%
3 people in the household	16.9%
4 people in the household	15.8%
5 people in the household	6.0%
6 people in the household	1.9%
7 people in the household	0.4%
8 or more people in the household	0.2%

### 1.8 Employment and economic status

71.6% of the borough's residents are described as economically active. This table shows the employment status of those 71.6%.

Status	Hours employed	Total Percentage
Part time	Employed for 15 hours per week or less	9.2%
Part time	Employed between 16 and 30 hours per week	18.4%
Full Time	Employed between 31 and 48 hours per week	60.5%
Full Time	Employed for more than 49 hours per week	11.9%

## 1.9 Education and Qualifications

Education and Qualifications	Total Percentage
No qualifications	23.0%
Level 1 qualifications, such as O Levels, GCSEs and NVQ level 1	42.5%
Level 2 qualifications, such as 5 or more O Levels, 1 A level, 2-3 AS levels or NVQ level 2	45.3%
Apprenticeship	6.3%
Level 3 qualifications, such as 2 or more A levels or an NVQ level 3	22.9%
Degree	12.4%
Professional qualifications	11.7%
Vocational or work related qualifications	15.8%
Foreign Qualifications	5.8%

## 1.10 Tenure of homes

Tenure	Total Percentage
Owned outright	32.5%
Owned with a mortgage or loan	40.0%
Shared Ownership	0.8%
Socially rented	14.4%
Rented privately	11.4%
Living rent free	0.8%

## 1.11 Car Ownership

Number of vehicles	Total Percentage
1 car or van per household	45.4
2 cars or vans per household	23.4

3 cars or vans per household	5.6
4 or more cars or vans per household	1.9

## Appendix 2 Statistics of library usage from the CIPFA Plus surveys of adult public library users 2019

### 2.1 Age

Library	Under 25	26 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 74	75 or over	no. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	9%	34%	28%	27%	3%	1,815	87%
Central Library	9%	20%	30%	36%	5%	357	85%
Crayford Library	11%	43%	25%	18%	2%	320	89%
Erith Library	9%	48%	29%	12%	2%	340	88%
Sidcup Library	6%	28%	26%	35%	4%	336	86%
Thamesmead Library	10%	40%	31%	19%	0%	124	88%
Welling Library	7%	36%	24%	29%	3%	338	89%

### 2.2 Gender

Library	Female	Male	No. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	66%	34%	1,913	92%
Central Library	60%	40%	379	90%



<b>Crayford Library</b>	65%	35%	333	93%
<b>Erith Library</b>	67%	33%	357	92%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	71%	29%	356	91%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	64%	36%	127	90%
<b>Welling Library</b>	72%	28%	361	95%

## 2.3 Disability

Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities or conditions

<b>Library</b>	<b>None / not applicable</b>	<b>Mobility</b>	<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Eyesight</b>	<b>Dexterity</b>	<b>Learning disability</b>	<b>Mental health problem</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>No. of cases</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
<b>Weighted total</b>	72%	12%	7%	3%	5%	3%	8%	2%	1,747	84%
<b>Central Library</b>	66%	14%	10%	2%	6%	4%	10%	3%	353	84%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	77%	10%	5%	1%	4%	4%	6%	2%	309	86%
<b>Erith Library</b>	73%	9%	5%	3%	5%	4%	10%	2%	311	81%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	69%	14%	9%	5%	5%	3%	6%	2%	331	85%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	72%	13%	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	6%	112	79%

<b>Welling Library</b>	79%	12%	5%	4%	4%	2%	5%	2%	331	87%
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## 2.4 Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group? (Aggregated results)

Library	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other	No. of cases	Response rate
<b>Weighted total</b>	72%	3%	7%	17%	1%	1,814	87%
<b>Central Library</b>	83%	3%	4%	9%	1%	357	85%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	71%	4%	8%	15%	1%	312	87%
<b>Erith Library</b>	47%	4%	6%	40%	2%	337	87%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	85%	2%	8%	4%	1%	343	88%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	47%	5%	8%	40%	0%	123	87%
<b>Welling Library</b>	71%	4%	13%	10%	2%	342	90%

## 2.5 Faith

What is your religion?

Library	No religion	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other	No. of cases	Response rate
<b>Weighted total</b>	25%	1%	64%	3%	0%	4%	1%	3%	1,546	74%
<b>Central Library</b>	24%	0%	70%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	321	76%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	27%	2%	57%	3%	1%	5%	2%	3%	261	73%
<b>Erith Library</b>	20%	1%	65%	3%	1%	5%	0%	4%	284	74%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	26%	1%	65%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	288	74%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	26%	0%	63%	4%	0%	5%	0%	2%	97	69%
<b>Welling Library</b>	27%	2%	54%	6%	0%	6%	2%	4%	295	77%

## 2.6 Current economic status

Library	Employed or self-employed, full or part-time?	On a government sponsored training scheme?	Unemployed?	A student?	Retired (whether receiving a pension or not)?	Looking after the home or family?	Long-term sick or disabled?	Other	No. of cases	Response rate
<b>Weighted total</b>	42%	1%	7%	7%	33%	6%	3%	1%	1,762	85%
<b>Central Library</b>	28%	0%	8%	8%	47%	6%	4%	0%	350	83%

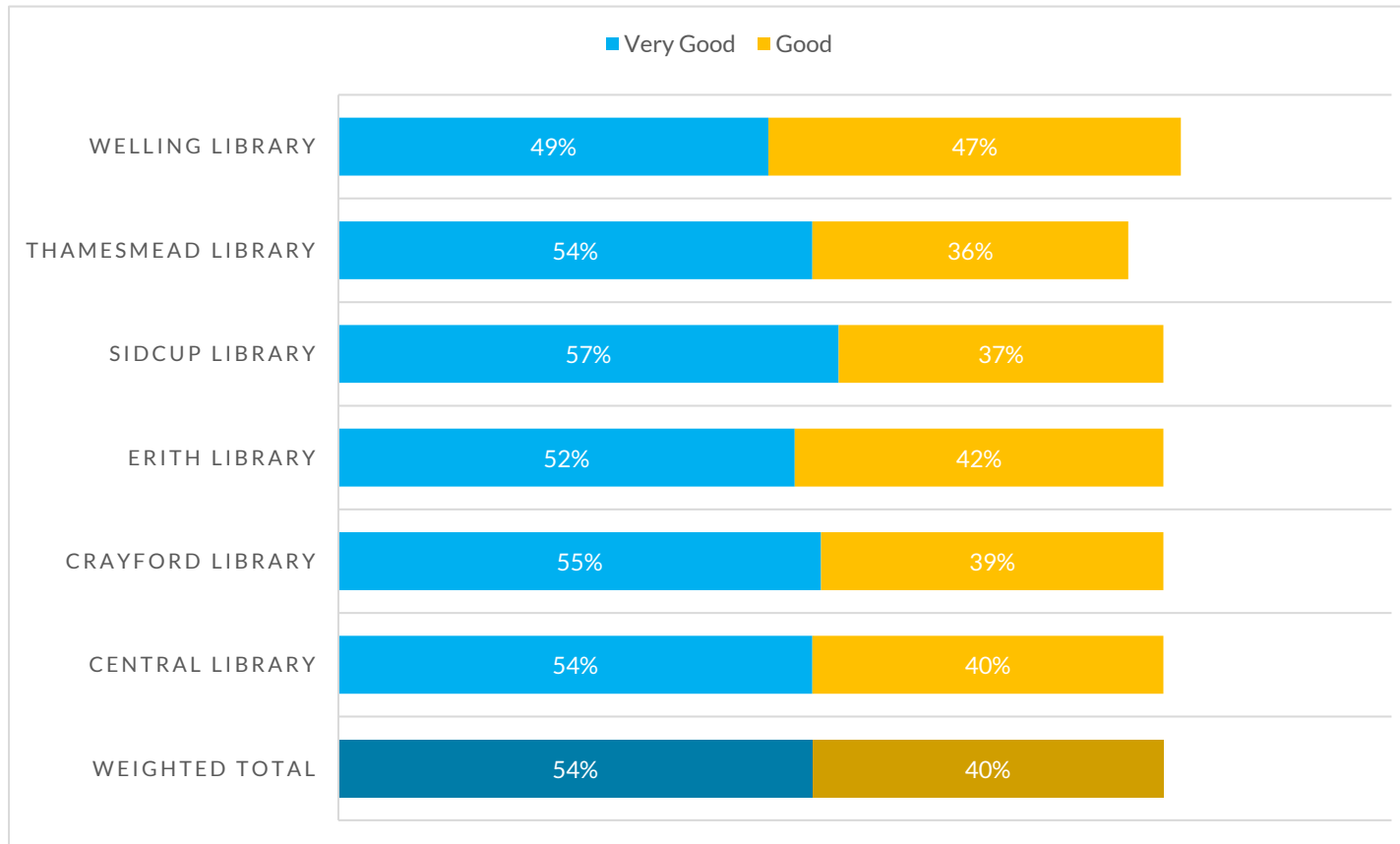
<b>Crayford Library</b>	55%	1%	6%	6%	22%	7%	2%	1%	316	88%
<b>Erith Library</b>	49%	2%	10%	12%	14%	7%	4%	1%	310	80%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	44%	0%	4%	3%	41%	4%	2%	1%	334	85%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	50%	0%	13%	13%	21%	3%	1%	0%	112	79%
<b>Welling Library</b>	44%	0%	5%	5%	35%	9%	2%	1%	340	89%

## 2.7 Overall satisfaction with the Library Service - 2019

Library	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	no. of cases	response rate
<b>Weighted total</b>	54%	40%	6%	0%	0%	2,036	98%
<b>Central Library</b>	54%	40%	6%	0%	0%	417	99%
<b>Crayford Library</b>	55%	39%	4%	1%	0%	356	99%
<b>Erith Library</b>	52%	42%	6%	0%	0%	369	96%
<b>Sidcup Library</b>	57%	37%	6%	0%	0%	381	97%
<b>Thamesmead Library</b>	54%	36%	11%	0%	0%	138	98%
<b>Welling Library</b>	49%	47%	4%	0%	0%	375	98%

## 2.8 Satisfaction rates overall

(Those customers who rated their library as either Good or Very Good)



## 2.9 Reasons for visiting Libraries

### 2.9.1 Use of books

Did you come to the library today intending to borrow one or more books?

Library	Yes	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	41%	59%	1,925	93%
Central Library	43%	57%	370	88%
Crayford Library	39%	61%	337	94%
Erith Library	29%	71%	366	95%
Sidcup Library	53%	47%	360	92%
Thamesmead Library	44%	56%	131	93%
Welling Library	42%	58%	361	95%

### 2.9.2 Use of computers

Did you intend to use a library computer during your visit today?

Library	Yes	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	27%	73%	2,045	98%

Central Library	23%	77%	415	99%
Crayford Library	24%	76%	355	99%
Erith Library	43%	57%	377	98%
Sidcup Library	22%	78%	383	98%
Thamesmead Library	50%	50%	139	99%
Welling Library	19%	81%	376	99%

### 2.9.3 Information Enquiries

Did you come here today to find something out?

Library	Yes	No	No. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	28%	72%	2,029	98%
Central Library	26%	74%	414	98%
Crayford Library	27%	73%	355	99%
Erith Library	33%	67%	368	95%
Sidcup Library	26%	74%	378	97%
Thamesmead Library	36%	64%	139	99%

Welling Library	26%	74%	375	98%
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## 2.10 How the Library has helped customers

Has using the library helped you with?

Library	Health and well-being?	Family / relationships?	Meeting people?	Study / learning ?	Getting online?	Personal finance / consumer matters?	Job seeking?	Your job?	Your retirement ?	No. of cases	Response rate
Weighted total	35%	21%	38%	54%	32%	9%	11%	12%	18%	1,871	90%
Central Library	37%	16%	28%	52%	27%	10%	10%	10%	21%	362	86%
Crayford Library	31%	25%	40%	48%	30%	6%	9%	10%	16%	319	89%
Erith Library	28%	22%	41%	62%	44%	7%	15%	13%	8%	365	95%
Sidcup Library	47%	25%	44%	51%	32%	13%	10%	14%	24%	352	90%
Thamesmead Library	35%	17%	37%	60%	51%	12%	24%	19%	8%	126	89%
Welling Library	33%	22%	44%	59%	26%	6%	9%	9%	23%	347	91%



## Appendix 3 Statistics of library usage from the Children's Plus surveys of public library users in 2017

### 3.1 Gender

Library	Girl	Boy	no. of cases	Survey response rate
Weighted total	57%	43%	1,525	98%
Central	55%	45%	476	98%
Crayford	56%	44%	165	97%
Erith	64%	36%	184	97%
Sidcup	58%	42%	233	99%
Thamesmead	55%	45%	200	99%
Welling	55%	45%	267	99%

### 3.2 Age

Library	KS1 0-7 years	KS2 7-11 years	KS3-4 11-16 years
Weighted total	48%	32%	20%

Central	46%	28%	26%
Crayford	66%	22%	15%
Erith	38%	38%	24%
Sidcup	69%	20%	11%
Thamesmead	28%	47%	25%
Welling	46%	42%	12%

### 3.3 Satisfaction rates

Library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Survey response rate
Weighted total	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	6%	18%	30%	43%	94%
Central	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	7%	22%	27%	40%	95%
Crayford	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	6%	13%	32%	46%	92%
Erith	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	5%	17%	24%	50%	93%
Sidcup	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	15%	39%	41%	93%
Thamesmead	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	8%	18%	27%	45%	93%

<b>Welling</b>	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	6%	18%	30%	43%	98%
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### 3.4 Ethnicity

<b>Library</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>no. of cases</b>	<b>Survey response rate</b>
<b>Weighted total</b>	14%	18%	7%	57%	4%	1,126	94%
<b>Central</b>	14%	11%	6%	64%	4%	340	94%
<b>Crayford</b>	4%	10%	14%	69%	2%	138	93%
<b>Erith</b>	12%	48%	6%	32%	2%	122	92%
<b>Sidcup</b>	12%	3%	8%	72%	4%	201	96%
<b>Thamesmead</b>	9%	52%	5%	34%	1%	130	93%
<b>Welling</b>	24%	12%	7%	49%	7%	195	93%

## Appendix 4 Statistics of library usage from the Library Management System

### 4.1 Central Library (includes figures for Community Services)

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	307,830	287,089	279,571	269,939	6.2
Issues	191,040	176,781	183,022	183,113	0.0
New members	4,086	3,919	4,260	5,233	22.8
Active members	13,420	13,159	12,712	13,026	2.47
Available IT time (hours)	100056:13	101195:23	90476:26	84729:50	-6.35
% use of IT time	46.3	40.1	48.4	46.76	-1.64

### 4.2 Crayford Library

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	74,550	91,371	167,548	186,310	11.2
Issues	53,468	56,091	60,893	62,322	2.3
New members	1,074	1,118	1,455	1,703	17.0
Active members	2,972	3,086	3,374	3,640	7.9
Available IT time (hours)	27816:36	27617:23	28918:55	27821:57	-3.79
% use of IT time	30.6	32.4	26.4	26.02	-0.38

### 4.3 Erith Library

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	146,594	151,318	161,162	147,194	-8.7
Issues	50,170	49,034	50,286	48,314	-3.9
New members	1,868	1,863	1,962	2,500	27.4
Active members	5,298	5,465	5,405	5,576	3.2
Available IT time (hours)	47714:23	48287:06	49559:24	46802:52	-5.56
% use of IT time	52.1	45.2	44.3	44.39	0.09

### 4.4 Sidcup Library

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	150,677	148,677	147,267	149,703	1.7
Issues	113,972	110,382	105,555	102,748	-2.7
New members	1,626	1,682	1,713	1,866	8.9
Active members	8,084	6,775	6,313	6,059	-4.0
Available IT time (hours)	45498:10	45678:52	45577:02	42236:43	-7.33
% use of IT time	28.0	26.5	26.0	26.2	0.2

#### 4.5 Thamesmead Library

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	44,583	43,594	44,308	38,158	-13.9
Issues	25,875	24,945	21,824	16,978	-22.2
New members	781	788	611	593	-2.9
Active members	2,526	2,505	2,279	2,045	-10.3
Available IT time (hours)	38690:35	39712:14	35440:20	33739:51	-4.8
% use of IT time	37.8	35.3	36.5	32.64	0.14

#### 4.6 Welling Library

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20
Visits	145,123	136,307	118,564	111,521	-5.9
Issues	71,626	68,743	73,482	73,185	-0.4
New members	1,396	1,421	1,617	1,740	7.6
Active members	4,595	4,666	4,685	4,770	1.8
Available IT time (hours)	42920:51	40223:20	40963:23	38235:01	-6.66
% use of IT time	42.6	45.9	34.2	33.62	-0.58

#### 4.7 All six Council Managed Libraries

Statistic	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019- 20
Visits	869,357	858,356	918,420	929,825	1.2
Issues	506,151	485,976	495,062	486,660	-1.7
New members	10,831	10,791	11,618	13,635	17.4
Active members	36,894	35,657	34,768	35,116	1.0
Available IT time (hours)	302696:48	302714:18	290935:30	273566:14	-5.97
% use of IT time	41.4	38.3	38.6	37.5	-1.1

## Appendix 5 Data from the Community Profiles for the six Council libraries

Data covers the ward in which each library is located and is taken from the 2011 census.

### 5.1 Age

Age	Borough average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
0-3	5.2%	4.8%	5.3%	7.4%	3.6%	8.0%	4.4%
4-7	5.0%	4.4%	5.6%	5.9%	3.9%	7.1%	4.4%
8-11	4.9%	4.1%	5.1%	5.1%	3.8%	6.1%	4.8%
12-18	9.5%	8.5%	9.7%	9.0%	8.7%	10.7%	9.5%
19-24	7.6%	7.4%	7.1%	7.9%	9.7%	8.4%	8.1%
25-34	12.3%	12.3%	13.2%	16.9%	11.4%	14.2%	12.1%
35-54	28.5%	28.6%	29.2%	26.9%	26.8%	30.9%	29.4%
55-64	10.9%	11.5%	10.3%	9.1%	12.1%	7.8%	11.6%
65-74	8.1%	8.6%	7.4%	6.1%	8.8%	4.3%	7.8%
75+	8.0%	9.7%	7.2%	5.6%	11.2%	2.6%	8.0%

### 5.2 Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Borough average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
White	81.9%	86.6%	88.2%	68.6%	89.9%	47.3%	84.5%
Mixed	2.3%	2.1%	1.83%	3.2%	2%	4.3%	1.8%
Asian	6.6%	7.4%	4.1%	9.1%	5.4%	6.9%	8.13%
Black	8.5%	3.1%	5.4%	17.9%	2.1%	40.2%	4.3%
Other	0.8%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%	1.2%	1.1%



### 5.3 Faith

Faith	Borough average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
Christian	62.1%	60.8%	62.1%	58.7%	63.8%	64.6%	62.0%
Buddhist	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	0.6%	1.2%	0.7%
Hindu	1.5%	1.9%	1.0%	1.6%	1.2%	1.0%	2.3%
Jewish	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Muslim	2.4%	1.9%	1.8%	3.3%	2.3%	5.7%	3.0%
Sikh	1.8%	1.8%	0.6%	4.9%	0.6%	0.6%	1.6%
Other religion	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%
No religion	24.1%	25.2%	26.7%	24.2%	23.5%	20.4%	23.6%
Not stated	7.0%	7%	6.7%	6.2%	7.6%	6.2%	6.4%

### 5.4 Household size

Household Size	Borough average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
1 person household	27.8%	28.6%	33.7%	32.0%	31.6%	30.5%	23.0%
2 person household	31.0%	32.7%	28.9%	28.8%	31.6%	24.3%	31.1%
3 person household	16.9%	17.0%	15.7%	16.7%	15.1%	16.6%	18.2%
4 person household	15.8%	14.2%	14.1%	13.2%	15.2%	15.6%	18.8%
5 person household	6.0%	5.6%	5.1%	5.8%	5.0%	8.0%	6.5%
6 person household	1.9%	1.3%	1.6%	2.6%	1.0%	3.6%	1.8%
7 person household	0.4%	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	0.9%	0.3%

<b>8+ person household</b>	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.6%	0.1%
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### 5.5 Economically active residents

<b>Economically active</b>	<b>Borough average</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Crayford</b>	<b>Erith</b>	<b>Sidcup</b>	<b>Thamesmead</b>	<b>Welling</b>
% of population (aged 16 to 74)	71.6%	74%	72.5%	70.1%	71.4%	70.1%	74.5%

### 5.6 Employment Status of economically active residents

<b>No of hours worked each week</b>	<b>Borough Average</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Crayford</b>	<b>Erith</b>	<b>Sidcup</b>	<b>Thamesmead</b>	<b>Welling</b>
<b>Part time - 15 hours or less</b>	9.2%	9.4%	8.9%	8.3%	11.7%	7.8%	8.3%
<b>Part time - 16-30 hours</b>	18.4%	16.8%	17.7%	17.6%	16.1%	20.0%	17.8%
<b>Full time - 31 - 48 hours</b>	60.5%	60.4%	62.4%	62.6%	59.0%	62.8%	62.6%
<b>Full time - 49 or more hours</b>	11.9%	13.4%	11.1%	11.5%	13.3%	9.4%	11.3%

### 5.7 Education and Qualifications

<b>Number of qualifications</b>	<b>Bexley</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Crayford</b>	<b>Erith</b>	<b>Sidcup</b>	<b>Thamesmead</b>	<b>Welling</b>
<b>No qualifications</b>	23.0%	21.0%	25.3%	23.6%	19.1%	20.8%	22.1%
<b>1-4 O Levels or GCSE's</b>	35.0%	35.0%	36.3%	32.6%	34.5%	28.1%	36.9%

NVQ Level 1, Foundation GNVQ	7.5%	7.1%	8.4%	9.1%	5.6%	8.8%	7.0%
5+ O levels or GCSEs, 1 A level or 2-3 AS levels	30.8%	35.8%	29.0%	26.8%	42.0%	24.0%	30.7%
NVQ level 2, Intermediate GNVQ, BTEC	14.5%	14.3%	16.0%	15.7%	11.2%	14.3%	15.2%
Apprenticeship	6.3%	6.6%	6.0%	4.8%	5.7%	2.8%	7.1%
2+ A levels, 4+ AS levels	12.9%	16.3%	11.3%	10.7%	21.3%	9.6%	11.7%
NVQ Level 3, Advanced GNVQ	10.0%	9.7%	9.9%	10.0%	9.6%	9.2%	10.7%
Degree / Higher degree	12.4%	14.7%	10.0%	14.3%	16.2%	18.9%	10.7%
NVQ level 4-5, HND BTEC Higher level	3.8%	3.9%	3.6%	3.7%	3.9%	4.3%	3.6%
Professional qualifications	11.7%	13.7%	10.6%	10.8%	15.4%	12.0%	10.4%
Other vocational / work related qualifications	15.8%	16.2%	16.3%	15.0%	15.8%	12.5%	16.5%
Foreign qualifications	5.8%	4.9%	4.4%	9.8%	4.8%	16.1%	4.8%

## 5.8 Unemployment

Unemployment	Bexley	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
Long term unemployed	1.7%	0.5%	0.8%	1.1%	0.3%	1.6%	0.6%
Never worked	3.2%	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	0.9%	3.7%	1.2%

Long term unemployed/ never worked	4.9%	1.8%	2.6%	3.6%	1.2%	5.3%	1.8%
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### 5.9 Tenure of homes

Tenure	Borough Average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
Owned – owned outright	32.5%	38.8%	24.7%	21.1%	39.0%	10.1%	39.0%
Owned – mortgage or loan	40.0%	41.9%	40.9%	34.0%	35.7%	30.9%	49.0%
Shared ownership	0.8%	0.3%	1.3%	3.2%	1.2%	0.4%	0.7%
Social rented	14.4%	3.9%	21.8%	20.2%	6.7%	38.4%	1.1%
Private rented	11.4%	14.2%	10.5%	20.5%	16.6%	19.0%	9.5%
Living rent free	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%	1.1%	0.7%

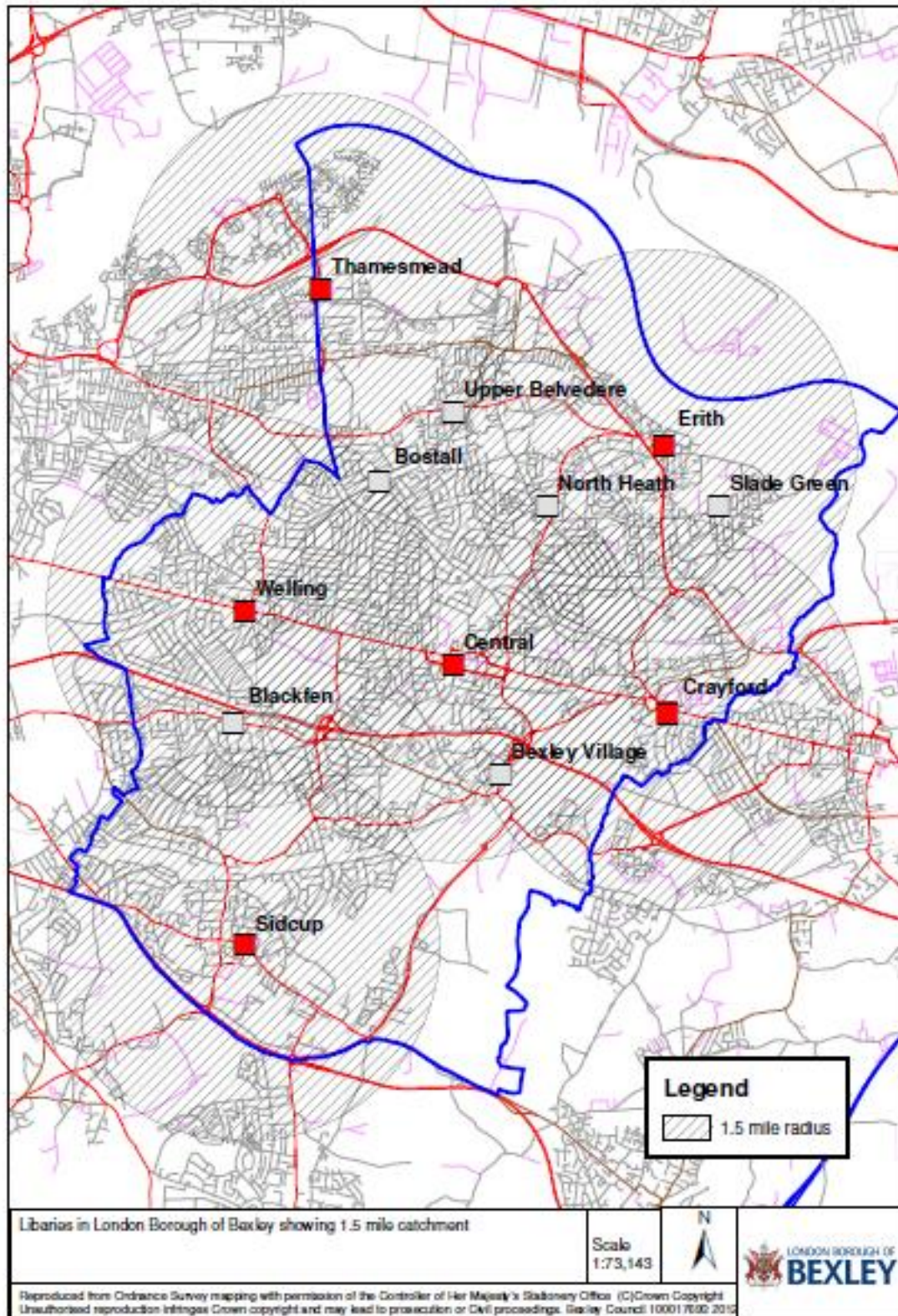
### 5.10 Car ownership

No of cars or vans per household	Borough Average	Central	Crayford	Erith	Sidcup	Thamesmead	Welling
None	23.7%	20.8%	24.7%	32.4%	23.8%	40.5%	17.8%
1 car or van	45.4%	46.3%	46.8%	46.1%	43.8%	42.7%	45.8%
2 cars or vans	23.4%	25.2%	22.4%	16.5%	24.2%	13%	27.4%
3 cars or vans	5.6%	5.9%	4.7%	3.6%	6.1%	2.8%	6.6%

<b>4 or more cars or vans</b>	1.9%	1.8%	1.4%	1.2%	2%	0.9%	2.5%
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## Appendix 6 Map of current library locations and catchment areas of six Council libraries, based on a radius of 1.5 miles

Council libraries shown in red, community managed libraries shown in grey.



## Appendix 7 Travel information to Council libraries

### 7.1 Transport links to the six Council libraries

Council Library	Public Transport links
Central Library	<p>Bus numbers 89, 96, 99, 132, 229, 269, 401, 422, 486, 492, B11, B12, B13, B14, B15 and B16 stop nearby.</p> <p>Bexleyheath railway station is a 15-minute walk away.</p> <p>Parking – several pay and display car parks nearby serving the Broadway shopping centre.</p>
Crayford Library	<p>Bus numbers 96, 428 and 492 stop nearby.</p> <p>Crayford railway station is nearby.</p> <p>Parking – time limited parking available in Sainsbury's supermarket or the Tower Retail Park.</p>
Erith Library	<p>Bus numbers 99, 229, 428, 469 and B12 stop nearby.</p> <p>Erith railway station is nearby.</p> <p>Parking – time limited parking available in Morrison's car park plus pay and display car park in nearby Queens Street.</p>
Sidcup Library	<p>Bus numbers 51, 233, 321, 492, B14 and R11 stop nearby.</p> <p>Sidcup railway station is a 15-minute walk away.</p> <p>Parking – on-street parking with time restrictions plus a pay and display car park at the nearby Morrison's store.</p>
Thamesmead Library	<p>Bus numbers 229 and 401 stop nearby.</p> <p>Abbey Wood railway station is a 15 minute walk away</p> <p>Parking – some parking available outside the library plus on-street parking nearby</p>
Welling Library	<p>Bus numbers 51, 89, 96, 486, B15 and B16 stop nearby.</p> <p>Welling railway station is nearby.</p> <p>Parking - on-street pay and display parking plus several off-street car parks which serve the High Street.</p>

## 7.2 Travel Matrix for all Bexley Libraries

Library	Bus routes within a short walk	Going to
Bexley Village Community Library	132, 229, 269, 492, B12	Blackfen, Central, Crayford, Erith, North Heath, Sidcup and Thamesmead libraries
Blackfen Community Library	51, 132, B13	Bexley, Central, Sidcup and Welling Libraries
Bostall Community Library	422, B11	Central and Thamesmead Libraries
Central Library	89, 96, 99, 132, 229, 269, 401, 422, 486, 492, B11, B12, B13, B14, B15, B16	All libraries including Bexley Community Library
Crayford Library	96, 428, 492	Bexley, Central, Erith, Sidcup, Slade Green and Welling Libraries.
Erith Library	99, 229, 428, 469, B12	Bexley, Central, Crayford, North Heath, Sidcup, Slade Green, Thamesmead and Upper Belvedere Libraries
North Heath Community Library	89, 229, B12	Bexley, Central, Erith, Sidcup, Slade Green, Thamesmead and Welling Libraries
Sidcup Library	51, 229, 269, 492, B14	Bexley, Blackfen, Central, Crayford, Erith, North Heath, Thamesmead and Welling Libraries
Slade Green Community Library	89, 99, 428	Central, Crayford, Erith, North Heath, Upper Belvedere and Welling Libraries
Thamesmead Library	229, 401, B11	Bexley, Bostall, Central, Erith, North Heath, Sidcup and Upper Belvedere Libraries
Upper Belvedere Community Library	99, 401	Central, Erith, Slade Green and Thamesmead Libraries



Welling Library	51, 89, 96, 486, B15, B16	Blackfen, Central, Crayford, North Heath, Sidcup and Slade Green Libraries
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\*School buses not included

## **Appendix 8 Current Library Opening Hours**

### **8.1 Current opening hours of the Council libraries**

*\*Opening hours pre COVID-19*

#### **8.1.1 Central Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Thursday	9.30am – 7pm
Friday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am – 5pm
Sunday	10am – 1pm

#### **8.1.2 Crayford Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9am – 7pm
Thursday	9am – 5.30pm
Friday	9am – 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am – 5pm

#### **8.1.3 Erith Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9am – 7pm
Wednesday	9am – 5.30pm
Thursday	9am – 5.30pm

Friday	9.30am – 5pm
Saturday	9am – 5.30pm

#### **8.1.4 Sidcup Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 7pm
Thursday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Friday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am – 5pm

#### **8.1.5 Thamesmead Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 7pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Thursday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Friday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am – 5pm

#### **8.1.6 Welling Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Thursday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Friday	9.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday	9.30am – 5pm
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## 8.2 Current opening hours of the libraries that are Community Managed

*\*Opening hours pre COVID-19*

### 8.2.1 Bexley Community Library

Day	Opening Hours
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	11.30 am – 4.30pm
Wednesday	12.30pm – 4.30pm
Thursday	9.30am – 4pm
Friday	12noon – 5pm
Saturday	9.30am – 2pm

### 8.2.2 Blackfen Community Library

Day	Opening Hours
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9.30am – 5pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 5pm
Thursday	9.30am – 5pm
Friday	9.30am – 5pm
Saturday	9.30am – 3pm

### 8.2.3 Bostall Community Library

Day	Opening Hours
Monday	9.30am – 1pm
Tuesday	1 – 5pm
Wednesday	Closed

Thursday	9.30am – 5pm
Friday	9.30am – 5pm
Saturday	9.30am – 2pm

#### **8.2.4 North Heath Community Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am – 1pm
Thursday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Friday	9.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday	9.30am – 2pm

#### **8.2.5 Slade Green and Howbury Community Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	10am – 5pm
Tuesday	10am – 5pm
Wednesday	10am – 5pm
Thursday	10am – 7pm
Friday	10am – 5pm
Saturday	10am – 2pm

#### **8.2.6 Upper Belvedere Community Library**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Hours</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 5pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	Closed

Friday	9.30am - 5pm
Saturday	9.30am - 2pm

## Appendix 9 CIPFA Actuals 2018/19 – Population per service point

Based on provision of 12 libraries in Bexley.

Authority	Population per service point
Richmond upon Thames	15,146
Enfield	19,641
Bexley	20,608
Barnet	23,065
Westminster	23,209
Lewisham	23,346
Redbridge	23,377
Bromley	23,650
Greenwich	23,850
Islington	23,910
Ealing	24,429
Hounslow	24,618
Kingston upon Thames	25,071
Sutton	25,563
Havering	25,780
Kensington & Chelsea	26,033
Southwark	28,845
Camden	29,133
Merton	29,457
Croydon	29,638
Wandsworth	29,682
Haringey	30,067
Waltham Forest	30,744
Hackney	34,963
Newham	35,200

Barking & Dagenham	35,333
Tower Hamlets	39,713
Harrow	41,683
Hammersmith & Fulham	46,350
Brent	55,133
Hillingdon	Figures unavailable
Lambeth	Figures unavailable



## Appendix 10 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

# Equality Impact Assessment

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## 1. Service Affected

Library Service and Local Studies and Archives Centre

## 2. Relevance to equality

Libraries are highly relevant to equality. Library Services offer a range of targeted services, such as children's activities, social groups for older residents, specialist groups for people living with dementia and the visually impaired, etc. alongside universal library services.

Targeted activities for children include events aimed at different age groups such as Teenage Reading Groups, Young Knitters, Toddlertimes and Storytimes as well as specific events in school holidays such as the Summer Reading Challenge, Digifests and craft activities. Young children (Key Stage 1 users) were found to be the largest user group for all libraries except Thamesmead in the Children CIPFA PLUS survey (2017).

Library staff report that libraries are well used by groups such as the elderly and people with learning difficulties. Approximately 30% of adult users in the CIPFA PLUS (2019) survey were aged 65 and over. 28% of users in the CIPFA PLUS (2019) survey identified themselves as living with disabilities or conditions. 3% of users identified as having a learning difficulty.

According to the CIPFA PLUS survey 2019, 66% of adult users across the borough were women. This skew towards female service users was reflected at all six branches managed by the Council.

## 3. Potential Savings

A range of options have been put forward for savings from the operating cost of the library service. The value of the savings to be achieved will depend on which combination of options are chosen by Members as the way forward but it is anticipated to be in the region of £0.570m. This is comprised from the following list of options, which are considered in more detail in section 4 below:

- Closure of each Council run library for 1 full day or 2 half days = estimated saving of £0.150m p/a
- Proposed self-service period in each library every day = estimated saving of £0.150m p/a
- Ending evening opening at all libraries and ending Sunday opening at Central library = up to £0.050m

- Reduction or cessation of staff-run events = £TBD – dependent on other options pursued
- Changes to local studies service – by appointment only = estimated saving of £0.030m - £0.040m
- Reduction or cessation of funding provided to support Community Managed Libraries = up to £0.200m

It should be noted that the level of savings achieved will vary, depending on which options are taken forward, due to staffing inter-dependencies.

## 4. Policy and Service Proposal

Bexley has 12 libraries. The library service is a statutory function under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and is funded and provided by the London Borough of Bexley. Six libraries are Council managed and form the statutory element of the library service. In 2014/15 it was determined that 98.6% of all residents live within 1.5 miles of one of these Council managed libraries, providing a good level of access across the borough.

The six Council Managed Libraries are Central, Crayford, Erith, Sidcup, Thamesmead and Welling.

The six libraries operated directly by the Council provide direct access to books, audio-visual material (DVDs, books on CD), IT and information, as well as a wide range of local community events and activities. Books, audiobooks, newspapers and magazines can now also be viewed online/downloaded via the digital library. Libraries are also a service point for some Council Services including the payment of Council Tax bills, arranging bulky waste collections, etc.

The Service also provides outreach services including those to housebound readers. All libraries work with local schools to provide support to class visits at libraries and talks and presentations at schools.

The Local Studies and Archives Centre is located at Central Library, in Bexleyheath. It is responsible for the preservation and promotion of the records, history and heritage of the Borough and for providing public access to these records.

The six Community Managed Libraries are Bexley Village, Blackfen, Bostall, Northumberland Heath, Slade Green and Upper Belvedere. These libraries are not part of the statutory library provision in Bexley. The six Community Managed Libraries make up an enhanced offer with different operating models as follows:

- Bostall Library and Bexley Village Library are managed by Bostall Library Community Group and are separate from the Council's library systems
- Blackfen Library is managed by New Generation Community Trust and is separate from the Council's library systems

- North Heath, Upper Belvedere and Slade Green Libraries are managed by Eco Communities and they utilise the Council's library systems for membership and stock.

The changes that are outlined for consideration in the consultation exercise are born out of the need to make significant efficiency savings across the Council, due to substantial financial challenge across all service areas – a financial position which has been exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The changes also seek to address changing patterns of library use, including an ongoing reduction in issue of physical books, and increasing digital downloads across the service.

The development of options have been informed by a number of factors including; the needs assessment, current visitor usage data; changing patterns of customer behaviour over recent years and seeking to ensure that opening hour and self-service changes are staggered across the borough's libraries, to minimise travel time, if a resident's closest library is unstaffed in any period.

The options proposed are as follows:

- Reduction to opening times, including a closed day or two half days at each Council-run library
- Introduction of a daily period where staff are not available and customers will access library provision through self-service facilities only, at each Council-run library.
- Removal of evening opening at all libraries and the Sunday opening at Central library.
- Reduction of events, activities and other programmes run by staff, at the Council-run libraries.
- Changes to the delivery of the Local Studies and Archives service – with access to archives and trained staff by appointment only.
- Reduction OR ending of financial support to the Community Managed Libraries. The community groups who manage these libraries may be able to maintain this service, but there is a risk that if this is not the case these libraries may close, if an alternative community provider cannot be found.
- Do nothing option - no changes to current service provision
- Suggestions from residents and library users, received during the public consultation process, for other ways of achieving significant cost reductions and amending services to reflect changing usage patterns will also be considered.

## **5. Impact on equalities groups**

### **A summary of data used to assess impact**

Full details of the data and analysis can be found in the Needs Assessment.

In order to assess the impact of this proposal, the library service has access to a variety of information sources including:

- Census 2011 data
- Bexley Libraries Community Profiles (for core libraries and based on Census 2011 data within a radius of 1.5 miles of each library)
- Library Statistics from the Library Management System – this includes some demographic information that relates to use of specific libraries
- CIPFA Children’s Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2017
- CIPFA Public Library User Survey (PLUS) 2019
- CIPFA Archive Services Survey
- Reports from quarterly review meetings with community managed library groups.
- The library service activities programme
- The Needs Assessment for Bexley Library Service

The CIPFA PLUS surveys are one week snapshot surveys of usage of public library services and are carried out every four years. Information gathered in these surveys has been used to identify the characteristics of customers at each library including age, gender, disability, ethnicity and religion. The full details can be found in Appendix 2 of the Needs Assessment.

The key gap in the information available is that the library service does not specifically engage with equality groups to collect data on their use of library services. It should also be noted that the demographic information from the Census survey is from 2011 and therefore likely to be out of date. However, using the statistical and demographic information available about the borough, in conjunction with library service data and other sources of information about library service activity, it is possible to draw together a good picture of service usage by equality groups. A detailed Needs Assessment has been drafted to take account the impact of the proposed options on local need.

Community profiles have been compiled using the Census 2011 data which show that:

- Central and Sidcup have a higher than average number of older residents.
- Both Thamesmead and Erith have higher than average numbers of residents for all 3 ages groups below the age of 11.

- Christianity is the dominant religion that residents identify with across the borough. This is most noticeable in Thamesmead.
- Erith has a Sikh population that is more than double the borough average proportion.
- Thamesmead has a higher than average proportion of larger households (5+ persons).
- Welling is the only location to have a lower than average proportion of 1 person households.
- Crayford has a higher than average proportion of economically active residents.
- Sidcup and Welling both have a higher than average proportion of households with 4 or more cars/vehicles.
- Thamesmead has the highest proportion of households that do not own a car or a van.

For further information relating to community profiles please see Section 7.2 of the Needs Assessment.

## Comparison of profiles of library users with ward populations

The profile of library users in terms of their ethnicity, gender, age and faith can be compared with the ward totals for that branch using the CIPFA 2019 survey and the Census 2011 data. Details can be found in Tables 1 - 4. The CIPFA 2019 data is the most up to date information available about library users. The Census 2011 data shows information about the population of the ward in which each of the libraries is located. Both sets of data show similarities and differences between the profile of library users and the overall population. When taking into account the impact of potential changes to the service, the 2019 CIPFA survey data is of most use as it relates to those that use the library. It is also the most up to date information currently available. It should be noted that as the census data is from 2011, the more recent data from the CIPFA survey may also represent how ward populations have changed over the last 9 years.

Table 1. Ethnicity of library users compared with the ward in which the branch is located

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other
<b>Bexley average (CIPFA 2019)</b>	72%	3%	7%	17%	1%
<b>Bexley (Census 2011)</b>	82%	2%	7%	9%	1%
<b>Central Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	83%	3%	4%	9%	1%

Christchurch (Census 2011)	87%	2%	7%	3%	1%
Crayford Library (CIPFA 2019)	71%	4%	8%	15%	1%
Crayford (Census 2011)	88%	2%	4%	5%	0%
Erith Library (CIPFA 2019)	47%	4%	6%	40%	2%
Erith (Census 2011)	69%	3%	9%	18%	1%
Sidcup Library (CIPFA 2019)	85%	2%	8%	4%	1%
Sidcup (Census 2011)	90%	2%	5%	2%	1%
Thamesmead Library (CIPFA 2019)	47%	5%	8%	40%	0%
Thamesmead East (Census 2011)	47%	4%	7%	40%	1%
Welling Library (CIPFA 2019)	71%	4%	13%	10%	2%
Falconwood and Welling (Census 2011)	85%	2%	8%	4%	1%

Table 2. Gender of library users compared with the ward in which the branch is located

	Female	Male
Bexley average (CIPFA 2019)	66%	34%
Bexley (Census 2011)	52%	48%
Central Library (CIPFA 2019)	60%	40%
Christchurch Ward (Census 2011)	52%	48%
Crayford Library (CIPFA 2019)	65%	35%
Crayford Ward (Census 2011)	51%	49%
Erith Library (CIPFA 2019)	67%	33%
Erith Ward (Census 2011)	51%	49%
Sidcup Library (CIPFA 2019)	71%	29%
Sidcup Ward (Census 2011)	53%	47%
Thamesmead Library (CIPFA 2019)	64%	36%
Thamesmead East Ward (Census 2011)	52%	48%
Welling Library (CIPFA 2019)	72%	28%
Falconwood and Welling Ward (Census 2011)	51%	49%

Table 3. Age of library users compared with the ward in which the branch is located

	<b>Under 25*</b>	<b>26 to 44</b>	<b>45 to 64</b>	<b>65 to 74</b>	<b>75 or over</b>
<b>Bexley average (CIPFA 2019)</b>	9%	34%	28%	27%	3%
<b>Bexley (Census 2011)</b>	32%	26%	25%	8%	8%
<b>Central Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	9%	20%	30%	36%	5%
<b>Christchurch Ward (Census 2011)</b>	30%	29%	26%	9%	10%
<b>Crayford Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	11%	43%	25%	18%	2%
<b>Crayford Ward (Census 2011)</b>	33%	28%	24%	7%	7%
<b>Erith Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	9%	48%	29%	12%	2%
<b>Erith Ward (Census 2011)</b>	35%	31%	22%	6%	6%
<b>Sidcup Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	6%	28%	26%	35%	4%
<b>Sidcup Ward (Census 2011)</b>	30%	24%	26%	9%	11%
<b>Thamesmead Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	10%	40%	31%	19%	0%
<b>Thamesmead East Ward (Census 2011)</b>	40%	31%	21%	4%	3%
<b>Welling Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	7%	36%	24%	29%	3%
<b>Falconwood and Welling Ward (Census 2011)</b>	31%	26%	27%	8%	8%

\*discrepancy in numbers for users aged below 25 to be expected as children complete a separate CIPFA survey, the adult survey would only address those aged 18

Table 4. Faith of library users compared with the ward in which the branch is located

	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>Hindu</b>	<b>Jewish</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Sikh</b>	<b>No religion</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Bexley average (CIPFA 2019)</b>	64%	1%	3%	0%	4%	1%	25%	3%
<b>Bexley (Census 2011)</b>	62%	1%	2%	0%	2%	2%	24%	0%
<b>Central Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	70%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	24%	2%
<b>Christchurch Ward (Census 2011)</b>	61%	1%	2%	0%	2%	2%	25%	0%
<b>Crayford Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	57%	2%	3%	1%	5%	2%	27%	3%

<b>Crayford Ward (Census 2011)</b>	62%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	27%	0%
<b>Erith Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	65%	1%	3%	1%	5%	0%	20%	4%
<b>Erith Ward (Census 2011)</b>	59%	0%	2%	0%	3%	5%	24%	1%
<b>Sidcup Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	65%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	26%	2%
<b>Sidcup Ward (Census 2011)</b>	64%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	24%	0%
<b>Thamesmead Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	63%	0%	4%	0%	5%	0%	26%	2%
<b>Thamesmead East Ward (Census 2011)</b>	65%	1%	1%	0%	6%	1%	20%	0%
<b>Welling Library (CIPFA 2019)</b>	54%	2%	6%	0%	6%	2%	27%	4%
<b>Falconwood and Welling Ward (Census 2011)</b>	62%	1%	2%	0%	3%	2%	24%	0%

The comparisons in Tables 1 – 4 show the following general themes:

- In most libraries a higher proportion of library users are of BAME origin than can be seen in the whole population in the ward.
- A significantly higher proportion of library users are female.
- A high proportion of library users are in the 65-74 age category and a small proportion of library users are in the 18-25 age category.
- Library users reflect similar proportions of faith groups as the wards in which they are based.

There is no specific demographic information available relating to gender reassignment, sexual orientation or marriage and civil partnership. Although there is also no direct demographic information relating to pregnancy and maternity, the CIPFA Children's PLUS survey provides a breakdown of children's ages which can be used to some extent to infer the size of this equality group.

A summary of visitor numbers, physical issues and digital downloads from 2015/16 to 2019/20 are shown in tables 5, 6 and 7.



Table 5 – Total number of physical issues for all 12 libraries and 6 core libraries from 2015/16 to 2019/20

<b>Year</b>	<b>Physical Issues (all 12 libraries)</b>	<b>Physical issues (6 core libraries)</b>
2015-16	815,744	653,482
2016-17	767,209	663,316
2017-18	722,703	634,661
2018-19	732,622	645,891
2019-20	729,360	648,271

Table 5 shows a decline in physical issues across all 12 libraries from 2015/16 to 2017/18, a slight increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 and a slight decrease from 2018/19 to 2019/20. Across the six core libraries, table 1 shows a slight increase in physical issues from 2015/16 to 2016/17, a decrease from 2016/17 to 2017/18 and an increase from 2017/18 to 2019/20.

Table 6 – Number of digital downloads from 2015/16 to 2019/20

<b>Year</b>	<b>Digital downloads</b>
2015-16	11,365
2016-17	18,700
2017-18	21,531
2018-19	39,930
2019-20	68,330

Table 6 shows an increase in digital downloads each year from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

Table 7 – Total number of visits for all 12 libraries and 6 core libraries from 2015/16 to 2019/20

<b>Year</b>	<b>Visitor Numbers (all 12 libraries)</b>	<b>Visitor Numbers (6 core libraries)</b>
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2015-16	1,086,696	789,858
2016-17	1,138,148	869,838
2017-18	1,122,953	858,356
2018-19	1,167,424	918,420
2019-20	1,147,696	931,428

Table 7 shows an increase from 2015/16 to 2016/17 in total visitor numbers at all 12 libraries, a decrease from 2016/17 to 2017/18, an increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 and a decrease from 2018/19-2019/20. Across the 6 core libraries, the table shows an increase in total visitor numbers from 2015/16 to 2016/17, a slight decrease from 2016/17 to 2017/18 and an increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 and again from 2018/19 to 2019/20.

## **Assessment of each proposal**

### **Proposed reductions to opening times, including a closed day or two half days at each Council managed library**

#### **Age**

A reduction in opening times may make it more difficult for elderly customers to access the Library service as they may need to travel further from their home to get to the next closest library. According to CIPFA PLUS 2019, 30% of adult library users were aged 65 and over. Possible negative impact.

Young children might also be affected as their carers/parents would need to take them to the library – the increased distance could make this difficult. Possible negative impact.

#### **Disability**

It may be more difficult for customers with additional needs or disabilities (e.g. mobility issues) to access the Council managed libraries if the closest Council library is further away from their home than at present. Possible negative impact.

#### **Sex**

No anticipated impact.

#### **Gender reassignment**

No anticipated impact.

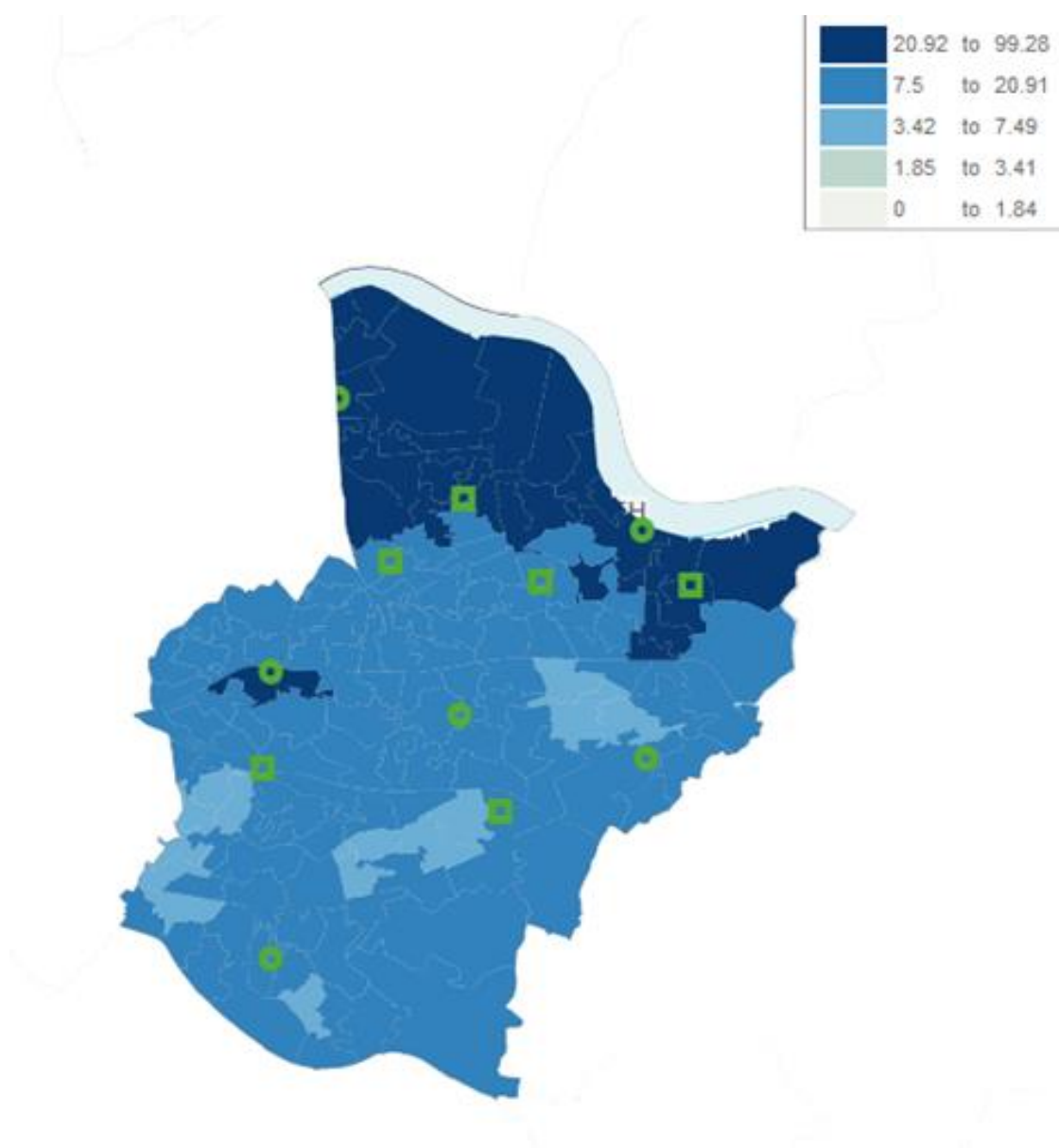
#### **Pregnancy and maternity**

Women in late pregnancy or with a new-born baby could find it harder to travel further afield to get to their nearest library. Possible negative impact.

It should be noted that a separate proposal is also being considered which might impact on the borough's Children's Centres. If both proposals are progressed, there would be a risk of a double impact on support networks for parents with young children. Potential cumulative impact.

## **Race**

Figure 1 is based on Census 2011 data and shows the proportion of population classed as non-white across Bexley. Across the north of the borough there is a large area which is more diverse. Two council libraries, Erith and Thamesmead as well as two community libraries, Slade Green and Upper Belvedere, are located in this region. Over 50% of customers surveyed at these branches in the CIPFA PLUS 2019 survey were of BAME origin. As the north of the borough is more ethnically diverse, the changes at these four libraries will have a larger impact on BAME communities. However, the proposed changes are equitable across all libraries, unless community libraries take a bespoke approach. So whilst a higher proportion of BAME communities will be impacted in the north of the borough, due to the ethnic make-up of this part of the borough –the eight libraries in the rest of the borough, with communities predominantly classed as white, will be similarly affected by the same changes. If the two community libraries in the north of the borough are adversely affected, due to the approach taken by their operators, in relation to the six community libraries as a whole, this would have a larger impact on BAME groups. This position will only be known at a later date.



**Figure 1 - Proportion of population classed as non-white in Bexley (Census 2011)**

*Council-Managed Libraries – green circles*

*Community-Managed Libraries – green squares*

### **Religion or belief**

64% of customers surveyed in CIPFA PLUS 2019 identified themselves as Christians – as the predominant faith group for library users across the borough, they would be the most affected by any proposed changes. Possible negative impact

If the two community libraries in the north of the borough are adversely affected, due to the approach taken by their operators in relation to the six community libraries as a whole, this would have a larger impact on BAME groups. This position will only be known at a later date.

**Sexual orientation**

No anticipated impact.

**Marriage and civil partnership**

No anticipated impact.

**Proposed introduction of a daily period where staff are not available and customers will access library provision through self-service facilities, at each Council-run library.****Age**

Elderly customers are likely to be less technologically abled. Lack of staff assistance and an increased reliance on self-service technology may make accessing the service more difficult for these customers compared to other groups. Likely negative impact.

While very young users (Key Stage 1) may also have difficulty operating self-service technology, the impact is likely to be less noticeable as they would be accompanied by a carer/parent who could help them use these facilities. Unlike elderly customers, young users would not be visiting the library by themselves – the impact would depend on the technological skills of the person they visit with. Possible/unlikely negative impact.

**Disability**

For customers with disabilities that may require staff assistance, the introduction of a daily period without staff available may make the service less accessible. CIPFA 2019 found that 28% of adult library users identified themselves as having a disability/additional need. Likely negative impact.

**Sex**

No anticipated impact.

**Gender reassignment**

No anticipated impact.

**Pregnancy and maternity**

No anticipated impact.

**Race**

Council-run libraries span the borough and include areas of the borough with the highest percentage BAME residents (at Thamesmead and Erith). A differential impact could occur - BAME communities could arguably be impacted by the introduction of self-service periods to a greater extent. Possible negative impact.

**Religion or belief**

No anticipated impact.

## **Sexual orientation**

No anticipated impact.

## **Marriage and civil partnership**

No anticipated impact.

## **Proposed reduction of events, activities and other programmes, at the Council-run**

### **Age**

All libraries currently have regular activities that are aimed at and mainly attended by older residents e.g. Coffee and Conversation, Knit and Knatter, etc. If there was no staff support for these events, relying on volunteers or external funding may lead to loss of these events for residents, for a temporary period at least. Likely negative impact.

However, providing and promoting additional volunteering opportunities in libraries to support events and activities, would enable a greater number of older or retired residents to volunteer their time and services, thereby increasing their social inclusion, health and wellbeing and allowing them to take a more active role in the community. Possible positive impact.

All libraries offer regular events and activities for young children e.g. Toddlertime, Storytime, Stay and Play, etc. The activities for babies and toddlers in libraries act as a support network for new parents. A reduction in these events may lead to loss of these events if suitable volunteers are not found to run them. Possible negative impact.

The Summer Reading Challenge is an annual event aimed at children, this is already mainly staffed by volunteers at all libraries so it is hoped that there would be minimal impact. Organisation of the event and coordination of volunteers is managed by back office staff. While there is a potential risk that this is negatively impacted by reduction of staff time on events, this could also be an opportunity for volunteers to gain skills and experience in planning and management skills (enhance employability skills for volunteers also seeking employment). Possible negative or positive impact.

### **Disability**

Bexley libraries offer some events and activities targeted at customers with additional needs or disabilities e.g. visually impaired reading group, support/coffee mornings for people living with dementia and their carers, bag book sessions for adults with learning disabilities, etc. Any reduction in these events, if suitable volunteers or external partners could not be found, would lead to loss of these events. Likely negative impact.

### **Sex**

No data is held on the gender of people attending regular events and activities in branches but 66% of library users are female so it is likely that any reduction in the

events and activities programme will have a greater impact on women. Likely negative impact.

### **Gender reassignment**

No anticipated impact.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

All libraries offer regular events and activities for young children e.g. Toddlertime, Storytime, Stay and Play, etc. These activities for babies and toddlers in libraries act as a support network for new parents. A reduction in these events may lead to loss of these events if suitable volunteers or new approaches for running them are not found. Possible negative impact.

### **Race**

Any reduction in events and activities in branches with higher proportion of BAME communities could have a differential impact on these communities. Possible negative impact.

### **Religion or belief**

No anticipated impact.

### **Sexual orientation**

No anticipated impact.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

No anticipated impact.

## **Proposed changes to the delivery of the Local Studies and Archives service – with access to trained staff by appointment.**

### **Age**

No data exists for the age of visitors to the LSAC but it is felt that the Centre is predominantly used by older residents for researching their family or local history. The proposed changes will therefore predominantly affect older customers but professional assistance and access to archival material will be retained through an appointment system, thus reducing impact. Possible negative impact.

Some externally funded projects are run by the LSAC with local schools, and visits by schools to the Centre do take place. Any reduction in staffing capacity may limit the number of school visits or collaborative projects that can take place. Possible negative impact.

### **Disability**

No anticipated impact.

## **Sex**

No data is held on the gender of people attending regular events and activities in branches but 66% of library users are female so it is likely that any reduction in the events and activities programme will have a greater impact on women. Likely negative impact.

## **Gender reassignment**

No anticipated impact.

## **Pregnancy and maternity**

No anticipated impact.

## **Race**

No anticipated impact.

## **Religion or belief**

No anticipated impact.

## **Sexual orientation**

No anticipated impact.

## **Marriage and civil partnership**

No anticipated impact.

## **Proposed reduction or ending of financial support to the Community Managed Libraries.**

The community groups who manage these libraries may be able to maintain this service, but there is a risk that this is not the case and that these libraries would then close, if an alternative community provider cannot be found.

## **Age**

The current provider may need to reduce the existing offer (opening hours or services provided) or close the library entirely if new sources of funding are not found. Likely negative impact.

If the current provider is unable to continue, a new provider may amend the existing offer (amended hours, range of facilities or services offered) which may be beneficial or detrimental to residents. Possible positive or negative impact.

If an alternative community provider is not found and the library is closed, this could mean elderly residents may need to travel further to reach their closest library. Likely negative impact.



## **Disability**

If the Council reduced or ended their support to the Community Managed Libraries, this might cause a reduction in access to large print and audio material for customers (some community libraries currently share the same library system as Council libraries). Possible negative impact.

If the current provider is unable to continue, a new provider may amend the existing offer (amended hours, range of facilities or services offered) which may be beneficial or detrimental to residents with disabilities. Possible positive or negative impact.

If no alternative community provider is found and the library is closed, this could mean residents with additional needs/disabilities may need to travel further to reach their closest library. Possible negative impact.

## **Sex**

No anticipated impact.

## **Gender reassignment**

No anticipated impact.

## **Pregnancy and maternity**

Activities for babies and toddlers in libraries can act as a support network for new parents. It is possible that the existing, or a new community provider might offer an enhanced range of such activities. It is also possible that these activities may be reduced by the existing or a new community provider. Possible positive or negative impact.

If no new community provider is found and the library is closed, parents would need to travel further to another library to access these activities. Likely negative impact.

It should be noted that a separate proposal is also being considered which could have an impact on children's centres. If both proposals are progressed, there would be a risk of a double impact on support networks for parents with young children. Potential cumulative impact.

## **Race**

If the Council reduced or ended their support to the Community Managed Libraries, this might cause a reduction in access to materials in other languages such as Bengali, Gujarati, etc. (some community libraries currently share the same library system as Council libraries so their customers can request stock from these libraries). There may be reduced supply of stock in ethnic languages. CIPFA 2019 found that 28% of adult library users were from ethnic minorities. Possible negative impact.

## **Religion or belief**

No anticipated impact.

## Sexual orientation

No anticipated impact.

## Marriage and civil partnership

No anticipated impact.

## Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

Following government announcements on the COVID-19 pandemic, all Council libraries closed from 20 March 2020. Individual branches gradually reopened in late July 2020.

As the only service available during this period of closure, borrowing of eResources increased significantly during this quarter, expanding at a much higher rate than it had done previously.

Table 4. Comparison of issues of eResources during the April-June period in 2019 and 2020.

eResource	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019	Total	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	Total	% diff
eBooks	1,317	1,370	1,220	3,907	3,276	4,213	4,233	11,722	200.0
eAudiobooks	596	646	656	1,898	1,470	1,325	1,011	3,806	100.5
eMagazines	2,390	2,634	2,110	7,134	3,237	2,890	3,085	9,212	29.1
eComics	75	36	43	154	219	110	28	357	131.8
eNewspapers (PressReader)	0	0	0	0	9,243	11,575	12,552	33,370	

Table 4 illustrates that while the libraries were closed (no lending alternatives available), items also available to borrow in the digital library (books, audiobooks and comics) all had at least a 100% increase in the number of issues compared to the same period last year.

While libraries have since reopened with a limited service, the extent of the impact of COVID-19 is not yet clear. While use of digital resources may decrease again as users return to visiting libraries, it is equally possible that the risk of COVID-19 continues to act as a deterrent and customers will choose to continue to use digital services and self-service options to avoid excessive contact and to continue to observe social distancing. If this is the case, this would help to minimise the impact of some of the proposals as customers would be using alternate options not affected by these proposals e.g. the digital library which is not affected by amended opening hours or self-service only periods.

## **6. Supporting evidence about why a change is required**

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), local government had to adapt to significant reductions in funding due to discretionary cuts in government spending by three consecutive governments from 2010. During the pandemic, the Council has delivered an entirely new range of services from scratch and at pace as directed by the Government to support our staff, businesses and residents. This, in addition to a significant impact on the income streams upon which the Council relies, has come at a cost to our finances. This savings proposal is part of the package of proposals that will help the Council to reduce spending and to balance its budget by driving out efficiencies, making savings and transformational changes and by adapting our services and how we provide them in order to protect customer facing front line services to the most vulnerable and those services most important to residents.

The options being consulted on draw upon changing usage patterns across Bexley's libraries over recent years – particularly in relation to increasing digital usage and reductions in physical book issues.

The proposed options for changes to library provision will be subject to a full public consultation in keeping with the DCMS advice on changes to statutory library services. This consultation is expected to be carried out over a three month period, from September to mid December 2020.

## **7. Possible mitigating actions**

### **Proposed reductions to opening times, including a closed day or two half days at each Council managed library**

- A footfall study was undertaken in 2019 to identify visiting trends to all libraries. When considering reductions to opening times, this study would be taken into account to try to align closures with periods that are least/less busy at each library – to minimise the number of residents affected.
- To maintain access to services, we will aim to ensure (where possible) that if one library is closed, the next nearest library will remain open.
- Saturday closures will be kept to a minimum to ensure people who are working during the week, so are not able to visit during the week, still have access to the service.
- Any whole day closures will be spread across the week between the libraries, to minimise impact.
- Clear communications would signpost all changes to timetables etc., and promote how each library may be accessed (public transport routes, parking options, etc.).

- Promotion of Home Library service as an alternative for customers unable to get to their next closest library (NB eligibility criteria apply).
- Promotion and development of the digital offer as an alternative which is accessible 24/7 for all customers provided they can access the internet. Since the introduction of eResources in 2010, use of these items has steadily increased. During the lockdown period between April and June 2020, use of eBooks tripled compared to the same period last year and eAudiobook downloads doubled. This shows that some customers are able and willing to continue to borrow items even when they are unable to physically visit a library.
- Offer training/workshops/instructions to show customers how to access the digital offer and to assist customers who do not currently use this service.
- Responses to the consultation from the BAME community will be analysed carefully when finalising proposals to ensure that feedback from this equality group is taken into account

**Proposed introduction of a daily period where staff are not available and customers would access library provision through self-service facilities, at each Council-run library.**

- See mitigation actions for changes to opening hours above.
- Clear signage and instructions to be available close to self-service facilities to instruct customers how to use these facilities.
- Clear communications notifying customers when this will be introduced and when the daily periods will be at each library so that customers are able to take this into account before they visit.
- For Council services offered at the library, promote alternative methods to access these services e.g. via the Council website.
- Prior to introducing this change, communicate this change in good time and have staff available to show customers how to use self-service facilities.
- Use of trained volunteers to be considered – to provide assistance to customers during self-service periods.
- Responses to the consultation from the BAME community will be analysed carefully when finalising proposals to ensure that feedback from this equality group is taken into account.

**Proposed reduction of events, activities and other programmes, at the Council-run libraries.**

- The Library service will work with the Council's Communities Team and the voluntary sector to promote the voluntary offer at libraries to ensure that a varied programme of events and activities can be maintained.

- Support and training will be given to all volunteers to ensure that they are able to offer the same level of service as staff when running activities, etc., which will help to minimise the impact on customers.

### **Proposed changes to the delivery of the Local Studies and Archives service – with access to trained staff by appointment.**

- Clear communications to advise customers of this change and how they can book appointments.
- A variety of methods will be offered for booking appointments (email and phone number) to make sure it is accessible for all.
- An increasing proportion of archive records have been digitised and are available to view online. Targeted promotion to make customers aware of this and a drive to digitise more records would mitigate the impact of this proposal as it would allow customers access without the need to take an appointment. The effect of this is limited though as not all records may be suitable for digitisation.

### **Proposed reduction or ending of financial support to the Community Managed Libraries.**

The community groups who manage these libraries may be able to maintain this service, but there is a risk that this is not the case and that these libraries would then close, if an alternative community provider cannot be found.

- Provide advice and guidance to existing community groups on possible new funding schemes they could apply for, to replace the Council grant funding.
- Work with the Council's Communities Team to help the current providers find additional volunteers to staff the community libraries.
- Work with the Council's Communities Team to look for new community groups to take over the management of the libraries if the existing providers are not able to continue. In the north of the borough this would specifically target groups that contain a high proportion of BAME residents.

**Officer Drafting – Paul Fisher – Date 16.09.20**

**Agreed by Director – Steve Moore – Date 16.09.20**

## Appendix 11 Road Casualties in London Boroughs

Reported casualties by severity, by local government area, for London in 2018

(Taken from Table RAS30038 for Great Britain Annual Report 2018)

Authority	Killed	Seriously injured	Slightly injured	Total number of road casualties 2018
Barking and Dagenham	2	98	697	797
Barnet	4	132	1,077	1,213
Bexley	3	79	555	637
Brent	5	150	948	1,103
Bromley	3	109	788	900
Camden	5	147	872	1,024
City of London	1	81	214	296
Croydon	4	108	937	1,049
Ealing	5	139	1,023	1,162
Enfield	8	118	1,001	1,127
Greenwich	8	101	775	884
Hackney	2	157	825	984
Hammersmith	1	110	676	787
Haringey	2	116	899	1,017
Harrow	0	71	439	510
Havering	3	79	703	785
Hillingdon	6	121	794	921
Hounslow	2	120	834	956
Islington	2	139	712	853
Kensington and Chelsea	3	123	624	750
Kingston upon Thames	2	53	333	388
Lambeth	1	201	1,256	1,458

Lewisham	6	101	904	1,011
London Airport (Heathrow)	0	6	40	46
Merton	3	75	521	599
Newham	5	103	977	1,085
Redbridge	1	103	876	980
Richmond Upon Thames	2	83	417	502
Southwark	2	188	1,101	1,291
Sutton	3	67	438	508
Tower Hamlets	2	161	1,174	1,337
Waltham Forest	7	96	740	843
Wandsworth	6	163	936	1,105
Westminster	3	269	1,437	1,709

## Appendix 12 Libraries Footfall Study 2019

Results of footfall study carried out at libraries from July – November 2019.

### 12.1 Daily visits as weekly percentages

Library	Mon am	Mon pm	Tues am	Tues pm	Wed am	Wed pm	Thurs am	Thurs pm	Fri am	Fri pm	Sat am	Sat pm	Sun am
Central	9%	6%	10%	7%	10%	7%	9%	9%	9%	6%	9%	6%	5%
Crayford	13%	9%	12%	8%	9%	7%	9%	6%	9%	6%	8%	4%	
Erith	10%	8%	10%	11%	10%	7%	8%	7%	8%	7%	8%	7%	
Sidcup	10%	7%	11%	8%	10%	10%	9%	7%	11%	8%	9%	6%	
Thamesmead	8%	9%	11%	9%	7%	8%	8%	10%	7%	8%	8%	7%	
Welling	11%	7%	9%	5%	11%	8%	10%	8%	9%	7%	8%	6%	

### 12.2 Central Library

#### 12.2.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Totals
22/07/2019	NO DATA	NO DATA	849	1040	987	823	354	4053
29/07/2019	993	928	978	1054	891	856	262	5962



05/07/2019	1113	1332	1096	1068	894	NO DATA	NO DATA	5503
19/08/2019	968	947	956	843	852	701	254	5521
26/08/2019	Bank Holiday	1083	1073	1147	841	951	281	5376
02/09/2019	1015	1031	964	1022	985	1085	331	6433
09/09/2019	936	1075	955	1041	864	888	315	6074
16/09/2019	998	989	944	1117	934	886	271	6139
23/09/2019	1011	872	872	1229	1011	962	237	6194
30/09/2019	1064	1253	911	1039	911	1038	295	6511
07/10/2019	980	990	1018	1044	895	893	242	6062
14/10/2019	896	957	907	1052	953	874	239	5878
21/10/2019	929	996	963	986	892	830	316	5912
28/10/2019	1087	973	1113	1006	1051	879	284	6393
04/11/2019	1038	1036	995	1117	874	878	302	6240
11/11/2019	994	1040	979	1130	834	991	278	6246
18/11/2019	914	1001	888	920	907	916	270	5816
<b>TOTAL DAY</b>	<b>14936</b>	<b>16503</b>	<b>16461</b>	<b>17855</b>	<b>15576</b>	<b>14451</b>	<b>4531</b>	

<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>995.7333</b>	<b>1031.438</b>	<b>968.2941</b>	<b>1050.294</b>	<b>916.2353</b>	<b>903.1875</b>	<b>283.1875</b>	
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### 12.2.2 Average footfall throughout the day

Time	10.30am	11.30am	12.30pm	1.30pm	2.30pm	3.30pm	4.30pm	5.30pm	6.30pm	7pm
Average	145.70	133.25	130.41	109.71	119.30	104.16	113.33	67.76	60.13	27.69
Percentage of total	14.4%	13.2%	12.9%	10.9%	11.8%	10.3%	11.2%	6.7%	5.9%	2.7%

## 12.3 Crayford Library

### 12.3.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
22/07/2019	NO DATA	NO DATA	605	469	608	446	2128
29/07/2019	841	690	706	526	550	410	3723
05/07/2019	678	657	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	1335
19/08/2019	809	628	606	604	576	433	3656
26/08/2019	Bank Holiday	808	737	678	690	532	3445

02/09/2019	850	698	619	576	593	534	3870
09/09/2019	634	637	645	580	626	525	3647
16/09/2019	661	622	659	627	613	464	3646
23/09/2019	683	537	609	598	544	529	3500
30/09/2019	745	636	637	668	568	472	3726
07/10/2019	693	696	631	632	578	497	3727
14/10/2019	614	661	620	599	626	496	3616
21/10/2019	665	610	638	533	568	461	3475
28/10/2019	691	584	681	623	574	407	3560
04/11/2019	690	726	626	658	600	516	3816
11/11/2019	713	637	687	622	570	507	3736
<b>TOTAL DAY</b>	9967	9827	9706	8993	8884	6783	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	711.93	655.13	647.07	599.53	592.27	481.93	

### 12.3.2 Average footfall throughout the day:

Time	9am	10am	11am	12 noon	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm
Average	58.60	75.26	91.69	80.70	66.57	69.71	64.88	65.90	42.73	28.53

Percentage of total	9.1%	11.7%	14.2%	12.5%	10.3%	10.8%	10.1%	10.2%	6.6%	4.4%
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## 12.4 Erith Library

### 12.4.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
02/09/2019	527	767	462	454	481	473	3164
09/09/2019	515	602	420	459	522	451	2969
16/09/2019	430	446	481	439	431	396	2623
23/09/2019	480	521	454	395	314	367	2531
30/09/2019	488	548	419	375	391	443	2664
07/10/2019	431	502	494	327	391	371	2516
14/10/2019	381	520	362	346	378	321	2308
21/10/2019	451	583	425	406	377	350	2592
28/10/2019	461	433	459	405	453	356	2567
04/11/2019	432	499	449	369	379	336	2464
11/11/2019	362	501	462	407	361	410	2503

18/11/2019	524	535	586	379	343	390	2757
<b>TOTAL DAY</b>	5482	6457	5473	4761	4821	4664	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	456.83	538.08	456.08	396.75	401.75	388.67	

#### 12.4.2 Average footfall throughout the day

Time	9.30am	10.30am	11.30am	12.30pm	1.30pm	2.30pm	3.30pm	4.30pm	5.30pm	6.30pm	7pm
Average	10.23	66.94	56.25	50.92	50.87	48.72	48.07	56.74	39.35	38.72	10.23
Percentage of total	2.1%	13.5%	11.3%	10.3%	10.2%	9.8%	9.7%	11.4%	7.9%	7.8%	2.1%

### 12.5 Sidcup Library

#### 12.5.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
22/07/2019	NO DATA	NO DATA	692	437	687	387	2203
29/07/2019	640	634	675	475	645	480	3549
05/07/2019	658	766	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	1424
19/08/2019	555	542	569	521	602	371	3160

<b>26/08/2019</b>	<b>Bank Holiday</b>	615	535	452	458	442	2502
<b>02/09/2019</b>	610	537	525	494	495	927	3588
<b>09/09/2019</b>	371	492	558	600	522	531	3074
<b>16/09/2019</b>	480	536	622	470	710	461	3279
<b>23/09/2019</b>	561	475	498	363	589	548	3034
<b>30/09/2019</b>	564	540	558	477	605	401	3145
<b>07/10/2019</b>	619	572	614	476	487	457	3225
<b>14/10/2019</b>	428	488	640	435	546	575	3112
<b>21/10/2019</b>	521	558	698	379	514	383	3053
<b>28/10/2019</b>	526	445	541	726	427	347	3012
<b>04/11/2019</b>	457	436	634	445	687	461	3120
<b>11/11/2019</b>	484	459	544	426	498	469	2880
<b>TOTAL DAY</b>	7474	8095	8903	7176	8472	7240	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	533.86	539.67	593.53	478.40	564.80	482.67	

### 12.5.2 Average footfall throughout the day

Time	10.30am	11.30am	12.30pm	1.30pm	2.30pm	3.30pm	4.30pm	5.30pm	6.30pm	7pm
Average	79.76	83.54	73.20	64.22	61.61	61.45	55.29	48.49	25.38	25.06
Percentage of total	13.8%	14.5%	12.7%	11.1%	10.7%	10.6%	9.6%	8.4%	4.4%	4.3%

## 12.6 Thamesmead Library

### 12.6.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
22/07/2019	NO DATA	NO DATA	136	146	115	171	568
29/07/2019	196	154	76	225	146	122	919
05/07/2019	285	351	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	636
19/08/2019	139	208	206	233	153	131	1070
26/08/2019	Bank Holiday	154	108	174	165	88	689
02/09/2019	0	127	152	243	88	178	788

09/09/2019	172	231	133	143	152	113	944
16/09/2019	186	116	118	107	113	172	812
23/09/2019	159	148	118	67	91	127	710
30/09/2019	222	186	152	162	112	136	970
07/10/2019	126	160	84	156	142	147	815
14/10/2019	137	102	79	133	159	132	742
21/10/2019	126	174	150	147	133	118	848
28/10/2019	225	128	96	109	108	99	765
04/11/2019	94	117	124	97	127	120	679
11/11/2019	126	140	85	75	74	122	622
<b>TOTAL</b>	2193	2496	1817	2217	1878	1976	
<b>AVERAGE</b>	156.64	166.40	227.13	277.13	234.75	247.00	

### 12.6.2 Average footfall throughout the day

Time	10.30am	11.30am	12.30pm	1.30pm	2.30pm	3.30pm	4.30pm	5.30pm	6.30pm
Average	20.19	15.02	16.89	17.76	17.44	17.17	18.56	16.38	17.14



Percentage of total	12.9%	7.2%	10.8%	11.4%	11.1%	11.0%	11.9%	10.5%	11.0%
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## 12.7 Welling Library

### 12.7.1 Daily visitor numbers

Week beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
22/07/2019	NO DATA	NO DATA	364	250	455	270	1339
29/07/2019	435	350	461	426	407	348	2427
05/07/2019	358	402	445	NO DATA	NO DATA	350	1555
19/08/2019	454	400	393	374	369	306	2296
26/08/2019	Bank Holiday	452	430	359	361	357	1959
02/09/2019	456	434	343	369	338	451	2391
09/09/2019	276	502	359	412	383	383	2315
16/09/2019	365	373	315	386	332	271	2042
23/09/2019	380	442	423	406	407	375	2433
30/09/2019	412	378	373	412	399	270	2244
07/10/2019	432	423	446	400	358	349	2408

14/10/2019	406	399	415	447	392	328	2387
21/10/2019	465	415	408	227	433	243	2191
28/10/2019	439	450	401	389	390	305	2374
04/11/2019	426	452	373	422	374	387	2434
11/11/2019	358	324	415	393	333	334	2157
18/11/2019	399	328	455	375	304	345	2206
<b>Total</b>	<b>6061</b>	<b>6524</b>	<b>6819</b>	<b>6047</b>	<b>6035</b>	<b>5672</b>	
<b>Average</b>	<b>404.0667</b>	<b>407.75</b>	<b>401.1176</b>	<b>377.9375</b>	<b>377.1875</b>	<b>333.6471</b>	

### 12.7.2 Average footfall throughout the day

Time	10.30am	11.30am	12.30pm	1.30pm	2.30pm	3.30pm	4.30pm	5.30pm
Average	61.8	55.61	53.14	45.6	45.15	43.33	45.24	34.38
Percentage of total	16.1%	14.5%	13.8%	11.9%	11.8%	11.3%	11.8%	9.0%

## **Appendix 13 Bexley Library – Digital Offer**

*\*Correct as of 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020*

The digital offer for Bexley Libraries includes the following:

- 6,164 eBooks (available via Overdrive/Libby app)
  - 4,843 Adult Fiction/Adult Non Fiction
- 1,321 Junior Fiction/Junior Non Fiction
  - 938 eAudiobooks
- Available for download on PressReader
  - 4,020 magazine titles
  - 2,463 newspaper titles
- Available for download on RBDigital
  - 7 magazine titles
  - 1,249 eComics

## Appendix 14 Events Programme at all Council Libraries (pre COVID-19)

Summary of regular events held at all libraries

### 14.1 Children's events frequency

Library	Occur more than once a week	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly
Central Library	2	4	0	2
Crayford Library	4	2	0	0
Erith Library	3	4	0	1
Sidcup Library	1	6	1	4
Thamesmead Library	1	4	0	0
Welling Library	3	8	0	1

*\*events term-time only.*

### 14.2 Adult events frequency

Library	Occur more than once a week	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly
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Central Library	1	2	0	5
Crayford Library	0	3	0	3
Erith Library	2	2	1	2
Sidcup Library	3	3	0	4
Thamesmead Library	1	2	0	1
Welling Library	0	4	2	2

## 14.3 Branch Programmes

### 14.3.1 Central Library

#### 14.3.1.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Storytime	Every Monday*	Rhymes, stories and songs for under 5's.
Stay and Play	Every Tuesday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups.
Read with me	Every Tuesday*	A ten minute one-to-one reading aloud session.
Chess Club	Every Thursday	For over 8's

DigiClub	1st Thursday of the month	Digital making activities for ages 10-16.
ToddlerTime	Every Friday, two sessions*	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds
Lego Club	Every Saturday* and Sunday	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over
Craft Club	One Saturday a month	Crafting fun on a Saturday morning.

### 14.3.1.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
Coffee and Conversation	Every Tuesday and Wednesday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat over a hot drink and a biscuit.
Reading Group for the Visually Impaired	First Wednesday of the month	Discuss your choice of books and anything else of interest over cup of tea and a biscuit.
Games Club	Every Wednesday	
Reader's Choice Reading Group	Third Thursday of the month	Chat about books of your choice – ideal for parents and carers with babies and toddlers.
Chess Club	Every Thursday	All ages and levels welcome.

Central Library Reading Group	Last Thursday of the month	A Reading Group where we discuss and review a nominated book and share book recommendations in an informal setting.
Book Bound Book Club	Second Thursday of the month	A Book Club where talk about a specific book and other books that we've read in a relaxed atmosphere.

### 14.3.2 Crayford Library

#### 14.3.2.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Rugs, Rhymes and Babytime	Every Monday and Friday*	Songs, rhymes and play for children under one – booking required
Toddleertime	Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday*	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds. Booking essential, please enquire with staff at the library.
Stay and Play	Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups.
Bexley Battle Gamers	Every Tuesday	Table-top war gaming and collectable card games for ages 11-19
Lego Club	Every Thursday and Saturday*	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over

Read With Me	Every Saturday	A ten minute one-to-one reading aloud session
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### 14.3.2.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
Crayford Town Archives	1st, 2nd and 4th Monday of the month	Local History group focussing on Crayford.
Reading Friends	Last Tuesday of the month	Get together with a good book, poem or newspaper article. Meet new people, make friends, chat and have a laugh. Everyone is welcome.
Crayford Library Reading Group	Third Wednesday of the month	
Stitch and Sew	Every Thursday	Crochet, sewing and more with likeminded people. Please bring all materials with you.
Crayford Knitters	Every Friday	Meet and swap tips with fellow knitters over a hot drink. All levels welcome.
Gardener's Coffee Club	Last Saturday of the month	Meet and swap tips with fellow gardeners over a hot drink.



### 14.3.3 Erith Library

#### 14.3.3.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Stay and Play	Every Monday and Tuesday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups.
Read With Me	Every Tuesday and Saturday*	A ten minute one-to-one reading aloud session
Lego Club	Every Monday*	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over
Toddler time	Every Wednesday, 2 sessions *	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds
Colouring Club	Every Thursday*	For ages 3 and over
Knitting Club	Every Friday*	Come along and learn how to knit
Saturday Club	Every Saturday*	Crafts, games, puzzles, Lego or colouring – a different activity every week!
Teenage Reading Group	2nd Saturday of the month*	

#### 14.3.3.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
Games Club	Every Monday	

Stitch and Sew	Every Tuesday and Wednesday	Crochet, sewing and more with likeminded people. Please bring all materials with you
Coffee Morning	Every Tuesday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat over a hot drink and a biscuit
Family History	Every other Wednesday	Volunteer-led help with family tree research
Reading Friends	3rd Tuesday of each month	Get together with a good book, poem or newspaper article. Meet new people, make friends, chat and have a laugh. Everyone is welcome.
Erith Library Reading Group	Second Wednesday of the month	

### 14.3.4 Sidcup Library

#### 14.3.4.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Lego Club	Every Tuesday*	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over
Read With Me	Every Wednesday*	A ten minute one-to-one reading aloud session
Number Wizards	One Wednesday a month*	Fun and games with numbers
Wacky Wednesday	One Wednesday a month*	After school crafting fun

Magic Ink	Every other Wednesday	Design and draw comics
Stay and Play	Every Thursday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups
Chess Club	Every Thursday	For ages 5 and over.
Toddler time	Every Thursday and Friday*	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds.
Story Makers	One Friday a month*	Stories and craft for younger children
Colouring Club	Every Saturday	

#### 14.3.4.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
Reader's Choice Reading Group	First Monday of the month	Chat about books of your choice – ideal for parents and carers with babies and toddlers.
Coffee Morning	Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat over a hot drink and a biscuit.
Coffee Afternoon	Every Tuesday and Thursday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat over a hot drink and a biscuit.

Scrabble Group	Every Tuesday and Wednesday	Join us for a friendly game over a hot drink.
Stitch and Sew	Every Wednesday	Crochet, sewing and more with likeminded people. Please bring all materials with you.
Sidcup Library Reading Group	First Wednesday of the month	
Chess Club	Every Thursday	All ages and levels welcome.
Jigsaws and Coffee	Every Friday	
Living Well with Dementia	Second Friday of the month	Come along for a friendly chat over a cuppa, puzzles and games - for people living with dementia, their family, carers' and friends.
Crime and Thriller Reading Group	Second Saturday of the month	

### 14.3.5 Thamesmead Library

#### 14.3.5.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Toddlertime	Every Tuesday*	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds.
Stay and Play	Every Tuesday and Wednesday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups.

Games Club	Every Friday*	
Lego Club	Every Saturday	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over.
Colouring Club	Every Saturday	All day drop in session

### 14.3.5.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
Coffee Morning	Every Monday and Friday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat.
Thamesmead Library Reading Group	Second Monday of the month	
Craft T	Every Wednesday	Crochet, sewing and more with likeminded people over a hot drink. Please bring all materials with you.
Games Club	Every Friday	

### 14.3.6 Welling Library

#### 14.3.6.1 Children's Events

Event	Day	Notes
Stay and Play	Every Monday*	Playtime with toys for under 5's. Stay and chat for the grown-ups.

Spanish Rhyme Time	Every Monday*	Songs and music to encourage a love of language at an early age
Teenage Reading Group	3rd Monday of the month	
New Knitters	Every Monday*	Come along and learn how to knit
Colouring Club	Every Monday*	
Read with Me	Every Tuesday and Thursday*	A ten minute one-to-one reading aloud session.
Games Club	Every Wednesday*	
Toddler time	Every Thursday*	Songs and rhymes for 0-3 year olds.
Lego Club	Every Thursday* and Saturday	Build Lego creations for ages 6 and over.
Baby Café	Every Friday*	
Pow! Comic Club	Every Friday*	Design and draw comics.
Craft Club	Every Saturday*	

#### 14.3.6.2 Adult Events

Event	Day	Notes
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Coffee Morning	Every Tuesday	Join us in a friendly and welcoming environment and meet new people, and have a chat over a hot drink and a biscuit.
'Book Marks' Reading Group	First Wednesday of the month	Chat about books of your choice.
Jane Austen Reading Group	Every other Thursday	Come along and discuss all things Jane Austen
Living Well	Every Thursday	Come along for a friendly chat over a cuppa, puzzles and games - for people living with dementia, their family, carers' and friends.
Knit and Knatter	Every Friday	Meet and swap tips with fellow knitters over a hot drink. All levels welcome.
Welling Library Reading Group	Second Friday of the month	
Games Club	Every Friday	
Poetry Workshop	Every other Saturday	Friendly chat and discussion of all types of poetry.

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