



ROTHERHAM'S LIBRARY STRATEGY

2021-26

www.rotherham.gov.uk/libraries

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WELCOME TO OUR LIBRARY STRATEGY 2021-2026

Welcome to our new Library Strategy 2021 – 2026

We are pleased to present our new Library Strategy. We have spent the last 18 months talking and listening to over 1500 people to understand what matters most to local people about their libraries. We have learned what libraries should be focusing on over the next few years and what we need to do to improve residents' experience of using our libraries.

We have also learned that libraries are a vital part of our neighbourhoods and that they have the power to change the lives of those who use them. We heard that our libraries and neighbourhood hubs have helped people into work, strengthened local community networks, inspired people to read and provided a wealth of free activities for children and families. During the COVID-19 lockdown, 579 new people joined our libraries. There were 904 new online users, over 15,000 engagements with online library activities and a Facebook and Twitter reach of over 400,000.

We have learned that over 99 % of customers love our libraries – and we need more people in Rotherham to enjoy their benefits.

To make this happen, residents can expect to see:

- Improvements to library buildings, to make them more accessible and to create a warmer welcome
- More help to get people reading and to enjoy free books and reading materials
- Better ICT provision to enable more people to get online
- More advice and support services being delivered through libraries – bringing the Council and voluntary sector partners even closer to communities, helping people help themselves
- More activities for children, families and vulnerable people – right on your doorstep

We will spend the next five years working to put our new Strategy into practice. We hope you will join us – either online or at a library near you.



Councillor Allen

Cabinet Member for Cleaner,
Greener Communities

**“ Stories are the secret reservoir of values:
change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves,
and you change the individuals and nations. ”**

BEN OKRI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for people who want to use it.

In this Strategy we present a vision and framework for our Libraries service over the next five years, which we believe will meet the needs of people in Rotherham.

There are 15 libraries across the borough. Currently 98 % of Rotherham residents are able to access a library within 2 miles of their home.

As part of a commitment to widening access, the library service provides vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library, and a Schools' Loan Service, which offers resources to support reading, literacy and the wider curriculum in schools.

There is also a digital library provision, which enables people to access the service online. Users can join the library, along with enjoying online activities and events.

In order to produce a strategy to meet the future needs of the community the service has:

- ✓ carried out consultation with the public, members of library staff and partners
- ✓ examined usage, performance and demand for the service
- ✓ assessed the Service's contribution to corporate outcomes and priorities
- ✓ taken into account key national, regional and local strategies

- ✓ benchmarked the service against other local authorities: taking account of innovation, good practice and lessons learned
- ✓ reviewed available resources, including staff, buildings and stock

What will the strategy achieve?

For our communities:

- ✓ more people will enjoy the benefits of reading
- ✓ more people will get active and creative, taking part in library activities and groups as a way to stay healthy and well
- ✓ more people will have the opportunity to volunteer and become employment ready
- ✓ more people will feel part of their community and feel happier and less isolated as a result.
- ✓ more people see libraries as essential community and cultural hubs, a first point of contact for Council services

For our service:

- ✓ there will be increased financial sustainability, ensuring that libraries have a bright future at the heart of our town and neighbourhoods
- ✓ our staff and volunteers will be proud to work for us
- ✓ other organisations will want to be our partners because of our great reputation
- ✓ our buildings will be better equipped and more welcoming



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The way that people use their library is changing, and with it, their expectations and demands of their library service.

Nationally, traditional usage of libraries is generally on the decline, however, more recently Rotherham saw an increase in both the numbers of people who borrowed books and in those who visited libraries across the borough.

Our offer of digital resources is also showing a positive increase in usage as a result of Covid-19 lockdown. In recent years, we had an increase of over 70 percent in total e-resource downloads which is reflective of the national trend of moving towards digital services, as more and more people have access to technology and the internet.

Not only are attitudes to technology changing, but also the needs of the people of Rotherham. With more children coming from lower-income families and increasing social isolation and loneliness across all ages, our library service must play a vital role in reaching out to every single person in the Borough regardless of age, gender or social and economic background.

The library service needs to offer something for everyone, whether this is a space for quiet study or reading, or exciting activities, events and groups which bring people together.

This strategy identifies improvements needed in order to tackle the challenge of providing more modern and sustainable services in the face of increasingly complex demands.

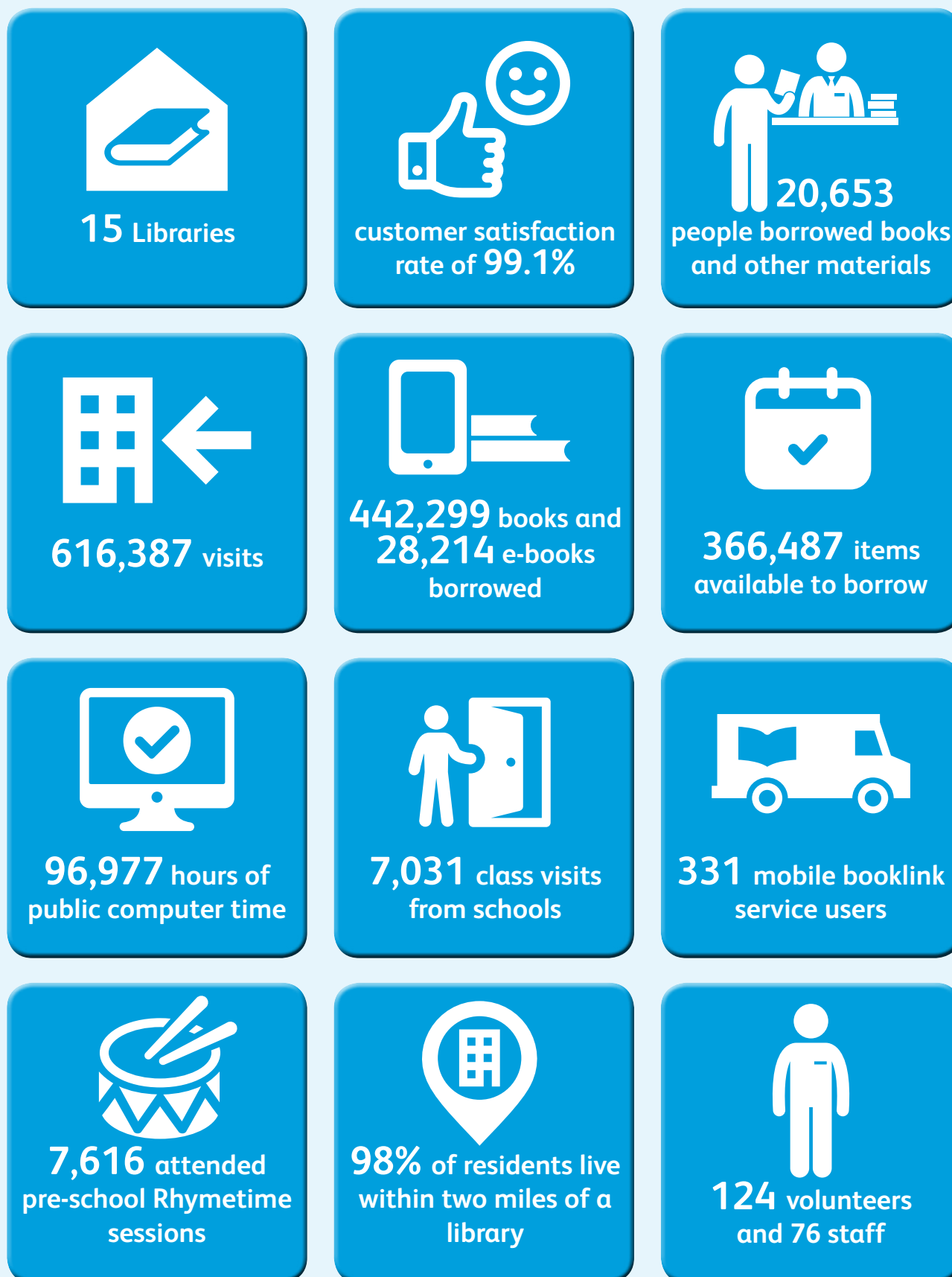
Locally, there are clear opportunities for this library strategy to provide a framework for cross- council work in the following areas:

- ✓ Rotherham's School Improvement Service (RoSIS), by improving reading and literacy attainment levels for children
- ✓ Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy, by giving opportunities for people to come together, to get involved in their local neighbourhood and to participate in interesting, enjoyable and creative events and activities

- ✓ Cultural Strategy, by offering a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provides everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of creative experience
- ✓ Economic Growth Plan, by supporting individuals to become job-ready
- ✓ Delivery of the Building Stronger Communities action plan, by providing opportunities for neighbourhood engagement and a visible, well-used and vibrant community hub
- ✓ Children and Young People's Plan, by providing opportunities for informal and intergenerational learning in a safe, attractive space
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing Strategy, by reducing social isolation and maintaining good mental health, using the Five Ways to Wellbeing as a framework for activities
- ✓ Supporting Adult Social Care and Housing in providing safe, trusted community-based places for service users and increasing opportunities for independent living
- ✓ Supporting the Customer Access Strategy through providing free Wi-Fi and digital assistance, so that customers who need help feel supported and able to access the services they need



Figure 1: **Key facts** about Rotherham Library Services



READING PICTURES, SEEING STORIES

“Reading Pictures, Seeing Stories”, a regional visual literacy project funded by the Arts Council, was delivered in autumn 2018 at Wath library. It focussed on the power of illustrations in books with Michael Morpurgo’s book “War Horse” as the theme in commemoration of the end of the Great War. Library staff delivered the Arts Award to school-children and Wath Central Junior School created an exciting exhibition in the Library.

Children’s author and illustrator Liz Million led workshops to inspire children in their own art work on the Great War theme.

Over 300 children were involved, and the exhibition in Wath Library was visited by nearly 100 people. One visitor commented: “What a fantastic exhibition. You can clearly see a lot of hard work has been undertaken by the children of Wath Central to create such a thought-provoking display. Well done to all!”



LEGO CLUBS

Thurcroft Library started a regular Lego Club for families in spring 2018 and it proved so popular that clubs were quickly extended to all our libraries. Library staff encourage children to use their imagination in creating and sharing stories using their models and to work together on projects.

The sessions are suitable for young people with all levels of ability and the overall response is excellent, particularly with children who have special educational needs and disabilities.

Some of those attending, children and their parents/carers, have shared what they think about the Lego clubs:

“All of my friends come now to the Library, we had never been until the Lego club started!”

“It’s a great way to do something free as a family, we love it”

“I forgot how much I loved Lego, now my son and I can enjoy it together like I did with my father when I was younger”



“ Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open. ”

LAURA BUS

Figure 2: **Services and facilities** delivered by Rotherham Libraries



WE LISTENED - WHAT DID YOU TELL US?

Over the last 18 months, Rotherham Council has undertaken consultation about our libraries in two phases. We have heard from over 1500 members of the public, stakeholders and partners to find out what people think of Rotherham libraries. People have told us what is most important to them and what their priorities are for library services in the future. A summary of the consultation findings is available as a supporting document to this strategy.

Top four public priorities



Key points from the consultation were as follows:

- **Books and reading** are the top priority for both adults and children, including audiobooks and e-books.
- Libraries are seen as a great **benefit to children**, with many users seeking a wider range of facilities and services catering to children and families.
- For **children and young people**, a wide range of modern and appealing books is a priority. They also want a more vibrant environment, with more activities, events and clubs available.
- People approve of recruiting **more volunteers** in their local library service, though paid **staff are viewed as skilled and knowledgeable**, and crucial to the service.
- People value having an **easily accessible** local library, close to home or easy to get to on public transport. Those who do not use libraries report that they would be encouraged to use them if they were in more convenient locations.
- People want libraries to be the social hub of the community, and consider it important that library buildings are **modern, clean and welcoming** with improved convenient opening hours.
- Library users agree that **technology**, should be used to enhance what is offered by the library, and to reduce costs and offer greater choice.
- People agree that **moving or sharing buildings** with organisations can help to increase usage and make libraries more sustainable in the community.
- Those who do not use libraries feel that they do not offer any services or facilities that they want to use. Many **people buy their own books and access information online** at home.

Since the new Library Strategy has been out for final consultation in 2020, there has been the opportunity to consider further feedback in light of learning from the lockdown period due to COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted that the way in which the library service delivers its offer moving forward will be different to the way it was prior to lockdown, particularly in relation to its online offer and how services are delivered through physical library sites. The service has had to reconsider the implications of reinstating a full service and must adapt in order to protect staff and the community.

OUR VISION

Libraries are a friendly and welcoming gateway to a world of reading, information, learning and creative activities, at the heart of our neighbourhoods. We seek to build on the strong community spirit that exists throughout the borough, to create access to a wide range of services and to place libraries at the heart of community life. Our libraries and neighbourhood hubs are modern, relevant and innovative facilities that meet the needs of people from all sections of the community.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to utilise our libraries to help people to help themselves, to be better informed, and to get active and creative, more often.



OUR STRATEGY

Over the next few pages we set out how we will make our vision real for local people...



CORE OFFER

Our Libraries

- Located in the heart of Rotherham's communities, our libraries will be recognised as neighbourhood hubs that are welcoming and safe and places to access information along with recreational, cultural and learning activity.
- Our library buildings will bring together Council services and partners in order for people to access a range of services at a local level.
- Our Libraries will carry an up-to-date and wide selection of books and reading material, including e-books, e-magazines, spoken word and large print.
- Our libraries will be easily accessible and offering ease of access for people with disabilities. They will be well used, with up-to-date facilities and be responsive to changing requirements, using available technology and resources effectively.

Our People

- We will provide a level of service which is enjoyed and valued by those who visit the library, so they want to come again and tell others about their experience.
- We will engage with library users and partners in meaningful ways, automating processes where possible to release time for genuine co-working with community groups, voluntary organisations and internal departments to deliver more efficient and better services.
- Our staff are our most valued resource: we will invest in their knowledge and skills and give them opportunity to develop and apply their expertise with regular reviews of training needs, a programme of workforce development and specialist development where appropriate.

- Volunteers play a vital role in supporting and enhancing Rotherham libraries and will continue to do so in the future. The service recognises the added value that volunteers bring by offering their time, skills, experience and commitment. We will ensure our volunteers feel valued and get something worthwhile from the time they give us. In order to do this, we will continue to work closely with Voluntary Action Rotherham to ensure their interests and skills are well matched to our opportunities and that they are fully trained and properly supported by our paid staff.

Our Activities

- **Reading:** this is key to taking advantage of opportunities in life, so we will inspire Rotherham's children, young people and their families to enjoy reading, enabling them to improve their quality of life and realise their full potential.
- **I.T.:** we will encourage and support people to help themselves wherever possible, equipping them with the knowledge and means to get online using up-to-date I.T. equipment, and access information and services independently.
- **Activities:** we will provide a wide range of activities, events, groups, clubs and courses to inspire and enable people to get more active and creative, more often.
- **Learning and Information:** we will provide support, advice and resources to enable people to learn, develop skills and enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- **Community:** we will be genuine neighbourhood hubs, bringing people and services together and encouraging people to build the support networks and partnerships they need to thrive.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES – LOCAL IMPACT

National Priorities for Libraries

Library services across the country are delivered in different ways as services are shaped by local policy, customer need and available resources.

Libraries Connected (a membership organisation advocating for the power of libraries, representing heads of library services in England, Wales and N. Ireland) has developed a package of Universal Offers which helps to underpin national and local priorities, providing a framework for future service developments around the key areas of:

- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Digital and Information

- ✓ Culture and Creativity
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing

Each of these key areas are underpinned by the Children's Promise which aims to ensure that Children are involved in decisions about the services that affect them as well as being offered opportunities to volunteer and the Six Steps Promise ensuring that the library service supports people with vision impairments.

Also, the Libraries Taskforce 2016 report "Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021", presents a vision of excellence including **seven key outcomes** which our Library Strategy supports.

“ Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better. ”

SIDNEY SHELDON



OUR ACTIONS

The seven outcomes presented in Libraries Deliver 2016-2021 by the Libraries Taskforce are incorporated within our goals as a Library Service and also have a broader application in the priorities presented in the Rotherham Council Plan. This strategy aligns closely to the Rotherham Cultural Strategy in order to support its key goal to enable everyone to get active, get creative and get outdoors, more often. Our Action plan follows the seven key themes of the Libraries Deliver report:

1. Cultural and creative enrichment

- ✓ We will offer a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provides everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of cultural experience. This will be supported through our partners, such as the Arts Council and Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance.
- ✓ We will seek funding to extend our cultural offer and engage with a wider range of interests, in particular supporting the local and regional cultural sector.
- ✓ We will seek to bring art, dance, music and theatre into the library space, with particular emphasis on bringing stories to life.
- ✓ We will improve our communication about library activities, especially those which are free and low cost.

Case Study:

FUN PALACES

Fun Palaces is an ongoing campaign celebrating culture at the heart of community, using arts, science, craft, tech, digital, heritage and sports activities as a catalyst for community engagement. 2019 saw the third year of Fun Palaces in Rotherham Libraries with successful events over the first weekend in October at the Central Library in Riverside House, Wath and Maltby libraries.



Since the first year Rotherham took part in this national initiative, interest and enthusiasm has grown with a steady year-on-year increase in those taking part and visiting the

events. Everyone who attended said they would recommend the events to others; they generated a sense of community and pride in where they lived, as well as a positive mood-boosting benefit.

Activities have been wide-ranging, with community groups and individuals coming to share their skills and pastimes with great enthusiasm. Indian dancing, Morris dancing, music and singing, papercraft, book-folding, painting, stamp-collecting and much more. One little girl who had made a paper flower returned to show her friend how to do it. This is what Fun Palaces are all about, learning something new and passing it on!

In April 2019 the central Fun Palaces team announced National Lottery funding which will support the work of the Fun Palaces campaign over the next 5 years. As a part of this, Rotherham Council will be included in the expanded programme with a Rotherham Fun Palaces Ambassador to help create and lead local cultural and community activities.

2. Increased reading and literacy

- ✓ We will encourage and support everyone, especially children and young people, to develop a life-long love of reading; for example, through continuing our partnership work with places where children go and organisations which work with them, such as schools and Grimm & co.
- ✓ We will offer a wide range of reading items, including e-books, large print, audio-books, newspapers and magazines, to support the personal literacy development of individual readers.
- ✓ We will continue to develop readers' groups, including online, themed and targeted groups.
- ✓ We will participate in national and regional reading events that encourage participation, especially among children, such as the Summer Reading Challenge.

Case Study:

SHARED READING

Rotherham Libraries partnered with Sheffield and Doncaster in the 'Shared Reading' project, led by 'The Reader' and funded by Arts Council England.

Reading groups met to improve connection and wellbeing, especially among people feeling isolated or vulnerable, through sharing thoughts, memories and stories inspired by reading aloud. Several volunteers became Reader Leaders to run groups themselves and

the project is expanding from the initial six groups to new locations in the Borough.

Some of the people attending groups have shared how it benefits them with the following comments:

"It's a way of making new friends"

"It welcomes people from all walks of life and also provides a good cuppa and nice biscuits!"

"It encourages people not to be afraid to read out aloud"



3. Improved digital access and literacy

- ✓ We will continue to offer free Wi-Fi access in all our library buildings and we will offer customers the facility to print from their own devices.
- ✓ We will provide up-to-date computer equipment for people to use free of charge.
- ✓ Through trained staff, volunteers and partners we will support people getting online and using I.T. with confidence.
- ✓ We will encourage digital literacy among children through developing such things as makerspaces and code clubs.

Case Study:

INVESTING IN DIGITAL

People who are ‘digitally literate’ are more likely to experience good employment, better health and make savings in household costs. There are still too many people in Rotherham who are digitally-excluded. The reach of libraries within Rotherham means that our library staff and partners are uniquely placed to help people get online, particularly in areas of deprivation. Library staff are there to support and upskill people to become

independent users of the internet. This helps people to access services more easily, to learn, and to interact with others.

In recognising the importance of supporting Digital inclusion, £405k from the Council’s Capital Programme has been invested in order to upgrade the public I.T. provision which includes new public access PCs across all libraries. Free Wi-Fi across all libraries will continue and the delivery of activities such as code clubs and provision of makerspaces will increase.



4. Helping Everyone Achieve their Full Potential

- ✓ We will continue to offer a wide-ranging stock of materials for loan or reference in various formats, both traditional and digital.
- ✓ We will ensure library staff are trained to support customers to make the best use of the full range of library resources, along with encouraging the take up sector specific qualifications.
- ✓ We will increase the number of new apprenticeships available within the service.
- ✓ We will support children with homework, students with their studies and adults with access to online information in relation to such things as jobs and benefits.
- ✓ Supported by Voluntary Action Rotherham, we will offer a range of volunteering opportunities to individuals and community groups in supporting delivery of the library service.

Case Study:

VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT THE LIBRARY SERVICE

Laura was appointed as a Library Volunteer at Riverside House. Having done her own family tree, she was enthusiastic to help other people by starting a weekly family history group. With the support and help of Library staff, she produced flyers and distributed these to local businesses in the town centre. The group started with just a couple of members but grew as word spread and it now sees up to eight people on a regular basis and meets twice a week in the Library.



Following this, Laura then helped with an event for The Big Read, when the author Mari Hannah came to Riverside Library to run a book group as part of Harrogate International Festivals Programme. During the summer she helped to

promote volunteering at the annual Volunteers Walk organised by Voluntary Action Rotherham and then in autumn worked at Rotherham College during Freshers Week, promoting both volunteering and library services' public consultation.

As part of the annual Fun Palace event in October, Laura introduced adults and children to playing the ukulele and it was so popular that she is starting a ukulele group once a month in the central Library at Riverside.

After applying for a post as a library assistant, she has been successfully appointed and will now be working across the borough in all fifteen libraries - a good news story both for Laura and the library service.

Laura says: "Volunteering with the library has opened up so many opportunities for me. Not only has it led to a paid job with the library, but I've also had the chance to start a ukulele group and a family history group which will be great experience to further my career. I have managed to work my volunteering around my studies as well."

Over the next 5 years, Rotherham libraries will create volunteering opportunities for more people, adding value to our services and helping people develop their skills and confidence.

5. Healthier and Happier Lives

- ✓ We will promote reading for pleasure as a positive benefit to health and mental well-being.
- ✓ We will host events, activities and groups whose purpose is to encourage and support a healthier, happier lifestyle.
- ✓ We will provide and support the use of information on physical health and mental well-being, through our own resources and in partnership with others.
- ✓ We will actively seek to reduce social isolation and loneliness through the organisation of reading groups and activities in which people can come together.
- ✓ We will offer a service to those who are potentially lonely and vulnerable through our Booklink and Home Library Services.
- ✓ Libraries will support the Council, suppliers and communities to address the climate change emergency.

Case Study:

LIVE WELL

This project worked with local communities and partners to improve the general health and mental wellbeing of local people.

“Cuppa and a Chat” sessions took place in three Libraries, where around 60 local people and school children chatted about how the ways we communicate have changed. Further events were delivered in partnership with local organisations including “Get Healthy Rotherham” and “Places for People” at five libraries. Topics covered included healthy eating and weight management, relaxation and stress management, exercise and fitness.

Yoga taster sessions were delivered in four libraries, and the response was excellent: *“Yoga was fantastic! Would love to see this being put*

on regularly”. “Would be nice to have more Yoga weekly, or some other form or exercise.” “Excellent, really good”

More books to support healthy living, mental health and well-being have been added to library stock and a “Dark Den” has been provided at Kiveton Park Library to offer a quiet, calm place for children who may be on the autistic spectrum and overwhelmed by the noise and bustle in the library.



6. Greater Prosperity

- ✓ We will offer work clubs in conjunction with partners.
- ✓ We will offer assisted digital support and beginners I.T. sessions to support people getting online and becoming confident computer users.
- ✓ We will work with partners to offer space for Information, Advice and Guidance particularly for those seeking or offering employment and training.
- ✓ Build a new library in Rotherham Town Centre, helping to revitalise the town and supporting the retail and hospitality sectors.

Case Study:

A NEW LIBRARY FOR ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE

Over the next five years, the Council will work with partners and the community to create a new community hub.

The hub will be a landmark feature for the community: a bright, welcoming, aspirational

hub, aimed at encouraging people to explore the environment and what it has to offer to Library members. It will offer a state-of-the-art book display, digital technology and dynamic social space in which to meet and learn.

Funding has been sought for this ambitious £5.7m project through the Future High Street Fund scheme.



“ The only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library ”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

7. Stronger More Resilient Communities

- ✓ Our libraries will function as friendly and welcoming community hubs, freely accessible to all. This will include reviewing: if buildings are in the right location; if they can be co-located with other services/partners; if the buildings require refurbishing/ modernising; if the service can host wider cultural and heritage activity.
- ✓ Work with appropriate partners and the community to create a new community hub in the town centre in order to increase engagement and increase footfall. The hub will be a landmark feature for the community: a bright, welcoming, aspirational hub, aimed at encouraging people to explore the environment and what it has to offer to Library members.
- ✓ Where partners express an interest in running a community library, a feasibility study will be undertaken. In cases where there is support from the local community and a sound business case to do so, the Council would look to transition the management of the service over to the community. A comprehensive support package from the Council would be put in place.
- ✓ Our staff and volunteers will be trained to provide excellent customer service to all those who wish to use our services.
- ✓ We will review our opening hours in line with customer and staff feedback and statistical information, and engage with local community groups and seek to implement automated solutions, in order to keep libraries open for more people, for more of the time.
- ✓ We will host a wide range of diverse events and activities that build community identity and cohesion.
- ✓ We will work with local people to shape our future services, extending ownership, responsibility and pride.

Case Study:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN LIBRARY SERVICES

In 2018, Brinsworth Parish Council was successful in obtaining Big Lottery Funding in order to build a new Brinsworth Resource Centre. In 2019, Brinsworth Parish Council approached the Council to improve library services within the community, specifically with a view to replacing the old 'portacabin' which had housed the library for over 20 years. The pavilion building, next door to the new Resource Centre, was extended in 2020 to accommodate a library that forms part of the new Brinsworth Community Hub.

Placing the library within the hub creates opportunities for daily informal and formal interactions which strengthen community cohesion. In 2021 the library will be managed by Brinsworth Community Trust (of which the

Parish Council is the sole trustee). The library will continue to form part of the Council's statutory provision and the Council will continue to provide support services - including supply and maintenance of stock, access to the Library Management System, and specialist library staff support including the training of volunteers.

The scheme enables increased community involvement in local library services, enabling the community to shape its service to meet local needs. This contributes to achieving a number of strategic priorities, notably, the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018 - 2025.



MONITORING OUR IMPACT

Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs will provide quarterly updates on our progress and publish an Annual Report. We have set targets as follows:

By 2026 we will:

- ✓ Increase the numbers of people who borrow books by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of visits by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase reading for pleasure amongst young people by 25 percent
- ✓ Increase the number and range of activities and groups by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of people using I.T. facilities by 10 percent
- ✓ Increase self-service take up such as online renewals and online requests by 20 percent
- ✓ Increase the number of volunteering hours by 50 percent
- ✓ Maintain our levels of customer satisfaction above 95 percent
- ✓ Trial technology which will allow customers to access libraries without staff being present in order to increase opening hours
- ✓ Be able to evidence the impact and value that libraries bring to communities through case studies and testimonials



“ A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead. ”

CAITLIN MORAN