



# Haverling

LONDON BOROUGH

## PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE AGENDA

8.00 pm

Monday  
3 February 2025

Council Chamber -  
Town Hall

Members 9: Quorum 4

### COUNCILLORS:

#### Conservative Group (3)

David Taylor (Chairman)  
Ray Best  
Osman Dervish

#### Labour Group (1)

Matthew Stanton

#### Haverling Residents' Group (4)

Philippa Crowder  
Laurance Garrard  
Robby Misir  
John Wood

#### East Haverling Residents Group (1)

Darren Wise

For information about the meeting please contact:  
Taiwo Adeoye - 01708 433079  
[taiwo.adeoye@onesource.co.uk](mailto:taiwo.adeoye@onesource.co.uk)

Please would all Members and officers attending ensure they sit in their allocated seats as this will enable correct identification of participants on the meeting webcast.

***Under the Committee Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the meeting may exercise the powers conferred upon the Mayor in relation to the conduct of full Council meetings. As such, should any member of the public interrupt proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room and may adjourn the meeting while this takes place.***

***Excessive noise and talking should also be kept to a minimum whilst the meeting is in progress in order that the scheduled business may proceed as planned.***

### **Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering**

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

## **What is Overview & Scrutiny?**

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny sub-committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

The sub-committees have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns to the public.

The sub-committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations. These are considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and if approved, submitted for a response to Council, Cabinet and other relevant bodies.

Sub-Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research or undertaking site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Sub-Committee that created it and will often suggest recommendations for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to pass to the Council's Executive.

## **Terms of Reference**

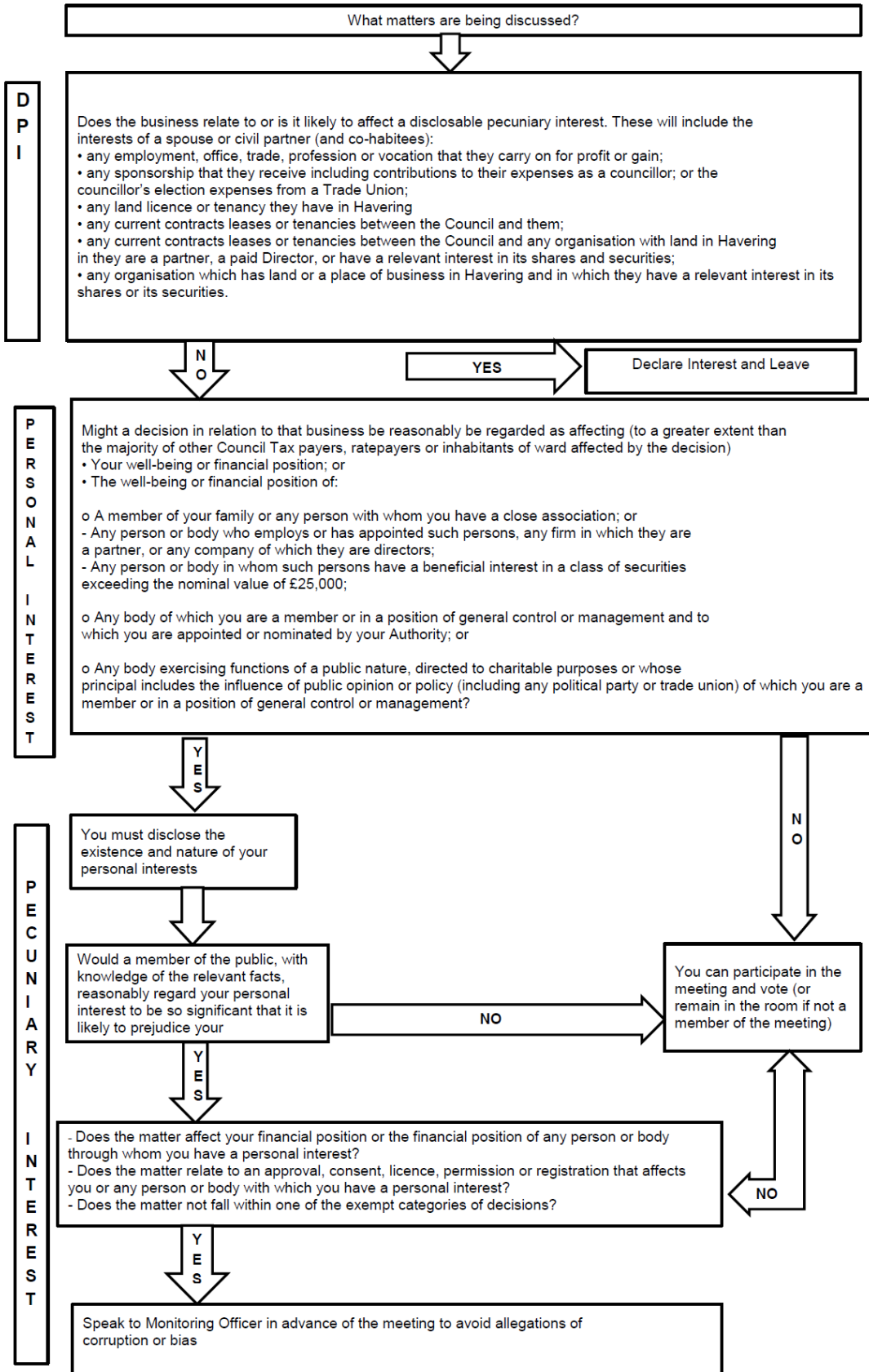
The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Housing & Accommodation Services
- Land & Property Services
- Planning
- Building Control
- Business Services
- Inward Investment
- Asset Management
- Property Services
- Facilities Management
- Sports

## **Place Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee, 3 February 2025**

- Leisure
- Arts
- Music
- Libraries
- Heritage
- Parks & Open Space
- Highways
- Parking & Traffic
- Waste & Recycling
- Climate Change
- Transport & Infrastructure
- Public Protection & Licensing
- Emergency Planning
- Technical Services

**DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF**



## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Receive (if any)

### **3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Members are invited to disclose any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

### **4 LIBRARY CONSULTATION (Pages 7 - 234)**

Report attached for predecision scrutiny.

**Zena Smith  
Head of Committee and  
Election Services**



<b>CABINET</b>	5 February 2025
<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Libraries Consultation
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Ford
<b>ELT Lead:</b>	Patrick Odling-Smee
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Guy Selfe, 01708 433866, guy.selfe@havering.gov.uk
<b>Policy context:</b>	People – things that matter for residents
<b>Financial summary:</b>	The draft Library Strategy 2024-2029, upon which the library consultation was based, included a financial saving on the libraries budget of £300k. The recommendations in this report will achieve close to that saving, of £288k annually.
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	Yes  (a) Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more (b) Significant effect on two or more Wards
<b>When should this matter be reviewed?</b>	March 2026
<b>Reviewing OSC:</b>	Place

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy X

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

## **SUMMARY**

The Council's budget setting exercise for 2023-24 included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council's library service by £300,000 over two years. This prompted the production of a Library Strategy that would set out how the library service would function in the next few years.

This report seeks approval of the Library Strategy.

Amongst other things, the Library Strategy provided for the potential closure of 4 out of 5 branch libraries.

The report considers the outcome of the consultation on the draft Library Strategy that sought views of stakeholders on the Strategy and on the option for the Council to close up to four branch libraries.

Following careful analysis of all the responses received during the consultation including the public survey, stakeholder feedback, petitions and correspondence received, the condition of the libraries, the Council's ability to invest capital, and the Council funding gap it is considered that Council funding for three branch libraries should cease. This will result in the consequential loss of service of three branch libraries that are recommended to close on 31 March 2025 and achieve an annual saving of £288k.

This report also considers a number of options to mitigate the impact of the decision.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Cabinet

1. Considers and notes the results of the Library Strategy consultation;
2. Approves and adopts the Library Strategy 2024-29 (as attached to this report);
3. Agrees the closure of three branch libraries from 1 April 2025 as set out in this report;
4. Agrees that the three branch libraries are mothballed from 1 April 2025 and delegates to the Strategic Director of Place the authority to use the branch library buildings for any appropriate meanwhile use, provided that any proposals for the disposal or long term use of the branch libraries be brought to a future Cabinet meeting;
5. Agree that the mitigating actions in section 5 are progressed;



6. Agree that the budget for book stock is continued as set out in this report.

<b>REPORT DETAIL</b>
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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility (a duty set out by law) to provide a local library service in accordance with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Act requires each local authority to provide a library service that is “comprehensive and efficient for those that live, work or study in the area”. It is for local decision how the library service best meets this requirement practically, including how many libraries there are, where they are, when they are open and what each one offers.
- 1.2 The guidance document ‘Libraries as a Statutory Service’, taken from the Judicial Review brought against the agreed changes by Lincolnshire Council to its library service contains the following: ‘A comprehensive service cannot mean that every resident lives close to a library. This has never been the case. Comprehensive has therefore been taken to mean delivering a service that is accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies. An efficient service must make the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, recognising the constraints on council resources. Decisions about the service must be embedded within a clear strategic framework which draws upon evidence about needs and aspirations across the diverse communities of the borough’.
- 1.3 The Council’s current statutory library provision consists of ten library sites, together with the Home Library service, the local studies library and a digital and online library.
- 1.4 Against a backdrop of continuing significant financial pressures for the Council, which included the need to request exceptional financial support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in order to set a balanced budget for the financial year 2024/25, the budget included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council’s library service by £300,000 over two years. The library service accordingly developed a draft library strategy which included a set of proposals to close a number of libraries in order to deliver that saving.
- 1.5 The evidence of need to apply for a capitalisation direction from the Government includes a thorough scrutiny of budget making decisions. The Council must demonstrate to the Government it is doing everything in its control to reduce costs and to deliver savings. Without making these difficult decisions, a request for a capitalisation direction may not be successful which could put further services at risk.

1.6 The draft strategy attached at Appendix A comprised:

- The proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the service by means to closing up to four of the five “branch” libraries (Collier Row, Elm Park, Gidea Park, Harold Wood, South Hornchurch);
- Proposals to reduce the service’s book stock budget by 61% (£161,000) in 2024/25 and £30,000 (from the 2023/24 base) in both 2025/26 and 2026/27;
- A detailed needs and usage assessment which was used to develop the proposals;
- A refreshed vision and strategic priorities to underpin the statutory service in coming years;
- Proposals to develop an investment business case seeking capital funding to improve the quality of the library estate;
- Proposals seeking views on whether a purpose-designed children’s library – either at a fixed site or as a mobile provision – could better meet library need in the future.

1.7 An extensive twelve week consultation on the draft library strategy began on 10 May 2024 and ended on 2 August 2024. Details are set out in section 2 below.

1.8 As part of any consultation on library closures, the Council is obliged to consider any implications arising from the Equality Act 2010. The Council has an equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve objectives set in the Act to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.9 Conclusions drawn from the consultation process are included below.

## **2 Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029 Consultation**

2.1 The consultation on the draft library strategy began on 10 May 2024 and ended on 2 August 2024. The consultation included:

- Online consultation on the draft strategy via the Council’s *CitizenSpace* portal;
- Hard copy paper version of the above, copies of which were made available at all libraries in the borough (hard copy consultations were subsequently manually entered on to the electronic portal);

- A series of 15 public meetings that were well attended were held across the entire library estate;
  - “SHOUT about Libraries”, a version of the consultation designed for children and young people. The SHOUT consultation commenced in mid-July 2024 and closed in September 2024.
- 2.2 Petitions regarding library closures were submitted at full council. These include the below that are signed by Havering residents as well as people from further afield.
- Harold Wood Library – Councillor Darren Wise - 2036 signatures
  - Gidea Park Library – Councillor Darren Wise – 96 signatures
  - Libraries (Trades Union Council) – Councillor Mandy Anderson – 22 signatures
  - Gidea Park Library – Councillor David Taylor 570 signatures
  - Green Party – 2 signatures
- 2.3 The Havering Council Libraries Consultation gathered insights from 3,399 respondents, and the SHOUT survey aimed at primary and secondary pupils gathered insights from 1,214 residents regarding the usage, importance, and impact of potential closure of libraries within the borough.
- 2.4 There were fifteen public consultation events with at least one being held at each library in Havering.
- 2.5 Any consultation is only informed by those who choose to take part. Although the council considers that it did take active steps to promote the consultation and exhort residents to respond, and taking into account that the volume of response was one of the largest responses in recent council history, the large majority of residents, and in particular non-library users (but residents whose council tax still contributes to library services) chose not to respond. The Council did seek to engage with non-users of the library service through regular publicity regarding the consultation including articles in the Living publication delivered by email to over 60,000 residents in the borough. Just over 6% of respondents to the survey were not library members with a further 2% not sure if they were a library member.

## **Headlines**

- 2.6 The Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029 consultation report is attached as Appendix B. Whilst all of the report should be considered when taking a decision, certain responses are worthy of highlighting here.
- 2.7 The Library Strategy vision is;

‘A service where education, information and inspiration is available for free to all. We exist to cultivate a community of lifelong learners, serves as welcoming sanctuary for people of all ages and empowers our communities with the tools

they need to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Together, we build bridges between the past and the future, residents new and old, fostering a shared journey of discovery, enlightenment, and community growth.'

- 2.8 The vision is supported by three strategic priorities;
- (a) Libraries to shape young lives
  - (b) Libraries to bring communities together
  - (c) Libraries to enjoy
- 2.9 The vast majority of consultation responses from the main survey – more than 90% of all responses received – came from residents who declared that they are current library members. Almost two thirds of responses (63%) came from residents whose declared “main local library” was one of the five libraries proposed for consideration of closure.
- 2.10 Two thirds of responses endorsed the service’s proposed refreshed vision, with 20% disagreeing. Library members provided valuable evidence on the activities they enjoy and pursue in libraries and on what other services libraries could provide. Despite the broad range of services that libraries provide, books are still the bedrock of the service and remain as the most frequently used service at a library.
- 2.11 More community programmes and events (59%) more digital and online resources (26%), job search assistance (24%) and enhanced language learning resources (21%) were cited by respondents as events or activities they wanted to see more of in libraries.
- 2.12 The vast majority of responses (more than 82%) declared that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal to close four of the five branch libraries. Just under 10% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the proposals and 7% told us they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals.
- 2.13 The draft strategy identified that those whose means of access to the library is currently on foot (with a particular focus on the elderly, disabled people, parents and children) were likely to be negatively impacted by library closures as proposed. In the consultation we asked a number of questions to develop evidence on transport options.
- 2.14 A large majority of respondents, more than 76% of all responses received, told us that their usual mode of travel to the library was on foot. 29% told us they travel usually by car and 20% by bus or train.
- 2.15 More than 58% of respondents told us they were somewhat or very reliant on public transport if they had to access another library in the event of their local site closing. 59% told us they had some or significant concerns about the reliability or availability of local transport options for accessing alternative libraries.

2.16 The qualitative data received during the consultation, either via free text boxes in the consultation or at public meetings, echoed these concerns. We heard very clearly from a large number of residents, particularly older residents, who travel on a limited basis in the borough and usually visit only familiar places – shopping districts, restaurants, supermarkets etc. Some residents told us that they would not be able to visit a different library if their nearest one was to close, while others told us that crossing major arterial routes (such as the A12 to reach Harold Hill library in the event of Harold Wood closing) would be a significant barrier.

### **SHOUT survey**

2.17 The SHOUT survey of primary and secondary aged children and young people, attached at Appendix C, received 1,214 responses. The majority of respondents, 76.6% were in primary schools years 1-6, whilst 22% were in secondary school years 7-13. A small percentage did not answer this question.

2.18 On frequency of visits to a library, 11.2% visited a library more than once a week, 21.7% visited once a week, 28.7% once a month and 38.4% less often than once a month.

2.19 When asked which is their local library, just over half of respondents at 52.7% cited one of the branches listed in the draft library strategy as one that might close. 7.5% of respondents stated they did not know which their local library was with the remainder citing one of the larger main libraries.

2.20 Respondents were asked what are some of the things you would feel or experience if your local library closed. The largest response of 70.3% stated they would not be able to borrow books anymore. 47.7% said they would not have anywhere quiet to go and 39.3% would miss going to library events or activities. 31.8% said they would use their school library, 26.7% said they would not have somewhere to go after school and 14.7% would not have access to computers or technology.

2.21 When asked if they would be able to visit another branch library if their branch was to close, 41.8% said they could not go by themselves, 40.8% said the other library is too far away and 38.6% said travelling to another library would be difficult. 30.7% said they could visit another library.

2.22 A further question about the impact felt if their local library closed resulted with 30.9% saying it would make things difficult for them, 30.2% said it would make life worse. 22.3% said it would be ok, with 16.6% saying it would not affect them at all.

### **Equalities**

2.23 More than 70% of respondents answered one or more equalities question in the consultation. From this data, we can understand that there is no outlier in

the age range of respondents, which reflects a service used regularly by a broad cross-section of residents. The age range with the largest volume of responses – 19%, was from those who told us they are between 35 and 44 years of age. Respondents aged 65-74 (14%), 55-64 and 45-64 (both 13%) were next highest in volume. Residents aged 75 and over (7%) and 25-34 (6%) followed, with just 1.5% of responses coming from those who told us they were aged up to 24. 22% of responses either did not answer the question or selected that they preferred not to say.

- 2.24 Nearly 25% of respondents did not tell us their gender. 57% of responses came from people who told us they are female and 18% from people who told us they are male.
- 2.25 More than 2,500 responses were received from residents who told us whether or not they have a disability, impairment or health condition. Of that figure, 19% told us they do have a disability, impairment or health condition. Declaration of a long-term illness or health condition accounted for most responses (7%), followed by sensory disability or impairment (5%), mental health condition (4%) and physical impairment or disability (4%).
- 2.26 A significant majority of respondents (nearly 75% of responses received) told us they were concerned or significantly concerned about the availability of alternative accommodations or services for individuals with disabilities if the library were to close. More than 750 responses (23%) were received telling us that the closure of a nearest library impact would impact or significantly impact ability to access other libraries due to a disability.

### **3 Proposed Library Closures**

3.1 As set out above, a permanent £300k saving on the libraries revenue budget over a two year period was agreed by the Council in its 2023-24 budget. That can only be realistically achieved by reducing the number of libraries. Section 8 of this report provides consideration of options other than closure. The draft Havering Library Strategy 2024-29 included proposals to close up to four out of the five branch libraries. The branches put forward were:

- Collier Row
- Elm Park
- Gidea Park
- Harold Wood
- South Hornchurch

3.2 The branch libraries were initially earmarked for potential closure as these five branches account for less than a quarter of library visits across the existing ten libraries, with more than three quarters of all visits, book issues and the vast majority of IT and WiFi use occurring at the current five main libraries.

- 3.3 The condition of the library estate requires significant investment in order to maintain the current condition.
- 3.4 The consultation proposed the potential closure of up to four branch libraries, in order to meet the required budget saving. However, the Council is mindful of the importance of local libraries, as evidenced within the consultation, the petitions received by the Council and the equalities assessment. As such, after careful consideration, it is recommended that only three branch libraries should close instead of four as stated as a maximum in the draft Library Strategy 2024-2025 consultation.
- 3.5 There would then be seven libraries remaining in Havering mitigating some of the impact of losing three branches. The remaining seven libraries account for 80.1% of all visits to the existing ten libraries in 2023/24 and 84% of all book issues in 2023/24. The financial impact of closing three branches instead of four is covered in the financial implications and risks section of this report.
- 3.6 Whilst proposing which branches to close is not easy, the rationale is explained below along with the likely impacts of the decision to close the three branch libraries recommended. A full needs assessment that considers all the libraries in Havering is included within the draft Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029 at Appendix A. The decision making criteria adopted by the Council seeks an objective basis by reference to the available data, as informed by the needs assessment.
- 3.7 The three branches recommended to close are:
- Gidea Park
  - Harold Wood
  - South Hornchurch
- 3.8 The table below highlights the factors considered when recommending closures and risks for each branch recommended for closure that decision makers need to be aware of when considering the recommendations of this report. The data presented is drawn from the borough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023 and 2021 Census data;

<b>Gidea Park Library</b>	
<b>Factors Considered when Recommending Closure</b>	<b>Risks</b>
Closure would contribute £87k towards the budgeted library service saving of £300k.	Gidea Park library is deemed to serve the following areas: Squirrel's Heath, Marshalls and Rise Park, St Edwards, St Albans and Emerson Park. Other branches are also deemed to serve these areas, for example St Edwards is
Closure would prevent the need for capital investment required of £200k+ as identified in a non-intrusive, visual inspection only condition survey. This	

<p>sum is expected to be higher if a full intrusive condition survey were carried out to include mechanical and electrical.</p>	<p>also served by Romford library. The data below is in comparison to other areas in Havering that are in the highest third indices. Considerations to inform decision makers when considering closure of Gidea Park library are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Households where no member has English as main language – England average is 5% - St Edwards 8.3%, St Albans 11.1%</li><li>• Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - St Edwards 4.8%,</li><li>• Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - St Edwards 35.9%, St Albans 31.9%</li><li>• Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – St Albans 15.2%</li><li>• Community safety (crime rate) – England average 88.2 – St Edwards 232.9, St Albans 74.0</li><li>• Children (% of population made up of children aged 0-15) – England average 18.6% - St Edwards 19.4%, Squirrels Heath 19.1%, St Albans 21.3%,</li><li>• Older people (% of population aged 65+) – England average 18.4% - Marshalls and Rise Park 23%, Emerson Park 24.9%</li><li>• AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health related environment) – England average 23.2 – Marshalls and Rise Park 24.9, St</li></ul>
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	Edwards 31.2, St Albans 33.8
In terms of visits to libraries in 2023/24, Gidea Park with 37,000 visits is the third lowest number of visits across ten branches in Havering.	
The next nearest library, Hornchurch, is 1.4 miles away and Romford is 1.5 miles away. Travel time from Gidea Park library to Hornchurch library is approximately five minutes by car, eleven minutes by bus and a 27 minute walk. These times are only a guide as local conditions might affect the time taken.	

<b>Harold Wood Library</b>	
<b>Factors Considered when Recommending Closure</b>	<b>Risks</b>
Closure would contribute £101k towards the budgeted library service saving of £300k.	<p>Harold Wood library is deemed to serve the following areas: Gooshays, Heaton, Harold Wood and Cranham. Other branches are also deemed to serve these areas, for example Gooshays is also served by Harold Hill library. The data below is in comparison to other areas in Havering that are in the highest third indices. Considerations to inform decision makers when considering closure of Harold Wood library are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment (% of residents 16+ with no qualifications – England average 18.1% - Gooshays 24%, Heaton 24.9%;</li> <li>• Households where no member has English as main language – England average</li> </ul>
Closure would prevent the need for capital investment required of £140k+ as identified in a non-intrusive, visual inspection only condition survey. This sum is expected to be higher if a full intrusive condition survey were carried out to include mechanical and electrical.	

	<p>is 5% - Gooshays 5.1%, Heaton 6.3%;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - Gooshays 6.1%, Heaton 6.3%;</li><li>• Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - Gooshays 26.9%, Heaton 29.6%;</li><li>• Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – Gooshays 20.1%, Heaton 20.3%;</li><li>• Disability (disabled under Equality Act) – England Average 17.3% - Gooshays 17%, Heaton 17.8%</li><li>• Community safety (crime rate) – England average 88.2 – Gooshays 66.7, Heaton 101.3;</li><li>• Children (% of population made up of children aged 0-15) – England average 18.6% - Gooshays 24%, Heaton 24.6%, Harold Wood 21.3%, Cranham 18.8%;</li><li>• Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty – England average 19.5% - Gooshays 20.5%, Heaton 21.4%;</li><li>• Older people (% of population aged 65+) – England average 18.4% - Cranham 22.9%</li><li>• AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health related environment) – England average 23.2 – Gooshays 24.9, Heaton 29.8;</li><li>• Community needs rank (data analysing the social and</li></ul>
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	cultural factors that can impact upon peoples outcomes) – England average 16,998 – Gooshays 2,021, Heaton 3,366.
In terms of visits to libraries in 2023/24, Harold Wood with 30,000 visits is the second lowest number of visits across ten branches in Havering.	The A12 was considered a barrier to accessing Harold Hill library from Harold Wood and was raised during the consultation as a key factor in some residents not using Harold Hill library as an alternative.
The next nearest library, Harold Hill, is 1.4 miles away. Travel time from Harold Wood library to Harold Hill library is approximately five minutes by car, sixteen minutes by bus and a 25 minute walk. These times are only a guide as local conditions might affect the time taken.	

<b>South Hornchurch Library</b>	
<b>Factors Considered when Recommending Closure</b>	<b>Risks</b>
Closure would contribute £100k towards the budgeted library service saving of £300k.	<p>South Hornchurch library is deemed to serve the following areas: South Hornchurch, Beam Park, Rainham and Wennington. Rainham branch is also deemed to serve these areas. The data below is in comparison to other areas in Havering that are in the highest third indices. Considerations to inform decision makers when considering closure of South Hornchurch library are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment (% of residents 16+ with no qualifications – England average 18.1% - Beam Park 21.8%, Rainham and Wennington 23.4%;</li> <li>• Households where no member has English as main language – England average</li> </ul>
Closure would prevent the need for capital investment required of £75k+ as identified in a non-intrusive, visual inspection only condition survey. This sum is expected to be higher if a full intrusive condition survey were carried out to include mechanical and electrical.	

	<p>is 5% - Beam Park 5.8%, Rainham and Wennington 5.5%;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - South Hornchurch 5.2%, Beam Park 7.5%, Rainham and Wennington 4.7%;</li><li>• Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - Beam Park 27.3%;</li><li>• Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – South Hornchurch 15.4%, Beam Park 18.1%, Rainham and Wennington 16.4%;</li><li>• Disability (disabled under Equality Act) – England Average 17.3% - Beam Park 15.6%;</li><li>• Community safety (crime rate) – England average 88.2 – South Hornchurch 65.1;</li><li>• Children (% of population made up of children aged 0-15) – England average 18.6% - South Hornchurch 20.7%, Beam Park 24.1%, Rainham and Wennington 20.2%;</li><li>• Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty – England average 19.5% - Beam Park 22.5%;</li><li>• AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health related environment) – England average 23.2 – South Hornchurch 31.2, Beam Park 32.2, Rainham and Wennington 28.5;</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community needs rank (data analysing the social and cultural factors that can impact upon peoples outcomes) – England average 16,998 – Beam Park 10,409, Rainham and Wennington 13,934.</li> </ul>
<p>In terms of visits to libraries in 2023/24, South Hornchurch with 19,000 visits is the lowest number of visits across ten branches in Havering.</p>	
<p>The next nearest library, Rainham, is 1.1 miles away. Travel time from South Hornchurch library to Rainham library is approximately four minutes by car, six minutes by bus and a 22 minute walk. These times are only a guide as local conditions might affect the time taken.</p>	

3.9 It is considered relevant to highlight that some residents currently have as far, or further to travel with the existing ten branches than residents that will have to travel to an alternative branch if the recommendations of this report are agreed. Examples of this are included below:

<b>Area</b>	<b>Car</b>	<b>Bus</b>	<b>Walk</b>
Bridport Avenue to Romford Library – 1.7 miles	5 minutes	13 minutes	29 minutes
Clay Tye Road to Upminster Library – 2.9 miles	7 minutes	15 minutes	54 minutes
Laburnham Gardens to Upminster Library – 1.9 miles	6 minutes	24 minutes	37 minutes

3.10 Local Insight estimates that there are 285,744 people currently living within 1.5 miles of a Havering library. Proposed closures of Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch libraries would mean that there would be an estimated 272,165 people living within a 1.5mile radius of a Havering library. This is a reduction of 4.8%. Please note that the Havering population is 262,057 (populations from neighbouring local authorities are also within 1.5mile radius of LBH libraries).

3.11 For the two branches not being recommended for closure, Collier Row and Elm Park, the following reasons are included for consideration:

- (a) Collier Row has slightly more visits in 2023/24 than the three branches recommended for closure;
- (b) Collier Row is also the most remote library from any other library in the borough with further distance and travel times to other branches if it were to close;
- (c) Elm Park has the highest number of visits, 44,000 in 2023/24 of all of the smaller five branch libraries.
- (d) The condition of Elm Park, being the newest of the five smaller branch libraries, is the best and requires significantly less investment than others.

3.12 The following table summarises against a number of considerations for the five branches considered for closure.

**Ranking scoring:**

**Saving** – Highest saving scores 5, lowest saving scores 1

**Investment required** – Highest investment required scores 5, lowest investment required scores 1

**Visitor Numbers** – Lowest visitor numbers scores 5, highest visitor numbers scores 1

**Distance to nearest branch** – Nearest distance scores 5, furthest distance scores 1

	Saving	Investment Required	Visitor no.	Distance to next nearest branch	Ranking Total
Gidea Park	£87k	£200k	37,000	1.4 miles	
Gidea Park Ranking	1	4	3	3.5	<b>11.5</b>
Harold Wood	£101k	£140k	30,000	1.4 miles	
Harold Wood Ranking	4	3	4	3.5	<b>14.5</b>
South Hornchurch	£100k	£75k	19,000	1.1 miles	
South Hornchurch Ranking	3	2	5	5	<b>15</b>
Collier Row	£90k	£300k	38,000	2.2 miles	
Collier Row Ranking	2	5	2	1	<b>10</b>
Elm Park	£110k	£15k	45,000	1.8 miles	

Elm Park Ranking	5	1	1	2	9
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3.13 Using the ranking system above provides the rationale for recommending the three branches for closure – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch.

3.14 Human resource implications arising from three branch library closures will result in 15 posts that will be affected and deleted. Of the 15 posts, 7 are filled by employees on permanent contracts, 8 are filled by employees on fixed term contracts, there are no agency workers and no vacancies. Subject to the recommendations in this report being agreed, the permanent employees will be relocated to vacant posts in other libraries and all those on fixed term contracts will have their contracts ended, then pooled together to apply for vacant permanent posts elsewhere in the library structure under the Council's Redeployment policy. Whilst technically there might be some 'redundancies' resulting from more fixed term contract employees than appropriate vacancies available in the structure, this is not expected to result in any redundancy payments being made.

3.15 Following the library consultation, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing wrote to the Government's Minister for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism, despite receiving a response, they could not provide any commitment to providing funding that could prevent library closures.

### **Needs Assessment Conclusions**

3.16 The needs assessment, assessing multiple factors, demonstrates a broad need for libraries across the borough. Every area has some level of need for a library and that with limited resources, difficult decisions need to be made about where the Council spends its resources. The following conclusions have been identified from the needs assessment:

- (a) The five main libraries (Harold Hill, Hornchurch, Romford, Upminster and Rainham) serve three quarters of all visits and issues, the vast majority of Wifi access and IT use and are easily accessible for the vast majority of the borough by public transport;
- (b) These main libraries serve catchment areas which include large and growing numbers of children aged 0-15 as well as growing populations of adults aged over 60. They are also in general the libraries in the best condition (although it should be noted that Hornchurch Library in particular will require significant investment within the next five years in order to maintain its operation);
- (c) There is therefore a strong evidence, based on the needs assessment and other factors, for the retention of these five main libraries as part of the future delivery model.

3.15 The impact of closing three branch libraries would be:

- (a) The total provision of statutory library services in the borough would reduce from 370 hours to 298 hours per week, a reduction of 19.5%;
- (b) More residents live further away from their nearest library and journeys that were able to be made on foot would now only be achievable mostly by using public transport, car or bicycle;
- (c) Some areas experiencing high levels of deprivation and/or serving large and growing populations of children or older adults would lose a nearby library. This could mean that children are unable to access libraries and the library offer at key points in the year. One potential impact could be uptake of the summer reading challenge and it is feasible that such a reduction in service could have a longer-term impact on educational attainment and adult literacy;
- (d) Concentrating the service on a provision of seven fixed sites is likely to make more effective use of capital funding when available to adequately maintain the library estate and make future improvements to condition and look and feel at each site.

3.16 The Council's proposed statutory library provision with the recommended changes consists of seven library sites together with the Home Library service, the local studies library and the digital online library. This revised provision is considered to mean that the Council will continue to meet its statutory duty.

#### **4 A Children's Library for Havering?**

- 4.1 The consultation provided for early engagement with library users in the larger survey on a proposal to explore whether a purpose-designed Children's Library – either at a fixed site in the borough or as a mobile service – could contribute to service development and respond to demographic change in future years. The draft strategy was clear that any development would require growth and was not proposed at the expense of the loss of any current library site.
- 4.2 In consultation, respondents gave mixed views on the proposal. 32% of responses told us they were likely or very likely to use such a facility and gave feedback on the range of facilities such a library could contain. There was a particularly strong response from those indicating that such a facility should contain opportunities to develop more activities and materials for children with special educational needs and disabilities. The proposal was however, as could be expected, overshadowed by the consultation on library closures. Many attendees of meetings told us they would prefer children's sections of libraries to be improved rather than a new library to be commissioned. There was no consensus on what form that library should take either – some residents accepted that a mobile library for children could mitigate anticipated reductions in classroom visits to local libraries in the event of closures, while others questioned whether a mobile provision could replace a building. The geography of the borough, one based on localities rather than an



acknowledged centre, was cited by those who did not feel a fixed site library to be workable.

- 4.3 The SHOUT survey also included questions on the provision of a children's library. When asked would you prefer a new library for young people or to improve your current library, 60% said they would improve their current library. Only just under a quarter of responses said they would prefer a children's library.
- 4.4 Given the consultation responses it is not proposed to consider further a children's library, however, in any future plans and investment, consideration is recommended to be given to improving the children and young people's sections of existing libraries. Further consultation will be required to seek the views of children and young people on what they would like to see as improvements.

## **5 Mitigating Actions**

- 5.1 Action to mitigate the closure of three branch libraries if the recommendations of this report are agreed include the following;
- (a) The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as information for nearby car parks and disabled car parking spaces. Available car parking at libraries will be assessed to ensure that parking is available for those who need it most;
  - (b) We will work with partners to support provision of information on active and alternative travel;
  - (c) Digital support will be targeted at those who most need it, including older people, users with a disability;
  - (d) Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed;
  - (e) Familiarisation visits to other libraries will be offered to older people and families with young children;
  - (f) Further work will be carried out to expand the number of library volunteers able to meet increased housebound delivery demand. As part of this service, we will promote more the use of the Family and Carers Card, enabling cardholders to select and issue stock on behalf of housebound users;
  - (g) Provide an outreach offer targeting schools and community settings which serve communities affected by library closures;
  - (h) For the affected schools, encourage the adoption of the Teachers Card, which enables bulk stock issue with an extended borrowing period;
  - (i) The service will prioritise promoting activities and initiatives, such as the Summer Reading programme and online events like author sessions, to encourage participation. The service will collaborate with affected schools to provide book stock from the closed libraries that will not be relocated to alternative locations;

- (j) Seek locations for a book swap service for communities where branch libraries have closed;
- (k) Consider ways of providing more flexible space in libraries, such as using unbooked meeting room space as study space in busy periods such as examination season;
- (l) Explore capital-funding opportunities to invest in the remaining libraries.

5.2 Of the three proposed closures, detailed work and active discussions continue to take place around the re-provision of a library service in Harold Wood and the possibility of an enhanced community offer in South Hornchurch subject to the schemes being financially viable. Work is also taking place looking at alternative locations for non-library support activities and groups that would be displaced as part of any closures.

## **6. Pre and Post Decision Position**

6.1 Should the recommendations of this report be agreed, attached at Appendix D is the position of a statutory library service as set out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 both before and after the decision. The position after the decision is still considered to provide a statutory library service with the evidence provided through the needs assessment, the public consultation and then reflected within the content of this report.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 It should be noted that the Council does not wish to reduce library provision at all. However, the financial difficulties facing the Council make it imperative to make difficult choices.
- 7.2 The initial proposal was to close up to 4 of the 5 branch libraries. However, after reviewing the consultation responses, equalities information and the other information provided in this report, it is recommended that only 3 branch libraries close, rather than 4. This seeks to balance the Council's legal obligation to set a balanced budget and its responsibilities to the Borough.
- 7.3 When considering the decision as to whether to close three branch libraries, Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, as well as the consultation response and needs assessment, the following are recommended to be taken into account.
- 7.4 Budget – there is a £300k saving budgeted within the libraries budget that cannot be met by other means than closing three branches. Even with closing three branches, the revenue saving is £288k so just falls short of the budgeted saving.
- 7.5 Capital – the capital required to invest in ten branch libraries is not available due to the ongoing financial situation for the Council. Whilst it will still be

incredibly challenging to provide capital even for seven libraries, it will absolutely not be possible for ten branches.

- 7.6 Usage – the three branch libraries recommended for closure have the lowest visitor number in 2023/24 of all ten libraries.

## REASONS AND OPTIONS

### **8. Reasons for the decision:**

- 8.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy includes a £300k budgeted saving for the library services budget - £150k for 2024/25 and a further £150k for 2025/2026. The overall financial position of the Council also influences the need to find these savings as all the decisions now required to do so are difficult and likely unpopular.
- 8.2 In order to achieve this saving, the only option considered viable and realistic, whilst still providing a statutory library service as set out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, is to close libraries. Whilst the saving with closing three branch libraries just falls short of the £300k required at £288k, the needs assessment and consultation responses have influenced the decision not to over achieve on the budget saving required by closing a fourth branch.

### **Other options considered:**

- 8.3 Do nothing – this is not an option as the budget saving is required to meet the Council's legal responsibility to set a balanced budget.
- 8.4 Achieve the required budget saving without closing three branches as recommended – the library service over the recent years has seen the budget reduced quite substantially. It is now at a position that to achieve the savings required, and to limit the capital investments required for the library branches, branch closures are the only realistic option. This option has been rejected.
- 8.5 Close fewer branch libraries i.e. close one or two libraries instead of three. This has been rejected as there would still be a sizable shortfall in the budgeted saving for libraries. However, it should be noted that the Council is proposing to close only 3 branch libraries, rather than 4.
- 8.6 The draft Havering Library Strategy 2024-2025 at Appendix A considers other library models, all of which have been rejected. These are:

(a) Community managed libraries – these run in one of two ways:

- Libraries are operated entirely by community groups or organisations in space not funded by the Council (although

- council owned space to lease may be available). These libraries would not form part of the statutory library service.
- Libraries run on a day to day basis by community groups or organisations. In order to remain part of the statutory service, the library would need to benefit from funding, support for infrastructure (buildings, IT connections) and professional librarian support.

The Council consulted in 2019 on proposals that would see some of the branch libraries transferred to become community managed if local appetite to do so could be evidenced. At that point, and at no point since then – has that local appetite been evidenced.

The draft Havering Library Strategy 2024-2025 included community groups or associations to express a desire and capacity during the consultation to take over the running of a branch library proposed for closure for consideration. No such expressions of interest were received.

(b) Contracted out library service

Some library services nationally are delivered on behalf of rather than directly by the Council. These services take a number of different forms, including contracted directly by private sector organisations, mutualised services (a service which was in the public sector, continues to deliver public services, and has a significant degree of employee control) or services run on behalf of Councils by charity partners on a contracted-out basis.

Desktop analysis has not identified that such a delivery model could guarantee statutory service delivery or delivery of library and broader council outcomes within the Council's current funding envelope.

(c) Replacement of branch libraries with a mobile library

This was rejected due to the set up and ongoing operational costs of a mobile library meaning the service was unlikely to deliver the required savings. In addition a mobile library is considered unlikely to adequately serve the geography and demographics of the borough, particularly that funding such a service may well impact on either opening hours elsewhere in the estate or other services such as the housebound service.

(d) Closure of no libraries but achieve required saving through reducing by half the opening hours in each library.

This option was not considered to be viable because it would result in a reduction of cumulative opening hours from 370 hours to 180 hours a

week. Also, such a reduction in opening hours would be unlikely to meet the Council's statutory obligations.

8.7 Within London alone there are six boroughs, including Havering, either proposing changes to library provision or having already closed branches. These are difficult decisions to take, but other boroughs, like Havering, are having to consider such decisions. Other areas outside of London are also considering and proposing changes to library provision, some 18 county or borough authorities.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

### Financial implications and risks:

The recommendation within this cabinet report to close three libraries across the borough would result in annual revenue savings of £288k per annum. The savings per library are broken down below, most of the saving is from staff costs and the remainder is the running costs of the premises.

Branch	£'s
South Hornchurch	100,000
Harold Wood	101,000
Gidea Park	87,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>288,000</b>

Against a backdrop of continuing significant financial pressures for the Council, which included the need to request exceptional financial support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in order to set a balanced budget for the financial year 2024/25. The budget included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council's library service by £300,000 over two years. £288k is the full year saving that is achievable from the closure of the three libraries, alternative options will need to be considered for the shortfall of £12k to be achieved.

The savings figure proposed include some assumptions. A full year of business rates savings have been assumed within the savings figure of £288k. Empty properties receive three months relief from business rates but if the libraries remain dormant then business rates will continue to be payable after the 3-month relief period which would mean the saving would be under achieved whilst the libraries are left dormant. The business rate element of the saving amounts to £23k for the full year and £17k including the 3-month relief.

The second assumption included within the savings figure is that the income from the nursery based at South Hornchurch will continue. South Hornchurch is one of the libraries that is in scope for closing and this site also leases space to a nursery

setting. The saving of £288k assumes that the nursery will continue to lease this space, and that the income is still forthcoming. The nursery setting currently holds a lease for the space they are renting but there is a risk at the end of the lease period that this income may not continue.

There is also a risk that if the sites remain empty, other costs could materialise such as security costs, hoarding, removals and service cap offs, this would also impact on the savings delivery. The estimated annual costs of retaining the dormant library sites are detailed below.

<b>Branch</b>	<b>£'s</b>
South Hornchurch	43,000
Harold Wood	43,000
Gidea Park	41,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>127,000</b>

The recommendation is that the three libraries will close on 31st March 2025 and therefore the full £288k saving will be able to be achieved in 2025/26, there is a risk that if the closing is delayed this will impact on the savings achievable in 2025/26, however dependent on how long the sites remain dormant determines how much of the above costs will be incurred. If the full amount of mothballing costs are incurred in 2025/26, the total amount of saving that could be achieved in 2025/26 is £161k. The costs below are estimates and could vary.

The saving can only be achieved in full when there are no longer any mothballing costs on the empty premises for a full financial year. Careful consideration needs to be given to the timing of the closing of the libraries in order for savings to be fully realised.

The libraries have had a visual condition survey which has identified that significant capital investment would be required in the buildings and therefore keeping the libraries would add additional pressure to the Council in the mid to long term. Closing the three libraries, would result in the avoidance of this capital investment and the reduction of revenue expenditure of £300k to Havering once the buildings are disposed of. For the three branches recommended for closure, the capital required to address the visual condition surveys is at least £415k. This does not take into consideration more extensive repairs and investment an intrusive condition survey might identify, including mechanical and electrical not included in the visual survey.

**Legal implications and risks:**

The Council has a statutory responsibility (a duty set out by law) to provide a local library service in accordance with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Act requires each local authority to provide a library service that is “comprehensive and efficient for those that live, work or study in the area”. It is for local decision

how the library service best meets this requirement practically, including how many libraries there are, where they are, when they are open and what each one offers.

There is no specific legislative process applicable to potential library closures. However, the Council needs to make an assessment as to whether it can provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service” where changes to the service (including closures) are planned. The Council is obliged to consult on the proposals before the Cabinet makes its final decision. Further, the Council will need to have regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty, potentially by way of an equality impact assessment. It appears that each of these considerations have been met.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

The recommendations contained within this report will be managed in accordance with the Council’s HR policies and procedures.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: ‘Protected characteristics’ are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An equalities impact assessment has been carried out and it is attached to this report at Appendix E.

**Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

The closure of three library branches will negatively impact the mental well-being and access to information of the users of those libraries who source information from those libraries and who spend a substantial amount of their time reading books and periodicals or accessing the internet with the support of staff. Although there are no statistics about the regular users of the three specific libraries, People with disability are more prevalent among the consultation responders (19%) than in the Havering population (15%). Nonetheless, the nearest remaining libraries are less than 1.5 miles away, and the three libraries proposed to be closed have lower

footfalls, so the implication will be lower than closing other libraries. Therefore, although the closure of those three libraries will negatively impact the well-being of the users, this option will have the least negative impact on health and well-being.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The proposed closure of three libraries will see a reduction in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions across the library estate.

However, the closure might impact sustainable transport options if the libraries were accessible by public transport or walking. This could lead to increased car usage across the borough if people need to travel further to access library services

To support the circular economy, we should consider reusing equipment and furniture from the closed library buildings rather than sending them to landfill.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None



# Havering Library Strategy 2024 - 2029

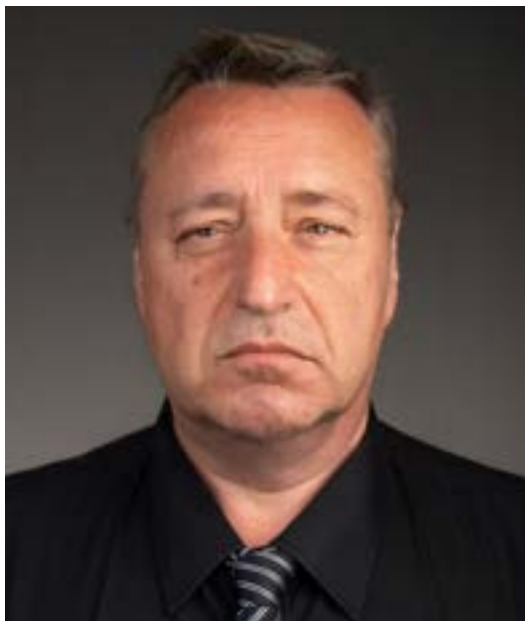


May 2024

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## Introduction – Cllr Paul Middleton



This library strategy, and the accompanying public consultation that will give us the evidence that helps us make decisions for the future, comes at an extremely difficult time for the borough. The funding we need to deliver all of our legal responsibilities – as well as those we don't have to provide but which residents want and need – is denied to us due to an unfair and outdated system.

Libraries are one of those legal responsibilities and this strategy proposes the very difficult decision of closing up to four of our current branch library sites, leaving us with six libraries in the borough. Doing so will save more than £300,000, a saving which has been part of the balanced Council budget that by law we have to set.

Although this is a very difficult choice to make, and one we know will have impacts, it is in our view an essential one for three reasons. The first is that the way people use our libraries has changed. More than 940,000 visits were made to our libraries in 2023/24, over three quarters of them at our five main libraries. More than 1 million items were issued and thousands of activity sessions – ranging from baby bounce to knit and natter, from IT sessions to the summer reading challenge– took place right across our library estate. We know that thousands of Havering residents value and cherish our libraries and we do too.

The second is that the condition of our library estate has declined and will do so further without intervention. And the third is that we need to consider how best to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service that meets residents' changing needs at a time of significantly reduced council funding.

This strategy seeks to build on the work that professional library staff are doing every day in Havering. It sets out a strategic vision for the service and priorities to ensure that libraries remain an intrinsic part of the fabric of our communities. While our proposals would if carried out reduce the number of libraries in the borough, the strategy will also kick-start the development of a business case to invest heavily in making sure the sites that remain see improvements to those buildings. And it will start the process to look at whether a children's library, with specialist library support for children with special educational needs, is viable.

Our libraries aren't just buildings that have books in them. They are places where people find inspiration, education and enjoyment. They are places that improve physical and mental health, help people become less lonely, provide free internet access and the help to use it and encourage participation in all facets of life in the borough. Trained library staff aren't people whose job it is to put books on shelves – they are people with empathy and knowledge who are there to help people achieve their aspirations.

It is in this spirit that this draft strategy is published. This strategy provides for a strong and sustainable service equipped to remain at the heart of our communities serving those in most need. Please do read this strategy and help us shape the future of libraries in Havering.

Councillor Paul Middleton

## Executive Summary

The Council's current statutory library provision consists of 10 library sites, together with the Home library service and the online library. This strategy proposes for consultation a reduction of sites from ten to six libraries. This is a reduction of 96 hours per week in service across the borough.

It is proposed that the service will continue to be delivered, on current opening hours, at:

- Harold Hill Library (50 hours per week)
- Hornchurch Library (50 hours per week)
- Rainham Library (50 hours per week)
- Romford (Central) Library (50 hours per week)
- Upminster Library (50 hours per week)
- One current branch library, site to be determined (24 hours per week)

It is therefore proposed that up to four of the remaining five branch libraries would close. These libraries placed at risk of closure in this draft strategy and consultation are:

- Collier Row Library
- Elm Park Library
- Gidea Park Library
- Harold Wood Library
- South Hornchurch Library

**Depending on a Cabinet decision to close specific sites, full-year recurrent savings would be in the region of between £334,613 and £350,855.**

The local studies library, online library and housebound delivery services would be unaffected by the proposals contained in this draft strategy.

The proposals and strategy have been informed by a needs assessment that concluded:

- More than three quarters of all visits and issues and the vast majority of IT and wifi use occur at the current five main libraries;
- The condition of the estate requires significant investment in order to maintain current condition. The council considers that obtaining such investment is not viable in the current funding climate;
- A library service of six sites will mean that the vast majority of the borough remains within a 20-30 minute journey by public transport of a nearby library;
- Some areas of deprivation and/or low educational attainment are likely to be negatively impacted by the closure of a branch library in their area;
- Some groups, particularly those with mobility issues, those living in difficult economic circumstances and children with disabilities and/or living in poverty are likely to be negatively impacted by the closure of a branch library in their area. For a small number of people it may result in them feeling excluded from the ability to visit and enjoy membership of a library.



It is proposed that Havering's Library Service Vision is:

*“A service where education, information and inspiration is available for free to all. We exist to cultivate a community of lifelong learners. Our service fosters literacy, nurtures creativity, supports local endeavours, serves as a welcoming sanctuary for people of all ages and empowers our communities with the tools they need to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Together, we build bridges between the past and the future, residents new and old, fostering a shared journey of discovery, enlightenment, and community growth.”*

The Strategy also provides for:

- Development of proof of concept and a business case for a new Havering Children's Library.
- Development of a business case for investment in improving the condition of the remaining library estate, including signage, furniture
- Library usage, demographic change and potential for new library services to inform the Council's ongoing work to ensure its buildings are future-proofed
- Libraries working to improve digital inclusion in the borough



## National and local context

### Our statutory duty

Havering Council has a statutory responsibility (a duty set out by law) to provide a local library service in accordance with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Act requires each local authority to provide a library service that is “comprehensive and efficient for those that live, work or study in the area”. It is for local decision how the library service best meets this requirement practically, including how many libraries there are, where they are, when they are open, and what each one offers.

The Council also has an equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set in the Act to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### The national context and supervision of public libraries in England

In England, public library services play a crucial role in fostering literacy, community engagement, and access to information. However, the landscape of these services is evolving amidst various national factors.

Firstly, funding challenges persist. Over the years, budget cuts have forced many local authorities to reduce library hours, staff, and resources. This has put pressure on the ability of libraries to provide diverse and comprehensive services to their communities.

Moreover, the digital age presents both opportunities and challenges. While online resources and digital platforms offer new ways to access information and engage with library services, they also highlight the need for libraries to adapt and modernize their offerings to remain relevant.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted library services, with temporary closures, restrictions, and a significant shift towards digital services. Library services have had to respond rapidly to changing local circumstances to ensure that post 2021 libraries remain relevant and used.

Despite these challenges, public libraries remain essential pillars of community life in England. They provide spaces for learning, creativity, and social interaction, forging a sense of belonging and supporting lifelong learning.

While books remain a cornerstone of library services, digital loans are gaining popularity alongside physical ones. Access to PCs has increased but use of libraries for traditional services like printing and copying are changing as the range of applications available to patrons on their own technology such as smartphones changes.

There are a number of national stakeholders who have power and influence over the way libraries are run; in particular, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), who have the power to intervene if a service is not meeting its legal requirements. Challenge can also come from the public through a judicial review.

DCMS suggest that when developing models, local authorities should ensure that library services:

- are shaped by local needs;
- meet legal requirements;
- focus on public benefit and deliver a high-quality user experience;
- make decisions informed by evidence, building on success;
- support delivery of consistent England-wide core offers;
- promote partnership working, innovation and enterprise; and
- use public funds effectively and efficiently

The DCMS Libraries Taskforce has produced a national strategy document for public libraries that sets out seven outcomes for libraries to deliver against:

- Cultural and creative enrichment
- Increased reading and literacy
- Improved digital access and literacy
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential
- Healthier and happier lives
- Greater prosperity
- Stronger, more resilient communities

Successful modern library services understand their role as part of the wider council vision and, working where necessary with partners, deliver a range of opportunities that respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of their local community.

To do this they:

- Recognise the ongoing importance of traditional library materials but also the key importance of digital enablement;
- Use the latest technology to support service delivery and increase access to services;
- Add value through links between libraries and other policy areas such as health and wellbeing, business and economic growth;
- Build the skills needed to help the library workforce deliver these priorities and to take on new roles as part of wider service provision; and
- Communicate the value of libraries, highlighting innovation and good ideas

## **Libraries in Havering – the local context**

### **Library performance**

The service performs well in comparison to similar library services. CIPFA's data on libraries shows that the Havering service measures low on cost and in the mid-range on visit numbers and lending. The service performs consistently well in the national Summer Reading Challenge.

Library footfall followed a national trend of decline by more than 25% from 2010 to the national closure at the start of the Covid pandemic. However, Havering's library service has been successful in building visitor numbers post-pandemic, adding more than 400,000 visits in the last two years.



### Visits to and issues at libraries in Havering

The service experienced a year-on-year increase of 33% in visitors between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Last year 940,602 visits were made to Havering's libraries. A total of 1.2m visits were made to Havering libraries in the full year before the pandemic, meaning the service has retained more than 78% of pre-pandemic visit numbers. While figures comparing retention rates of library services nationally are not published, it is believed that this figure represents a well-used and well-performing service.

Issue numbers have also increased in the last 2 years. In 2023/24 the service issued 979,431 items.

### The changing library estate

The library estate in Havering is among the service's highest risk areas. The newest buildings in the estate – Elm Park (2009), Rainham (2014) and Harold Hill (2016) provide a strong amenity mix with good-quality facilities in energy-efficient buildings. However, the rest of the estate is in generally poor condition and a number of buildings (Gidea Park, Harold Wood, Collier Row, South Hornchurch, Hornchurch) are either approaching the end of their natural life or are in need of significant improvement.

These deficiencies have been thrown in to stark relief during periods of bad weather. The service was forced to close a number of libraries in winter 2022 due to storm damage and also in the summer 2023 heatwave.

An initial condition survey was carried out on all library buildings in 2023. The survey set out that while a smaller number of buildings would need little more than general maintenance to remain operable, the estate in general is in poor condition, evidenced by instances of roof leaks, structural cracks, energy-inefficient buildings and flooring replacement.

The cost of remedying the issues set out in the below table – which would only serve to maintain rather than improve our libraries – is likely to be well over £1m in the next five years.



Library	General Condition	Key maintenance required in next 5-10 years
Collier Row – mid 1960s	Poor	Replacement of all window frames due to rotten timbers; Replace energy inefficient single glazed windows; Repair leaking guttering; Replace toilets in staff area due to asbestos; Redecorate throughout.
Elm Park – 2009	Good	Replacement of soiled carpet tiles; Replace leaking downpipe
Gidea Park – mid 1960s	Poor	Cracks in external structure; Roof requiring repair; Decoration required throughout directly including repair to water-damaged ceiling tiles.
Harold Hill – 2016	Good	Roof lights require full survey to check for water ingress; Full decoration recommended within 5-10 years; Survey and remedial work to check blocked drains and ensure system is functioning normally.
Harold Wood – 1960s	Poor	Replacement of energy-inefficient single-glazed windows; Leaking roof to be fully surveyed and repaired; cracks to external walls to be surveyed and repaired; Asbestos vinyl floor to be replaced; full redecoration throughout required directly.
Hornchurch – 1960s with 2007 extension	Average and declining	Single-glazed timber framed windows throughout are original to the building and need replacing directly; No insulation identified in condition survey; Full internal and external redecoration required directly; Fire safety compliance issues (insufficient compartmentalisation and fire stopping around flue ducting) to be remedied directly.
Upminster – 1960s	Average and declining	Leaking roof to be investigated and repaired; Damp to front external wall to be investigated and repaired; Full decoration internally required directly.
Rainham – 2014	Good	Full internal redecoration recommended within next 10 years.
Romford – 1965 refurbished in 2010	Average and declining	Extensive general maintenance to external facades; investigation and repair to multiple areas of water ingress in internal rooms; Renew all flooring within 5 years; General redecoration work.
South Hornchurch – 1960s	Average and declining	Ongoing checks to investigate compliance issues around glazing and glazed doors; cracks in external structure to be investigated; Full internal redecoration required within 5 years

## The 2019 Consultation and Community Hubs

The last significant review of Havering's library service came in 2019 with the publication of Front Doors To Sustainable Services. The consultation accompanying the publication aimed to identify opportunities to sustainably fund a library service for the borough following a zero-based budget review that had identified a budget shortfall in the order of £150,000.

Options to change opening hours and propose that the five "branch" libraries (Collier Row, Elm Park, Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch) would remain as part of the statutory library service but would be run and managed by community groups or associations if local appetite existed.

Following consultation, the Council's cabinet determined that no such appetite could be identified locally. The service subsequently secured budget growth to meet the annual budget shortfall.

The consultation also raised the concept of the creation of "community hubs" – defined as "local places at the heart of communities, offering and hosting a wide range of services, public events and activities, and spaces to meet friends and contribute to community life". Following the consultation two pilot hubs were created and are currently hosted at Harold Hill and Rainham libraries. The consultation assumes that these offers would continue.

The hubs' service offer is based on provision of information, advice and guidance on matters including housing, welfare, health and employment as well as a community food pantry offer. The food pantry offer in particular is fully utilised at both sites and is often over-subscribed.

## Looking to the future

In order that the library service can continue to develop in future, we think two factors are critical:

### 1. Condition and location of buildings

Satisfaction and popular usage of library buildings tend to depend on three factors – they are safe, comfortable and inviting.

While we are proud of the warm and professional service our library staff offer, the condition of the buildings we work from do not meet those standards. A smaller library estate will mean we are better able to maintain and develop the library estate to meet the needs of the borough as it changes, even taking into account the Council's current financial challenges.

This strategy and consultation proposes the development of a business case for capital investment in the remaining library estate, including the replacement of buildings which are no longer economically viable to maintain.

As the borough's population changes, we will need to ensure that the location of our libraries continues to reflect need.

Libraries thrive where people are. Successful libraries tend to be in areas with good local transport links, convenient pedestrian access and high street or other high-footfall locations. Although most of our library buildings fulfil these requirements, we will need to ensure they continue to do so in future.

We think this is particularly the case in the south of the borough, where one possible reason that library footfall is low at both Rainham and South Hornchurch libraries is that the development of housing to the West has stretched the catchment area of those libraries beyond reasonable bounds. In our work to look at the library and other public estate in the borough, we will look carefully at whether there needs to be further library development to serve population growth in the south of the borough in coming years.



## 2. The changing demographics of the borough and changing expectations of what people need in a library service

Havering has an increasingly diverse population. Historically and still one of the oldest populations in London, it now has the second largest growing youngest population in the UK and the highest in London, with an increase of 19.7% in those aged 0–14 years. We have also seen a 26.5% growth in 25–39 years.

Library usage is much more popular in groups of 0–19 years and over 60 years of age than other age groups. We think the changing demographics of the borough will lead to a continued increase in library use in coming years.

In particular, we think there is capacity for a continued and steep rise in demand from children and young people, and parents and carers, for library services. In order to meet this demand, we think there may be a case to develop proposals for a new library – a dedicated children’s library for Havering.

This strategy proposes the development of an options appraisal and business case for a new children’s library in the borough.

## Library vision



*“A service where education, information and inspiration is available for free to all. We exist to cultivate a community of lifelong learners. Our libraries build literacy, nurtures creativity, supports local endeavours, serves as a welcoming sanctuary for people of all ages and empowers our communities with the tools they need to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Together, we build bridges between the past and the future, residents new and old, fostering a shared journey of discovery, enlightenment, and community growth.”*

## Proposed Library Delivery Model

In order to deliver against the resourcing model provided to the library service in Havering, it is necessary to reduce the number of library buildings in use across the borough.

We propose the future delivery model for the statutory library service in Havering is:

- To reduce the number of library buildings in the borough by four, from ten libraries to six libraries. If implemented, this proposal will reduce the total cumulative weekly opening hours across the service from 370 hours per week to 274 hours per week. This would mean the closure of four of the borough's current five 'branch' libraries.
- The physical library service will operate from six sites (five open for 50 hours a week and one open for 24 hours a week), each holding a collection of physical book stock catering to a wide spectrum of interest. Free PC access, WiFi access and space for personal or school study will continue to be provided at all libraries and Havering Council basic customer service support is available at library front counters. A variety of meeting rooms and activity space will remain available for lease or partner use across the estate with commercial space available or already rented at Rainham, Upminster and Harold Hill
- Our Virtual Library offer will remain open access 24/7 to a wide range of online resources from dictionaries, art and music resources, driving and citizenship tests, encyclopaedias, study aids to family and local history resources, legal and business resources, online courses, foreign language courses, newspapers and magazine access, and access to e-books and audio books.
- The library service will continue to support Reader Development by developing and promoting library services to children, young people and adults, managing safeguarding across the service, and working with the branches to deliver our event programme. Also working closely with schools supporting literacy attainment via initiatives such as the Summer Reading scheme, Every Child a Member and class visits.
- A Housebound Service will continue to support people who are housebound either for a temporary period of time (i.e. coming out of hospital) or as an on-going service for people who meet the criteria.
- We will continue to offer opportunities for local people to volunteer for the service which can include delivering books to our housebound residents in addition to working onsite in a library.
- A Local Studies and Family History offer will continue to be based at Romford library will continue to provide access to local and family history collections, holding exhibitions and talks to the local community, and providing support for research. The Local Studies service collects, organises, maintains and makes accessible the permanent collection of books, maps, documents, illustrations, the archive of local authority minutes and other items relating to the London Borough of Havering in the Local Studies Library. It assists customers wishing to access information about the London Borough of Havering's history in the Local Studies Library with research appointments and an enquiry service.
- The library service will work across institutional boundaries to support and inspire the delivery of positive outcomes relating to health and wellbeing in Havering. In doing so it will seek to build partnerships with public, private and voluntary organisations.

## Other library delivery models considered and rejected

We have considered whether other options, delivery models or mitigations could be pursued as alternatives to our proposals.

### Community-managed libraries

Community-managed libraries run in two ways:

- Libraries are operated entirely by community groups or organisations in space not funded by Havering Council (although council-owned space to lease may be available). These libraries would not form part of the statutory library service.
- Libraries run on a day-to-day basis by community groups or organisations. In order to remain part of the statutory service, the library would need to benefit from funding, support for infrastructure (buildings, IT connections) and professional librarian support

Havering Council consulted in 2019 on proposals that would see some of the branch libraries transferred to become community-managed if local appetite to do so could be evidenced. At that point, and at no point since then – has that local appetite been evidenced.

Should community groups or associations express a desire and capacity during this consultation to take over the running of a branch library proposed for closure, Havering Council would give serious consideration and support to help make proposals viable and deliverable.

### Contracted-out library services

Some library services nationally are delivered on behalf of rather than directly by the Council. These services take a number of different forms, including contracted delivery by private sector organisations, mutualised services (a service which was in the public sector, continues to deliver public services, and has a significant degree of employee control) or services run on behalf of Councils by charity partners on a contracted-out basis.

We have not explored in detail any of these operating models for libraries because an initial desk-based assessment has not identified that they could guarantee statutory service delivery or delivery of library and broader council outcomes within the Council's current funding envelope.

If proposals emerge during the consultation that could be viable, we will give them due consideration.

### Other proposals for libraries in Havering

During options appraisal, we considered other options to deliver required savings within the context of a statutory library service.

These included:

- Replacement of branch libraries with a mobile library. This was rejected due to the set-up and ongoing operational costs of a mobile library meaning the service was unlikely to deliver required savings. In addition, a mobile library is considered unlikely to adequately serve the geography and demographics of the borough, particularly given that funding such a service may well impact on either opening hours elsewhere in the estate or other services such as the housebound service
- Closure of no libraries but achieving required savings through reducing by half opening hours in each library. This option was not considered to be viable because it would result in extremely inefficient use of ten buildings and would also result in a reduction of cumulative opening hours from 370 hours to 180 hours a week. Also, such a reduction in opening hours would be unlikely to meet the council's statutory obligations

# Havering Library Service Strategic Priorities 2024-2029





## Strategic Priority 1: Libraries to shape young lives

This strategic priority links to Havering Council's corporate plan 2024/25 priority: Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

The library service aims to enhance children's engagement through various initiatives such as facilitating easy access to local libraries, promoting membership, and collaborating with Early Years partners and schools. It focuses on literacy by emphasising Reading For Pleasure, conducting author events, and organizing creative writing competitions. The library offers diverse activities including Baby Bounce, Wiggle and Giggle sessions, Storytime, and the Summer Reading Challenge, while also prioritizing stock diversity, engaging children's interests, and promoting health and wellbeing collections tailored to children and young people.

### How we will accomplish this:

#### A new Havering Children's Library

Some libraries across the country have developed standalone children's libraries – either mobile or at a fixed site – to improve library provision for an audience that is a heavy user of library services.

We think that, given the current and forecast growth in numbers of children and young people in the borough, there is a case to explore whether a standalone Children's Library could provide additional positive outcomes.

We are agnostic as to what this library might look like – whether in a fixed location or mobile so it can visit schools and other provision – or whether there could be more benefits in improving the children's offer in individual libraries instead of creating a central provision.

We intend to carry out an options appraisal looking at what successful provision looks like nationally and internationally before developing a business case for members.





## Membership

- Ensure that by 2029 every child registered as born in the borough becomes a member of Havering libraries
- Make sure joining a library is a quick and easy process, particularly for those who face extra barriers such as disabled people young people whose parents face difficulties finding stable housing and young people in care
- Engage with Early Years partners to promote the service and ensure residents who use other council services are aware of library provision
- Support broad Council outcomes for children and young people by engaging with colleagues across the organisation to identify where libraries can add value and develop new services
- Engage with all schools to encourage class visits, staffed and unstaffed

## **Literacy**

- Focus on Reading For Pleasure, provide staff training to ensure awareness of its importance, particularly for new staff.
- Provide buildings and spaces suitable to hold Summer Reading Challenge activities and class visits
- Engage with additional needs schools to promote and encourage visits for Bag Book sessions
- Support school curricula activity through aligned library work i.e. Local Studies Library supporting school history projects and class visits
- Deliver regular author events online and in person to encourage Reading For Pleasure
- Hold competitions to encourage creative writing eg. National Poetry Day competition
- Display on rota basis local schools creative writing
- Deliver children's Reading Buddies at all libraries.
- Support the distribution of Bookstart packs at all libraries at suitable events.
- Create business plan for Havering Literary Festival, to be delivered at no cost to the public purse

## **Activities**

- Provide fun and accessible children's library areas suitable for age group and activities focusing on children using imagination and sensory play
- Baby bounce –hold free weekly sessions in every library
- Wiggle and Giggle – hold weekly sessions where possible
- Storytime – hold regular sessions including weekends
- Summer Reading Challenge – provide regular free activities throughout the summer to support the national programme
- Engage in national reading initiatives and high days/holidays
- Expand the activities provided for older children, potentially including gaming and e-sports

## **Stock**

- Provide suitable displays that are eye catching and fun
- Engage with children to see what they are reading
- Follow and purchase popular stock
- Ensure stock is representative and reflective of audience
- Present library in a fun way with a focus on 'Reading for Pleasure' eg. Comics and graphic novels
- Improve Young Adult stock
- Promote Health and Wellbeing collections eg. Reading Well books



## Strategic Priority 2: Libraries to bring communities together

This strategic priority links to Havering Council's corporate plan 2024/25 priority: A great place to live, work and enjoy

The library service meets community needs and wants through a diverse range of events and initiatives. These include regular programs for children and adults, fostering social inclusion and community harmony. Engaging in national reading initiatives and showcasing local organisations further strengthens community bonds. Additionally, the library service supports climate change awareness, with initiatives like staff training, participation in Green Libraries Week, and promoting events with climate action themes. Through its commitment to providing shared community spaces, diverse stock, and green initiatives, the library serves as a vital hub for education, creativity, and community engagement.

## How we will accomplish this:

### Events

#### Children's examples

- Baby bounce – hold weekly sessions in every library
- Wiggle and Giggle – hold weekly sessions where possible
- Storytime – hold regular sessions at times when children will attend eg Saturdays
- Summer Reading Challenge – provide regular free activities throughout the summer to support the theme
- Chess clubs
- Author events – eg. with multiple schools online for the same event
- Craft events
- Engage in national reading initiatives and high days/holidays eg. Empathy day
- Hold showcase events for local organisations

#### Adult examples

- Knit and Natter groups
- Gratitude Club
- Craft events
- Games Club
- Reading groups
- Poetry Group
- Engage in national reading initiatives and high days/holidays eg. World Book Day
- Hold showcase events for local organisations



### **Stock**

- Engage in-library with children and adults to see what they are reading
- Follow and purchase popular stock
- Ensure stock at all age levels is representative of a diverse borough with material suitable for all audiences to access

### **Shared community space**

- Build stronger partnerships between libraries and other community facilities - local GPs, organisations looking to hire space, support/guidance sessions
- Hold competitions to encourage creative writing eg. National Poetry Day competition
- Display on rota basis local school's creative writing if space allows.
- Display local artists' work of all ages
- Review need or Create start up business hub/independent work space

### **Green Libraries - My community and the world around us**

We will help bring climate action and awareness to our staff and our community by:

#### **Staff**

- Deliver staff training in the Green Libraries Campaign and local initiatives and have Green Champions at each library.
- Connect with and support council working groups on Climate Emergency and the CILIP Green Libraries Campaign.
- Signing the Green Libraries Campaign pledge
- Attend the Green Libraries Conference
- See if we can apply for funding for projects from the Green Libraries Grant Fund or The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme which provides grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.

#### **Information**

- Ensure a physical space is provided in each library for a Green Information Hub
- Stock the Libraries Connected Climate Change booklist with core books available at each library supported by the remaining books from the booklist on rotation across all libraries
- Hold and promote lists of local contacts for groups and activities
- Create a Green Reading Group

#### **Supporting Community Action**

- Participate in Green Libraries Week in October, support with events.
- Continue to deliver author events with climate action and awareness as a theme
- Continue to deliver events for all ages with climate action and awareness as a theme eg. Warm Coats, school uniforms
- Become focal meeting points for local action groups and the wider community eg. Hold Green Information days



### Strategic Priority 3: Libraries to enjoy

This strategic priority links to Havering Council's corporate plan 2024/25 priority: A great place to live, work and enjoy

The library service actively promotes happiness and enjoyment within its community through a multifaceted approach centred around reading, culture, creativity, and health. By emphasizing Reading for Pleasure, offering suitable building spaces for events, activities and displays, fostering a love for reading across all ages. Children benefit from engaging sessions like Baby Bounce and Summer Reading Challenge activities, while adults enjoy Book Clubs, poetry events, and diverse author engagements. These initiatives not only promote literacy but also social inclusion and community harmony. Additionally, the library supports health and wellbeing through key collections and events, while also providing information and digital resources. Furthermore, the library's commitment to environmental sustainability, demonstrated through initiatives like the Green Information Hub and Green Reading Group, aligns with broader community values, contributing to overall happiness and enjoyment.

## How we will accomplish this:

### Reading and enjoyment

- Literacy and being able to read is the key skill to unlocking Reading for pleasure and its emotional and material benefits.
- To encourage all of our community to read for pleasure we will:
- Focus on Reading For Pleasure, providing staff training to ensure awareness of its importance, particularly for new staff.
- Ensure buildings are suitable to display stock effectively and hold events to promote stock.
- Deliver regular author events online and in person to encourage Reading For Pleasure
- Develop social media engagement to promote Reading For Pleasure and our book stock, digital and hard copy.
- Ensure stock is continually purchased, once funds allow, to keep stock fresh and on top of trends. Attend conferences, search through social media avenues eg. Book Tok to source new diverse and sought after stock.

### Children

- Engage with all schools to encourage fun and interactive class visits, staffed and unstaffed
- Provide buildings and spaces suitable to hold Summer Reading Challenge activities and class visits
- Engage with additional needs schools to promote and encourage visits for Bag Book sessions
- Display on rota basis local school's creative writing if space allows.
- Deliver children's Reading Buddies at all libraries.
- Support the distribution of Bookstart packs at all libraries at suitable events.
- Develop an options appraisal and business case for a new Havering Children's Library which would be a dedicated library for children and young people in the borough.



## Adults

- Continue to hold physical Book Clubs, at least one per branch, plus Zoom online Book Club and Havering Libraries Poetry Group, poetry events and competitions.
- Hold competitions to encourage creative writing eg. National Poetry Day competition
- Display creative writing if space allows eg Poetry Winners
- Deliver borough wide Adult Reader Development projects eg. Relaunch 'Havering Reads'
- Continue to deliver diverse author events supported with relevant stock displays for national celebrations eg Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History month.
- Deliver adult Reading Buddies at Romford with possible expansion to other libraries.

## Culture and Creativity

### Events

- Hold a regular programme of events for children and adults to support happiness, social inclusion and community harmony:

### Children's examples

- Baby bounce – hold weekly sessions in every library
- Wiggle and Giggle – hold weekly sessions where possible
- Storytime – hold regular sessions at times when children will attend eg Saturdays
- Summer Reading Challenge – provide regular free activities throughout the summer to support the theme
- Chess clubs
- Author events – eg. with multiple schools online for the same event
- Craft events
- Engage in national reading initiatives and high days/holidays eg. Empathy day
- Hold showcase events for local organisations

### Adult examples

- Knit and Natter groups
- Gratitude Club
- Craft events
- Games Club
- Reading groups
- Poetry Group
- Engage in national reading initiatives and high days/holidays eg. World Book Day
- Hold showcase events for local organisations



### Health and Wellbeing

- We have key collections of books on topics essential to our community's health and well being.
- We will promote the Reading Well collections with space in each library for a Health and Wellbeing section and focus events eg. Children's Mental Health Week in February, Dementia Awareness Week, Healthy Weight Strategy.
- Clubs and Societies – publicising more, posters if possible
- Healthy Weight Strategy
- Vaccination Centres
- All events – social inclusion
- Reading Agency
- Health Champions – staff, health champions directory in branches and staff awareness
- Community Hub, Pantry
- Citizens Advice Bureaux offices
- Positive East – HIV information and testing
- Back to Work
- Reading Well
- Blood Pressure

### Information and Digital

- Staff – information professionals
- Green Libraries
- Information
- Ensure a physical space is provided in each library for a Green Information Hub
- Stock the Libraries Connected Climate Change booklist with core books available at each library supported by the remaining books from the booklist on rotation across all libraries
- Hold and promote lists of local contacts for groups and activities
- Create a Green Reading Group
- Public network
- IT volunteers
- Online ebooks, magazines
- Local history images – collections on website and facebook
- Online resources

## Measuring performance against strategic priorities

### Quantitative Measures

#### Library Usage Metrics:

- Total number of visits to the library per month/year.
- Number of registered library users.
- Percentage of registered users who are active borrowers.
- Number of new library card registrations per month/year.

#### Circulation Statistics:

- Total number of items issued per month/year.
- Breakdown of circulated items by type/format.
- Average number of items borrowed per borrower.
- Percentage of items that are checked out versus those that remain on shelves.

#### Digital Services:

- Number of visits to the library's website or online catalogue per month/year.
- Number of e-books and audiobooks downloaded or streamed.
- Usage statistics for online databases and digital resources.
- PC and wifi occupation rates.

#### Activity Attendance:

- Attendance figures for library programs and events (e.g., storytime sessions, workshops, author talks).
- Demographic breakdown of program attendees (age groups, demographics).

#### Community Engagement:

- Number of community partnerships established (e.g., collaborations with schools, local businesses, cultural organisations).
- Participation in community outreach activities (e.g., bookmobile services, literacy programmes).

## Qualitative Measures

### User Satisfaction Surveys:

- Regular surveys to gauge user satisfaction with library services, facilities, and staff assistance.
- Feedback on the variety and quality of materials available.

### Impact on Education and Literacy:

- Testimonials or case studies highlighting the library's role in supporting education and literacy initiatives.
- Anecdotal evidence of improved literacy skills or academic performance among library users.

### Community Impact and Inclusivity:

- Stories or testimonials showcasing how the library serves diverse community needs and populations.
- Feedback on the accessibility of library services for individuals with disabilities or language barriers.

### Collections and Resources Evaluation:

- Reviews or feedback on the relevance and diversity of the library's collection.
- Input from users regarding the availability of resources for research, professional development, and recreational reading.

### Innovative Services and Programmes:

- Assessment of new services or programs introduced by the library and their perceived value to the community.
- Feedback on the effectiveness of technology integration and digital literacy initiatives.

### Library Environment and Atmosphere:

- Observational assessments of the library's physical space, including cleanliness, organisation, and comfort.
- Feedback on the ambiance of the library and its suitability for various activities (e.g., studying, socialising).



## Appendix 1 – Library Needs Assessment

### Borough and Ward data

As part of the development of the Library Strategy we have looked at a series of data to determine where need is greatest.

These data have been drawn from the borough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023 and 2021 Census data.

The measures we have determined as relevant to the development of this strategy are:

- Educational attainment (percentage of residents 16+ with no qualifications)
- Households where no member has English as main language
- Unemployment percentage of residents claiming JSA/UC)
- Access to car percentage of residents who do not own a car or van)
- Deprivation percentage of households with 2 indices of deprivation)
- Disability (disabled under Equality Act)
- Community safety (crime rate)
- Children - (percentage of population made up of children aged 0-15)
- Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty
- Older people (percentage of population aged 65+)
- AHAH Index (a multi-dimensional index measuring how 'healthy' neighbourhoods are)
- Community Needs rank (data analysing the social and cultural factors that can impact upon peoples outcomes)

## Borough and Ward data

Note: The use of red, amber and green colouring on the below table is intended to highlight data that is in comparison to other wards in the highest, mid or lowest third and not to indicate an absence of need.

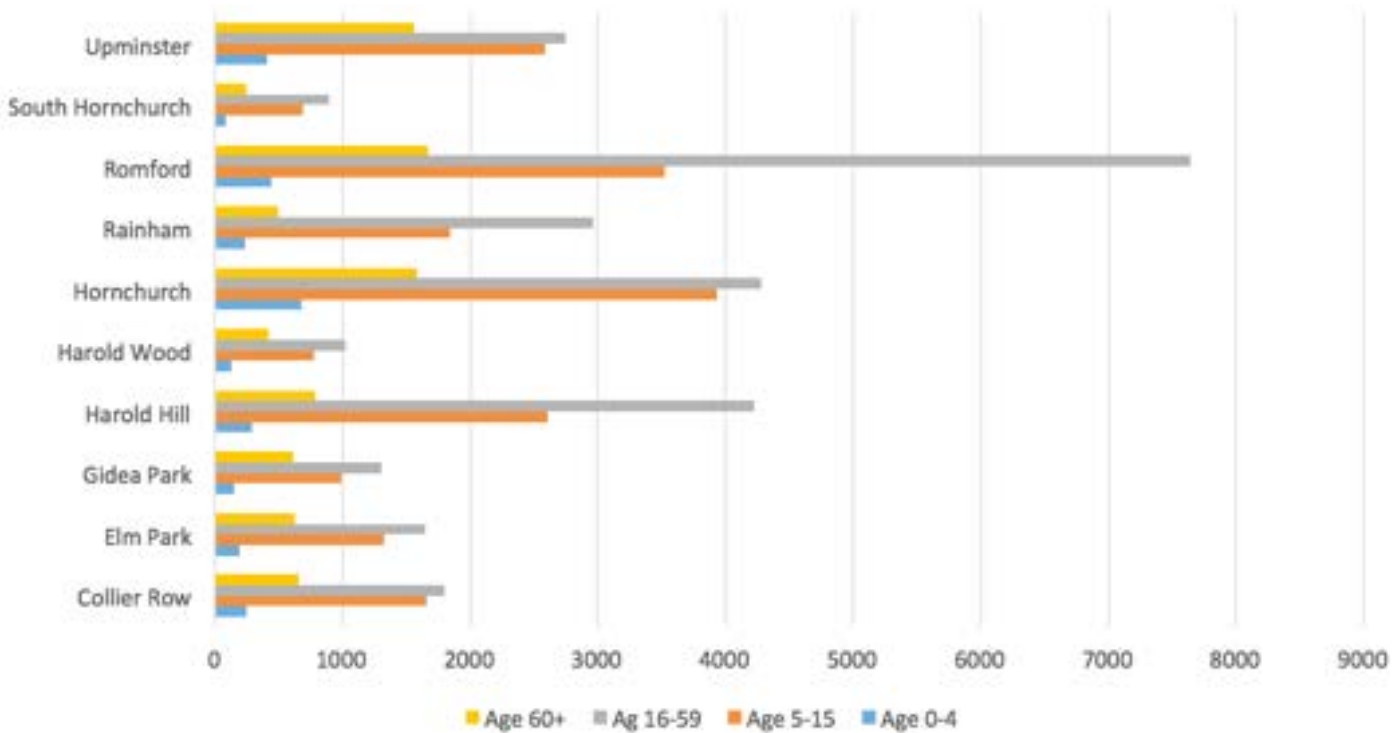
Ward	Havering- atte-Bower	Gooshays	Mawneys	Marshalls and Rise Park	Heaton	Rush Green & Crowlands	St Edwards
Nearest libraries	Collier Row; Harold Hill	Harold Hill; Harold Wood	Collier Row; Romford	Gidea Park; Romford	Harold Hill; Harold Wood	Romford	Romford; Gidea Park
Educational attainment (% of residents 16+ with no qualifications)	23.3%	24.0%	21.5%	18.9%	24.9%	18.7%	18.3%
Households where no member has English as main language	3.6%	5.1%	4.2%	3.8%	6.3%	11.0%	8.3%
Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC)	4.7%	6.1%	4.4%	2.7%	6.3%	5.6%	4.8%
Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van)	18.7%	26.9%	19.4%	14.9%	29.6%	29.7%	35.9%
Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation)	15.9%	20.1%	15.8%	12.8%	20.3%	14.5%	14.0%
Disability (disabled under Equality Act)	16.3%	17.0%	14.9%	13.3%	17.8%	13.3%	14.8%
Community safety (crime rate)	58.0	66.7	39.7	51.3	101.3	56.6	232.9
Children - % of population made up of children aged 0-15	21.5%	24.0%	20.5%	17.3%	24.6%	22.8%	19.4%
Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty	17.8%	20.5%	16.4%	10.6%	21.4%	19.0%	10.4%
Older people (% of population aged 65+)	16.9%	12.4%	18.0%	23.0%	12.7%	10.9%	15.2%
AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health-related environment)	30.8	24.9	30.3	24.9	29.8	34.1	31.2
Community Needs rank	8,094	2,021	17,504	28,347	3,366	22,835	23,665

Ward	Squirrels Heath	Harold Wood	St Albans	Hylands and Harrow Lodge	Emerson Park	St Andrews	Cranham
Nearest libraries	Gidea Park; Romford	Harold Wood; Harold Hill	Romford; Gidea Park	Romford; Hornchurch	Hornchurch; Gidea Park	Hornchurch; Upminster	Upminster; Harold Wood
Educational attainment (% of residents 16+ with no qualifications)	16.0%	17.2%	18.2%	18.4%	18.5%	20.2%	16.5%
Households where no member has English as main language	3.9%	4.3%	11.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.7%	1.0%
Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC)	2.9%	3.1%	4.3%	3.0%	2.2%	2.9%	1.9%
Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van)	18.9%	18.1%	31.9%	17.2%	11.5%	22.8%	15.7%
Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation)	11.6%	11.9%	15.2%	13.4%	12.6%	14.3%	11.6%
Disability (disabled under Equality Act)	13.1%	14.3%	13.5%	14.5%	12.7%	15.5%	14.0%
Community safety (crime rate)	48.4	59.9	74.0	45.1	32.4	43.7	29.4
Children - % of population made up of children aged 0-15	19.1%	18.7%	21.3%	17.6%	15.9%	16.2%	18.8%
Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty	9.9%	11.9%	16.7%	11.4%	7.2%	11.0%	8.0%
Older people (% of population aged 65+)	18.1%	17.3%	10.2%	19.2%	24.9%	22.5%	22.9%
AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health-related environment)	25.3	24.0	33.8	21.9	21.9	23.1	19.1
Community Needs rank	20,313	17,172	23,640	25,076	26,971	24,577	14,602

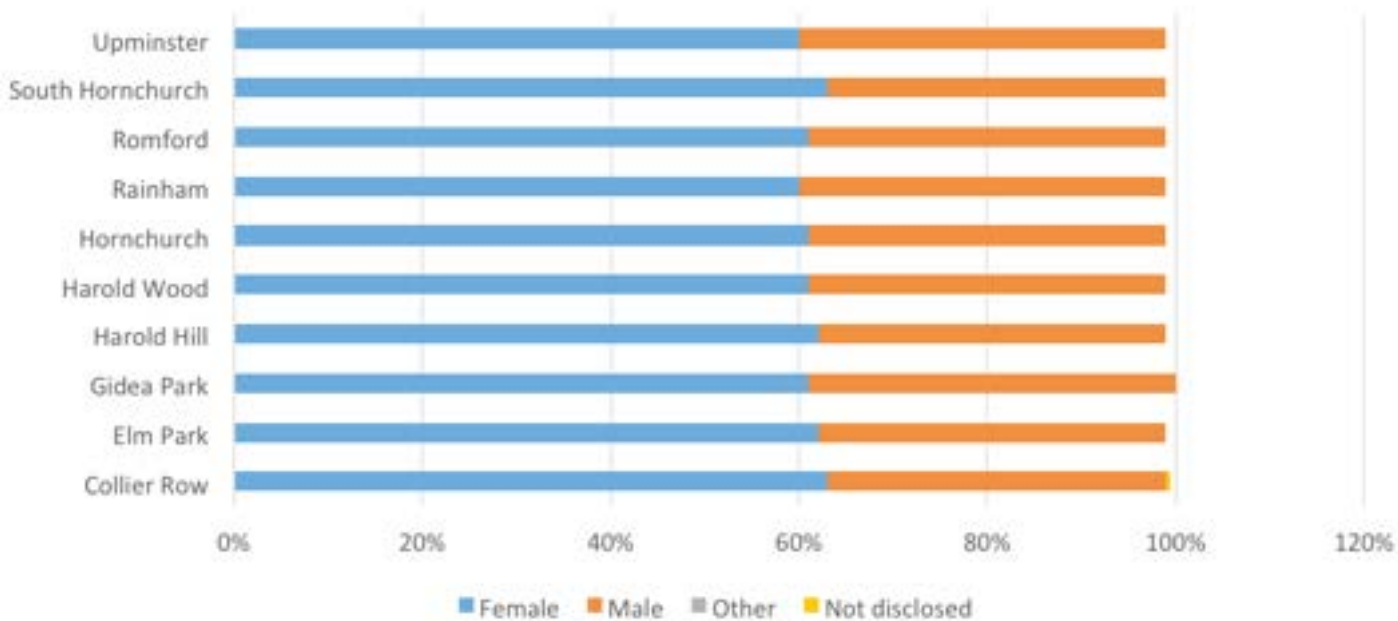
Ward	Elm Park	Hacton	Upminster	South Hornchurch	Beam Park	Rainham & Wennington	England average
Nearest libraries	Elm Park; Hornchurch	Hornchurch; Elm Park	Upminster; Hornchurch	South Hornchurch; Rainham	Rainham; South Hornchurch	Rainham; South Hornchurch	
Educational attainment (% of residents 16+ with no qualifications)	21.6%	19.2%	15.2%	18.1%	21.8%	23.4%	18.1%
Households where no member has English as main language	4.0%	2.4%	1.3%	4.7%	5.8%	5.5%	5.0%
Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC)	3.5%	2.1%	1.4%	5.2%	7.5%	4.7%	3.8%
Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van)	21.8%	17.1%	13.0%	19.3%	27.3%	20.8%	23.5%
Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation)	15.7%	12.6%	9.6%	15.4%	18.1%	16.4%	14.2%
Disability (disabled under Equality Act)	14.4%	13.2%	13.8%	14.0%	15.6%	14.7%	17.3%
Community safety (crime rate)	51.7	31.4	27.7	55.8	65.1	61.0	88.2
Children - % of population made up of children aged 0-15	19.5%	17.0%	17.2%	20.7%	24.1%	20.2%	18.6%
Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty	13.6%	7.7%	5.0%	15.8%	22.5%	16.2%	19.5%
Older people (% of population aged 65+)	18.0%	21.9%	24.6%	16.1%	10.1%	17.5%	18.4%
AHAH Index (higher score = poorer health-related environment)	29.4	25.7	21.7	31.2	32.2	28.5	23.2
Community Needs rank	16,056	21,380	24,668	14,452	10,409	13,934	16,998

### Library membership data

Library membership is available for free by law to all who live, work or study in the area, and in Havering as in many other library authorities, it is not restricted to these categories. Of the total membership of almost 60,000, there will be some who have not used the service for a long period but still remain members.

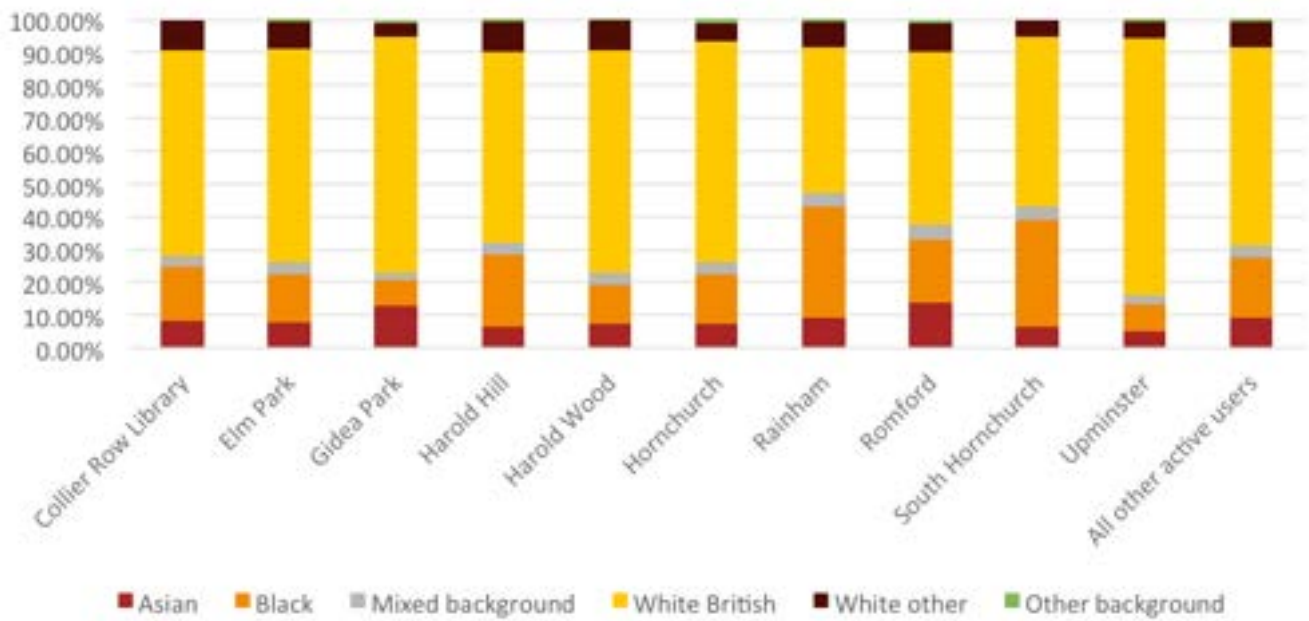


### Membership by gender





Ethnic origin profile by branch



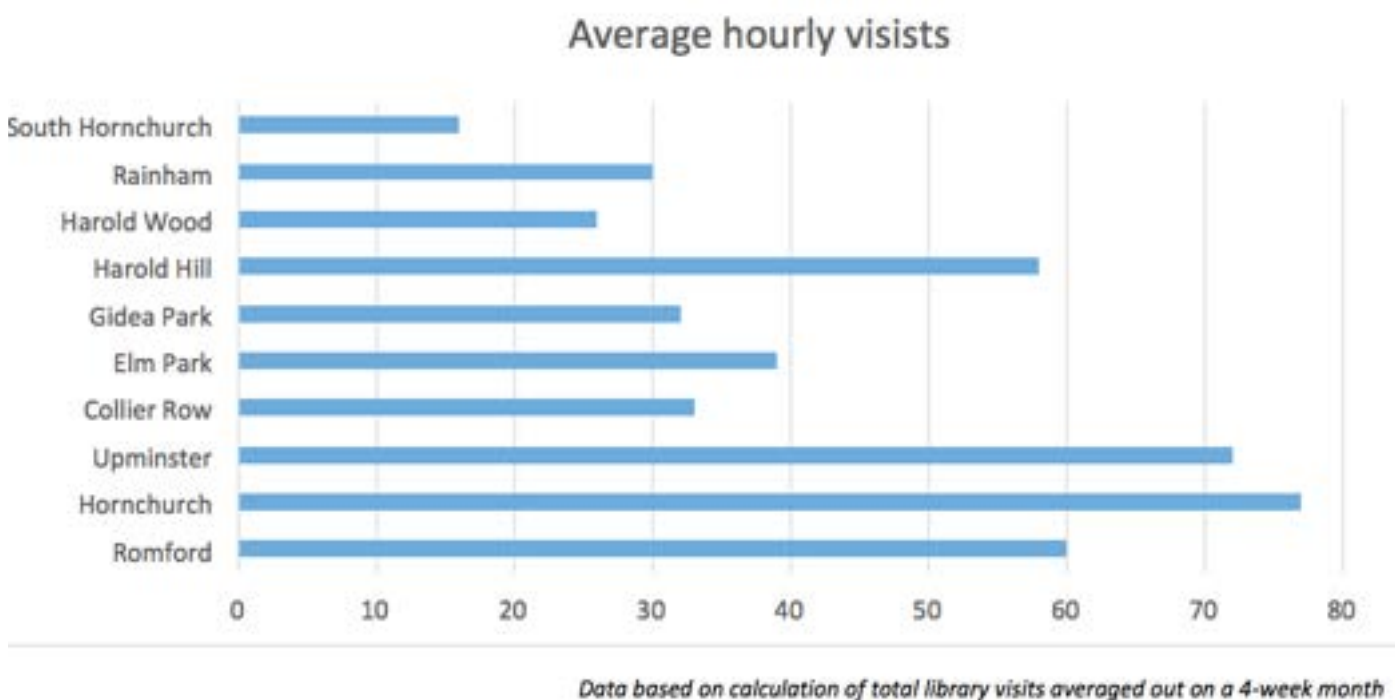
Note – the service’s recorded data on disability is limited . Less than 1% of members have provided data on disability, meaning the service holds no meaningful data to inform this needs assessment.

### Visits and Issue data

#### Library visits 2023-24

	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	March 2024	Total
Romford	10,614	12,503	14,080	14,100	13,699	11,787	12,178	11,417	8,864	11,059	11,988	12,824	145,113
Hornchurch	11,039	11,492	11,449	16,093	16,865	11,565	17,780	18,708	14,924	20,789	20,742	13,598	185,044
Upminster	12,821	10,554	12,690	15,940	19,226	13,299	15,342	13,034	13,816	18,839	14,388	12,502	172,451
Collier Row	2,276	3,110	3,427	4,142	6,037	3,733	2,474	2,703	2,113	2,671	2,798	2,546	38,030
Elm Park	3,074	3,045	3,896	4,132	3,983	4,187	3,582	3,242	4,216	4,132	3,447	3,932	44,868
Gidea Park	2,804	3,641	4,063	3,853	4,195	3,881	2,410	2,914	1,871	2,550	2,467	2,517	37,166
Harold Hill	6,183	7,219	7,153	8,361	9,039	11,354	11,599	14,201	12,011	15,029	17,753	19,400	139,302
Harold Wood	410	2,150	2,776	2,806	3,944	3,167	2,755	3,811	2,340	2,268	1,679	1,926	30,032
Rainham	4,221	4,491	4,877	4,841	5,163	5,383	6,796	9,475	6,434	7,324	7,423	7,168	73,596
South Hornchurch	1,655	1,741	1,619	1,704	1,936	1,950	1,471	1,335	1,821	1,673	741	1,065	18,711
Local History					57	59	70	170	42	158	53	66	675
Other activities	4,527	5,910	4,438	3,514	2,475	3,984	5,697	6,667	2,889	5,418	5,237	4,858	55,614
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,624</b>	<b>65,856</b>	<b>70,468</b>	<b>79,486</b>	<b>86,619</b>	<b>74,654</b>	<b>87,677</b>	<b>71,341</b>	<b>91,910</b>	<b>88,716</b>	<b>82,402</b>	<b>940,602</b>	

### Library average visits per hour



### Library issues 3 year trend

Year	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
Target	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	66,917	803,004
21/22	34,549	81,936	71,161	81,117	80,613	68,843	78,134	67,833	69,290	66,912	63,229	78,250	841,867
22/23	76,426	78,340	76,748	89,757	97,793	88,441	85,443	83,584	81,584	80,706	79,989	92,487	1,011,418
23/24	85,884	92,145	91,957	86,222	95,285	84,205	82,691	76,880	72,103	75,284	67,317	69,458	979,431

\*Figures include online issues of ebooks & eaudio

### Commentary

Measuring library performance on a library-by-library basis is not straightforward. Catchment area, opening hours, location (high street location sites tend to perform better than those buildings not on a high street), facility/activity mix and condition of building can all be factors explaining footfall.

However, a simple calculation based on averaging out the number of visitors divided by a four-week month can be used as a more meaningful comparison tool.

From this data, it is apparent that three libraries – Romford, Hornchurch and Upminster are far busier in terms of visits and issues. Rainham and Harold Hill are busier than branch libraries. Branch library visitor numbers are relatively similar although Elm Park has a higher average number of visitors.

Visitor numbers at Rainham and South Hornchurch remain very low by comparison to main and branch libraries respectively. It is possible that the geography of the south of the borough and Rainham library’s location as not on a recognisable high street is a cause for lower footfall figures at this location (and it should be noted that footfall is increasing at that site).

Three quarters of all library visits are made to the five main libraries and these libraries also account for 88% of all computer use and WiFi access.



## Schools in Havering

Havering's library service has built strong relationships with schools across the borough, linking with schools library services and running dozens of class visits to libraries. Each library has a catchment area of schools and this is listed below.

(Private schools are in *Italics*, Secondary schools at top of each list in **bold** and counted separately to Primary schools)

### Romford

- **Marshalls Park Academy**
- **St Edwards Academy**
- Concordia Academy
- Crowlands Primary
- Hylands Primary
- Gidea Park Primary
- The Mawney
- St Edwards CE Primary
- St Peters Catholic Primary
- **The Bridge** (Brentwood Rd) – secondary school for pupils with emotional needs

### Harold Wood

- **Redden Court School**
- Harold Court Primary
- Harold Wood Primary
- ***Lime Academy, Forest Approach***

### Elm Park

- **Abbs Cross Academy and Arts College**
- Benhurst School
- Elm Park Primary School
- RJ Mitchell Primary
- Scotts Primary
- St Albans Catholic Primary
- Harrow Lodge Primary



### Rainham

- **Harris Academy (formerly Chafford)**
- Brady Primary
- La Salette RC Primary
- Parsonage Farm Primary
- Rainham Village Primary

### South Hornchurch

- **Brittons Academy**
- Newtons Primary
- Scargill Infant
- Scargill Junior
- Whybridge Infant
- Whybridge Junior

### Hornchurch

- **Hornchurch High (formerly Albany)**
- **The Champion School**
- **Emerson Park Academy**
- **Sanders School**
- **Havering Sixth Form College**
- Hacton Primary
- Langtons Infant
- Langtons Junior
- Nelmes Primary
- St Mary's RC Primary
- Suttons Primary
- Towers Infant
- Towers Junior

### Gidea Park

- **Frances Bardsley Academy**
- **The Royal Liberty School**
- Ardleigh Green Infant
- Ardleigh Green Junior
- Squirrels Heath Infant
- Squirrels Heath Junior
- Gidea Park College
- St Marys Hare Park



### Upminster

- **Coopers' Company and Coborn School**
- **Gaynes School**
- **Hall Mead School**
- **Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School**
- Branfil Primary
- Engayne Primary
- The James Oglethorpe Primary
- St Joseph's RC Primary
- Upminster Infant
- Upminster Junior
- *Oakfields Montessori*
- ***Corbets Tey additional needs school***

### Harold Hill

- **Drapers' Academy**
- Broadford Primary
- Drapers Brookside Infant
- Drapers Brookside Junior
- Drapers Maylands
- Hilldene Primary
- Mead Primary
- Drapers Pyrgo Priory
- St Ursula's RC Infant
- St Ursula's RC Junior
- Lime Academy, Forest Approach (Settle Rd opp Drapers Academy) additional needs
- Lime Academy, Ravensbourne (Neave Cres) additional needs

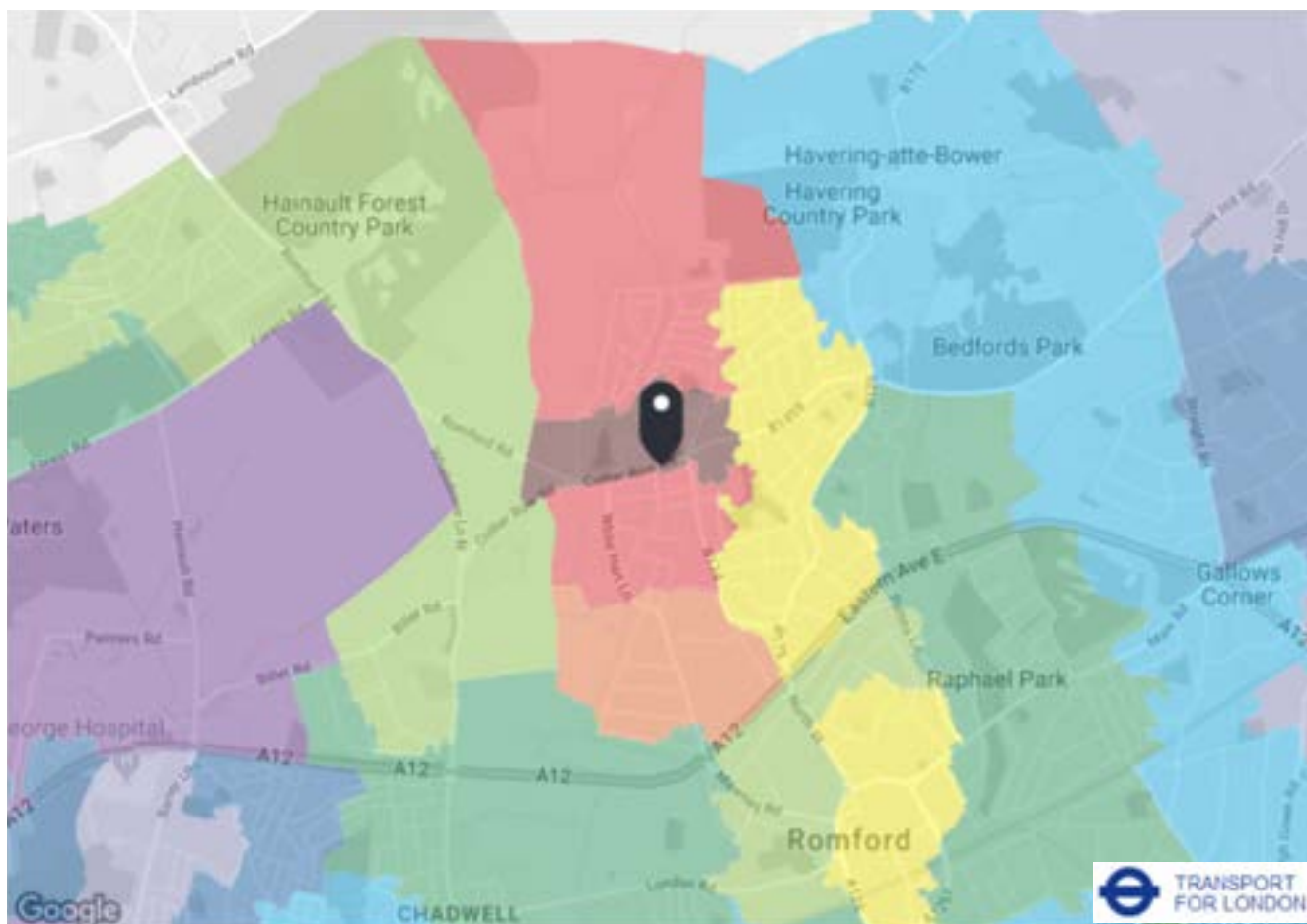
### Collier Row

- **Bower Park Academy**
- Rise Park Infant
- Rise Park Junior
- St Patricks Catholic Primary
- Clockhouse Infant
- Clockhouse Junior
- Crownfield Infant
- Crownfield Junior
- Dame Tipping CE Primary
- Parklands Infant
- Parklands Junior
- Oasis Pinewood Academy

## Transport links

### Collier Row

Collier Row library is located in a district shopping centre near the intersection of two main roads. The next nearest library to Collier Row is Romford, 2.4 miles away. This library is the most remote from any other in the borough. There is a bus stop outside the library and several bus routes serve the area. The map below shows approximate travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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#### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day:  
Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Collier Row Library**, 45 Collier Row Rd,  
Romford RM5 3NR, UK  
Easting: 549763, Northing: 191055

#### Map key - Travel Time

<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8B4513; border: 1px solid black;"></span> < 5 mins	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #E91E63; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 5 - 10 mins
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF9800; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 10 - 15 mins	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFEB3B; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 15 - 20 mins
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #C8E6C9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 20 - 25 mins	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8BC34A; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 25 - 30 mins
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #BBDEFB; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 30 - 35 mins	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #5E78E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 35 - 40 mins
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #B39DDB; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 40 - 45 mins	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #9575CD; border: 1px solid black;"></span> 45 - 50 mins

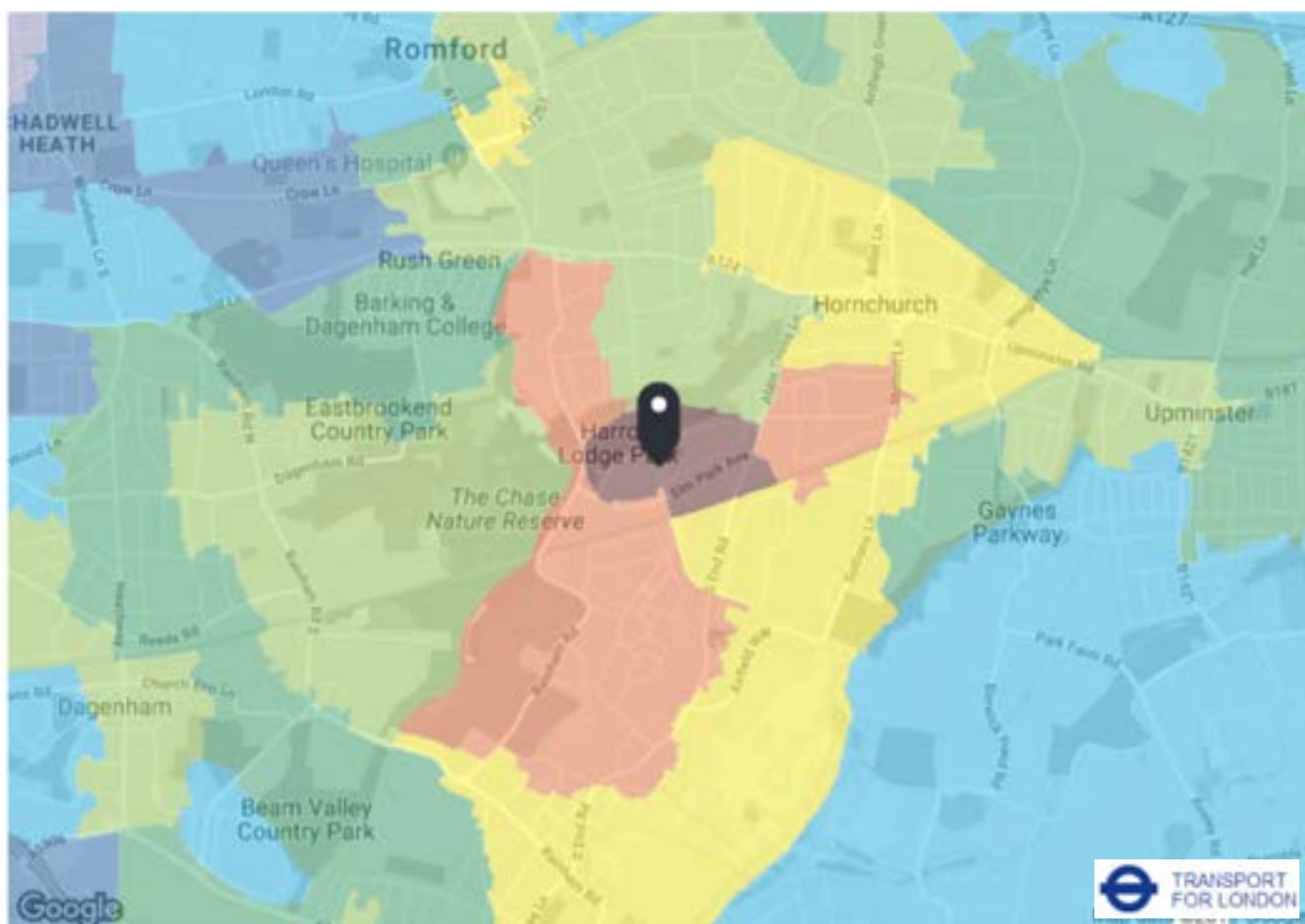
Much of the inhabited parts of Havering-atte-Bower and Mawney’s wards are within ten minutes travelling time from the library. Travelling times to Romford library are between 17 and 28 minutes off peak, but from the north of the area they are considerably longer.

Around 20% of households in Havering-atte-Bower and Mawney’s wards, those closest to the library, had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was below average for the borough. There are seven dedicated parking spaces at the library and free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Elm Park library

Elm Park library is located to the north of a district shopping centre and around 300 meters from an underground station. The next nearest library is Hornchurch, 1.8 miles away. This is the second most remote in the borough. There are bus stops within 150 metres of the library and several bus routes serve the area. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Elm Park Library**, 12 St. Nicholas Ave, Hornchurch RM12 4PT, UK

Easting: 552508, Northing: 186022

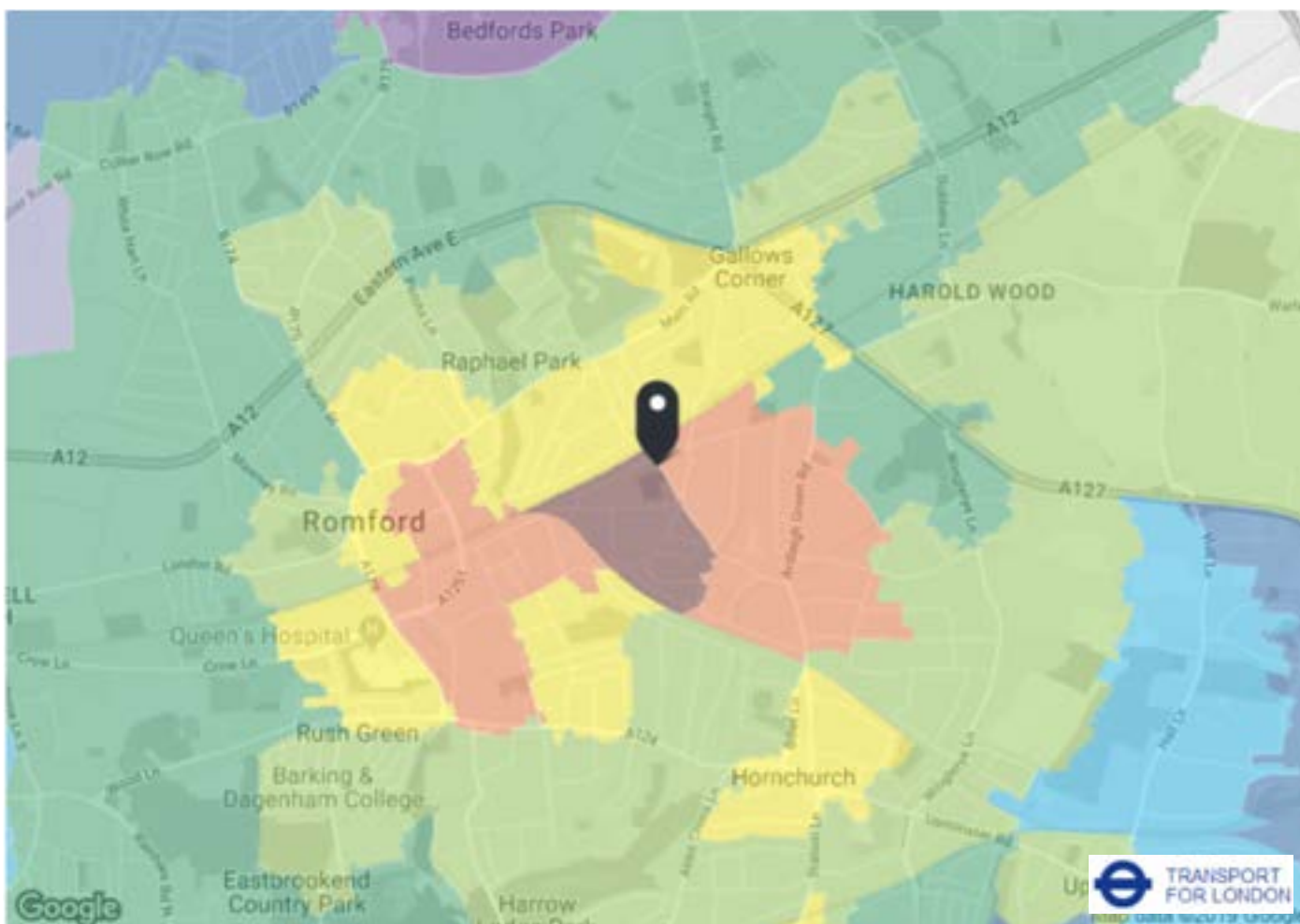
Much of Elm Park wards and parts of South Hornchurch and Hylands and Harrow Lodge wards are within ten minutes travelling time from the library. Travelling times to Hornchurch library are between 18 and 23 minutes.

Around 25% of households in Elm Park ward had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was above average for the borough. There is no dedicated parking space at the library, but there is free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Gidea Park library

Gidea Park library is located about 300 metres from a small area of shops in a mainly residential area and around 200 meters from a main line station. The next nearest library is Hornchurch, 1.4 miles away and Romford is 1.5 miles away. There are bus stops nearby but not immediately outside the library. The map below shows travelling times by public transport outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Gidea Park Library**, 168 Balgores Ln, Romford RM2 6BS, UK

Easting: 552940, Northing: 189103

Much of Squirrel's Heath ward is within 15 minutes travel of the library. Travelling times to Hornchurch library are between 14 and 26 minutes off peak, and a similar time to Romford library.

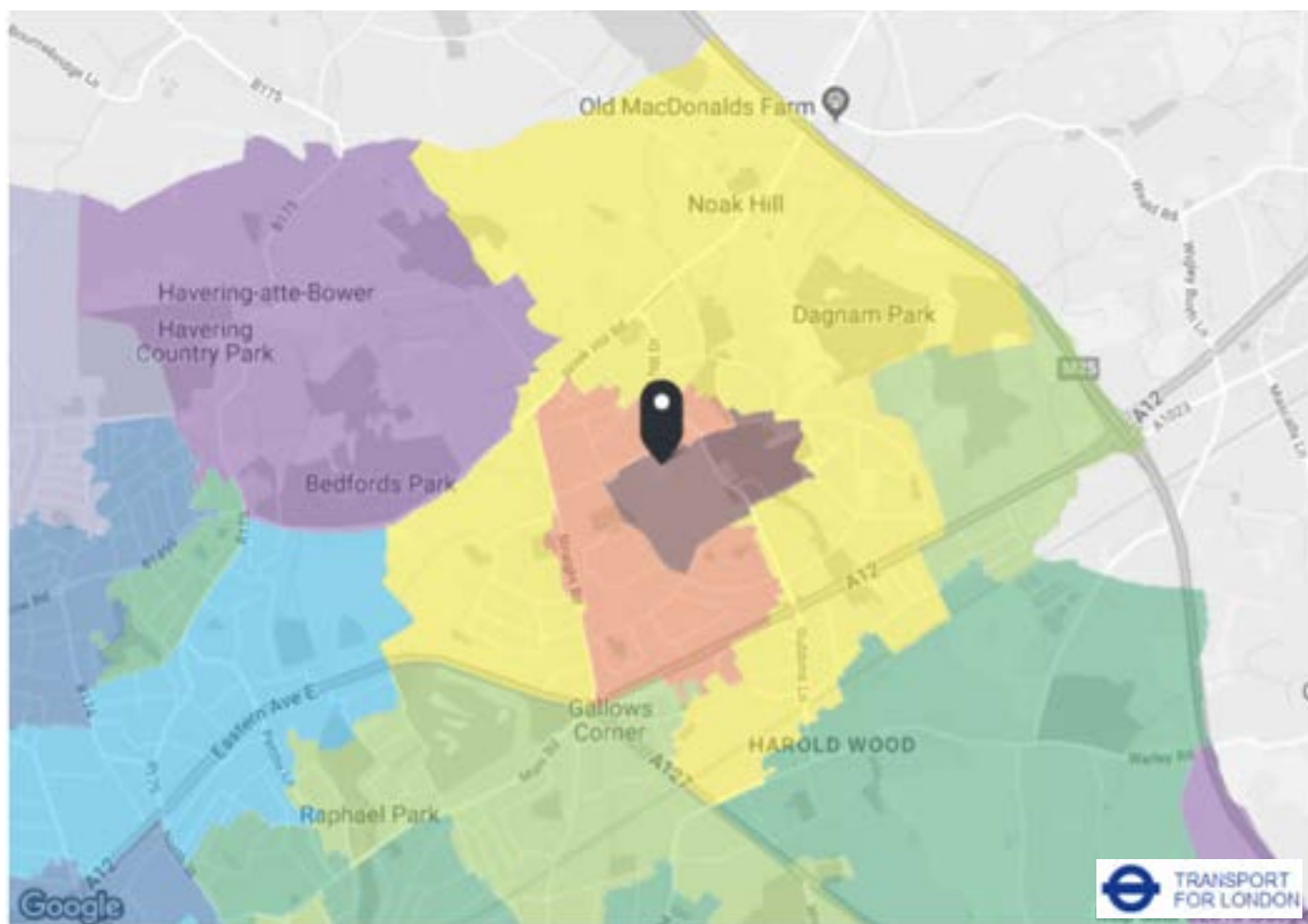
19% of households in Squirrel's Heath ward had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was below average for the borough. There are 16 dedicated parking spaces at the library and free parking nearby.



## Transport links

### Harold Hill library

Harold Hill library is located within a district shopping centre. The next nearest library is Harold Hill, 1.3 miles away. There are bus stops nearby but not immediately outside the library. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Harold Hill Library**, 19a Farnham Rd, Romford RM3 8EH, UK

Easting: 553791, Northing: 192062

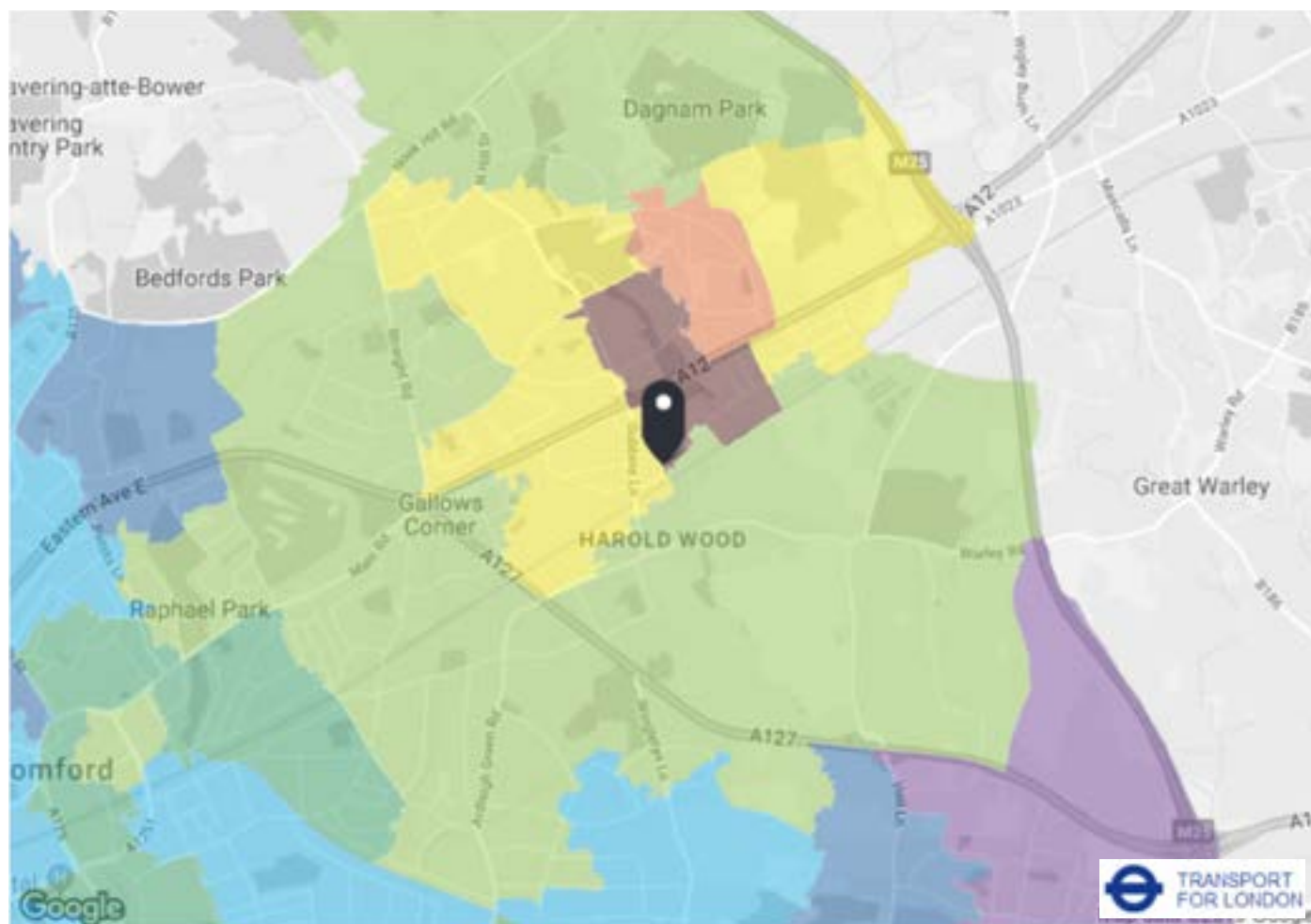
Much of Heaton ward is within 15 minutes travelling time from the library by public transport, but much of Gooshays ward has transport times of up to 20 minutes. Most of Harold Wood ward is within 20 minutes travelling time.

34% of households in Gooshays and Heaton wards, those closest to the library, had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was the highest in the borough. There are four dedicated parking spaces at the library and free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Harold Wood library

Harold Wood library is located at a short distance from a district shopping centre and about 250 metres from a main line railway station. The next nearest library to Harold Wood is Harold Hill, 1.3 miles away. There is a bus stop outside the library and several bus routes serve the area, although most stop near the station. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Harold Wood Library**, Arundel Rd, London RM3 0RX, UK

Easting: 554942, Northing: 190766

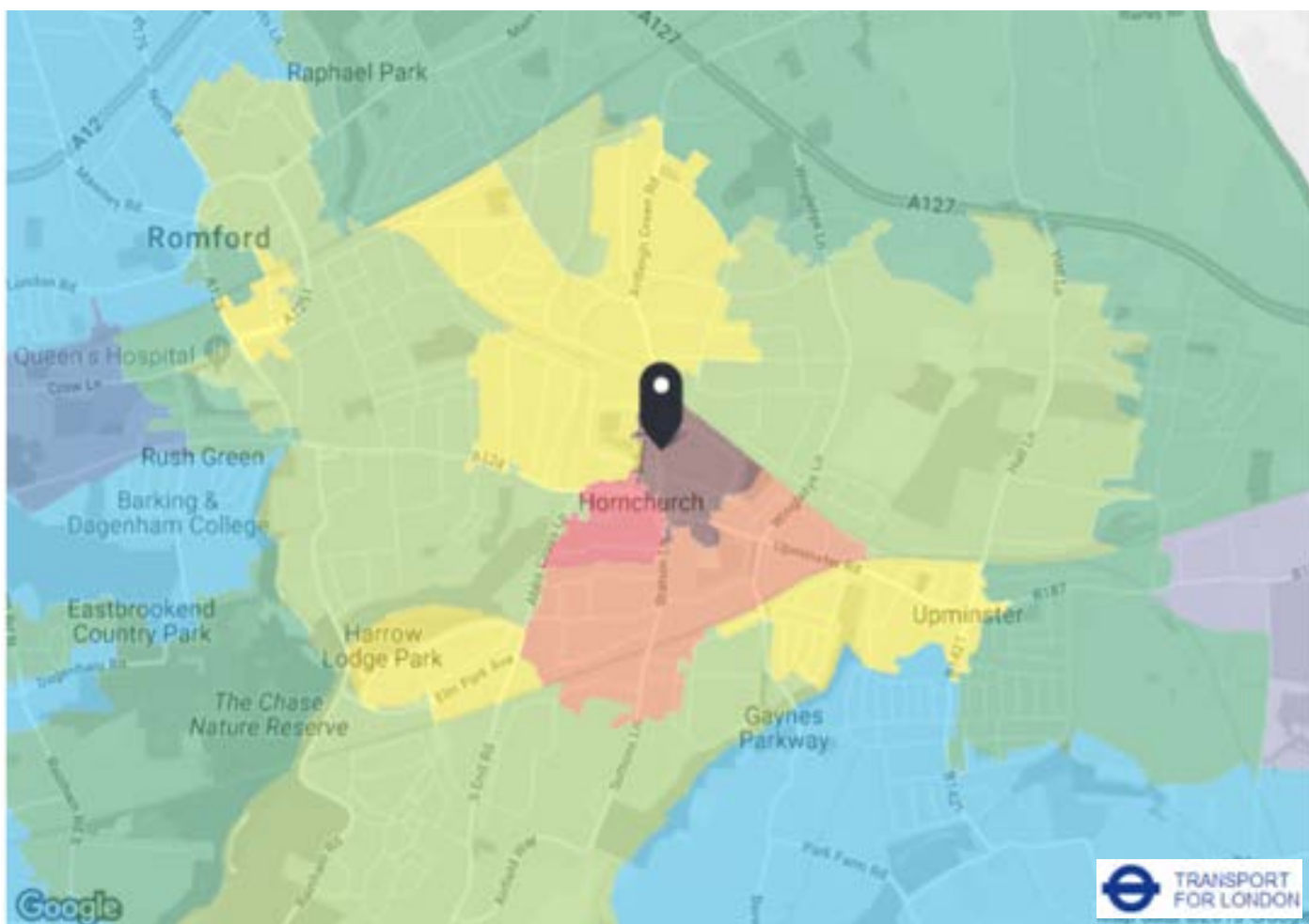
Much of the inhabited part of Harold Wood ward is within 15 minutes travelling time from the library and within 20 minutes of Harold Hill library. Travelling times to Harold Hill library are between 22 and 24 minutes off peak.

22% of households in Harold Wood ward had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was below average for the borough. There are four dedicated parking spaces at the library and free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Hornchurch library

Hornchurch library is located on the edge of the town centre of Hornchurch and about 1.2km from both Hornchurch and Upminster Bridge underground stations. The next nearest library is Gidea Park, 1.4 miles away. There are bus stops nearby and Hornchurch is very well served by buses. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Hornchurch Library**, 44 North St, Hornchurch RM11 1TB, UK

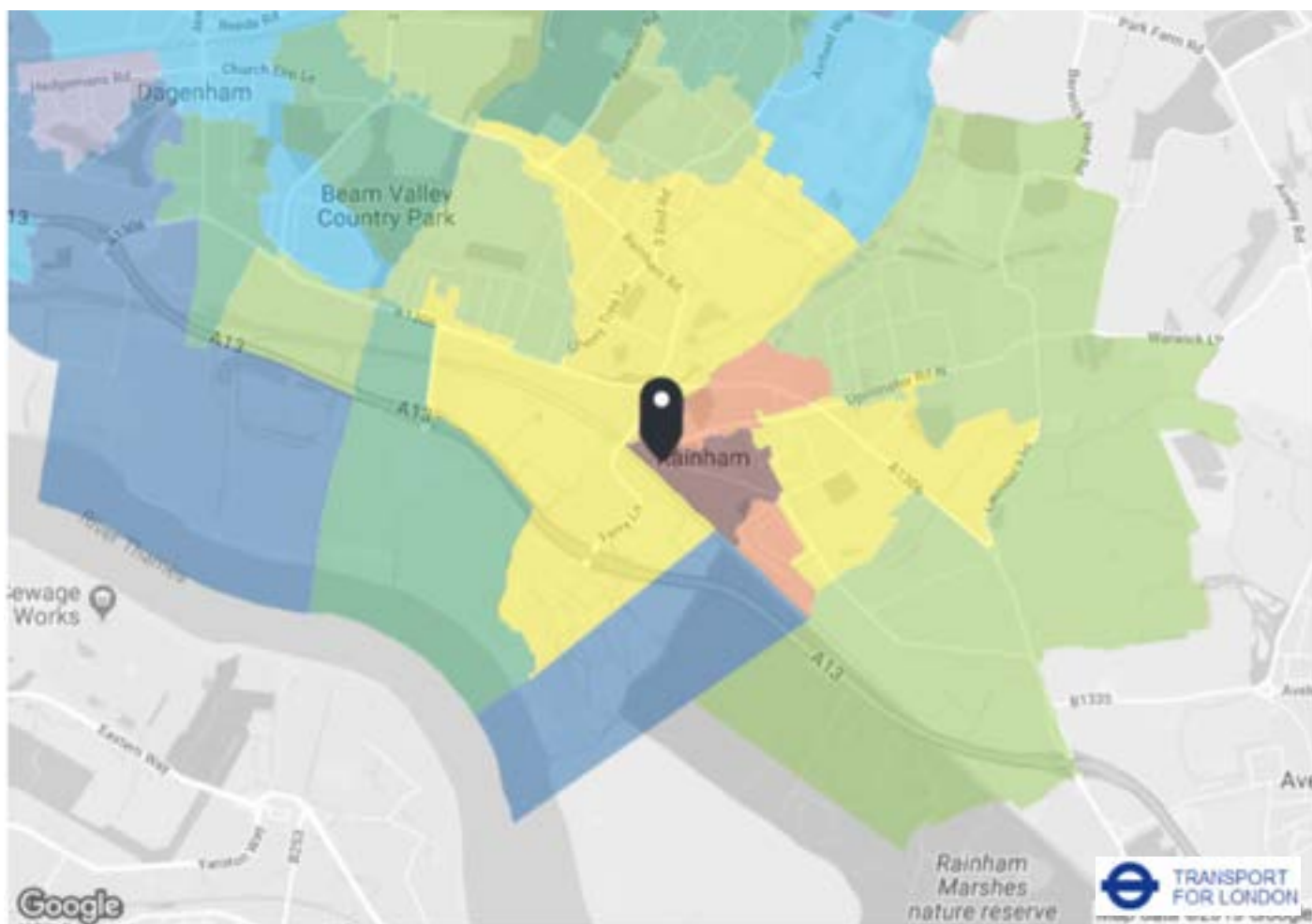
Easting: 554005, Northing: 187448

Much of St Andrews ward is within 15 minutes travelling time of the library, and most of Emerson Park ward within 20 minutes. Parts of Hacton and Hylands and Harrow Lodge wards are less accessible. 18% of households in these wards had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was well below average for the borough. There are 16 dedicated parking spaces at the library and free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Rainham library

Rainham library is located close to the district shopping centre and adjacent to Rainham mainline station. The next nearest library is South Hornchurch, 1.1 miles away. There are bus stops outside the library and Rainham is served by several bus routes. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Rainham Library**, Celtic Farm Rd, Rainham RM13 9GP, UK  
Easting: 552120, Northing: 182076

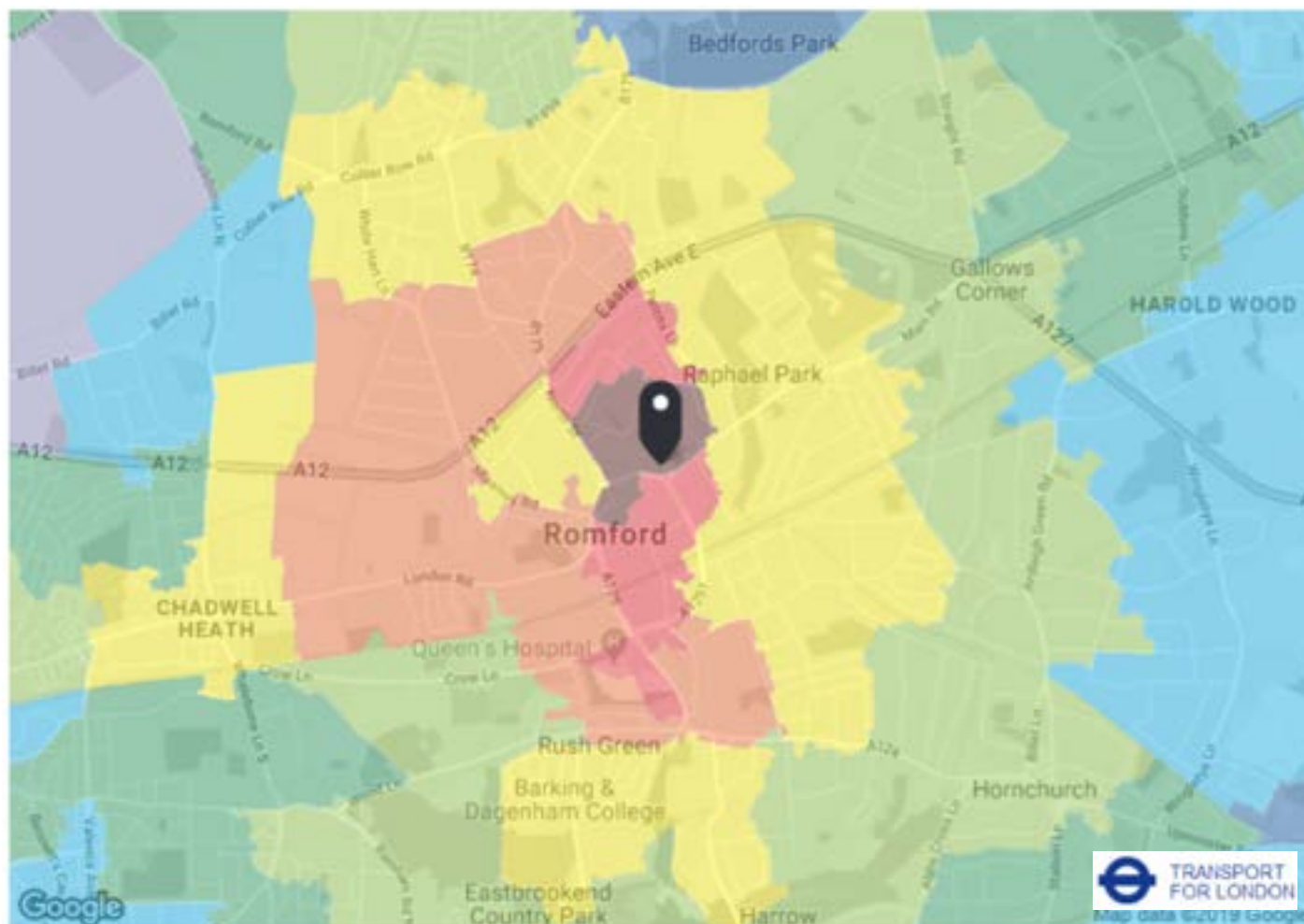
The map shows that most of the inhabited parts of Rainham and Wennington ward are within 25 minutes or less travelling time of the library. This also applies to the Beam Park and South Hornchurch wards.

21% of households in Rainham and Wennington ward had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was below average for the borough. There are no parking spaces at the library but there is free parking nearby.

## Transport links

### Romford library

Romford library is located on the edge of Romford town centre and about 700 metres from Romford mainline station. The next nearest library is Gidea Park, 1.5 miles away. There are bus stops outside the library and Romford is at the heart of the local bus network with routes to all parts of the borough. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Romford Library**, St. Edwards Way, Romford RM1 3AR, UK

Easting: 551391, Northing: 189141

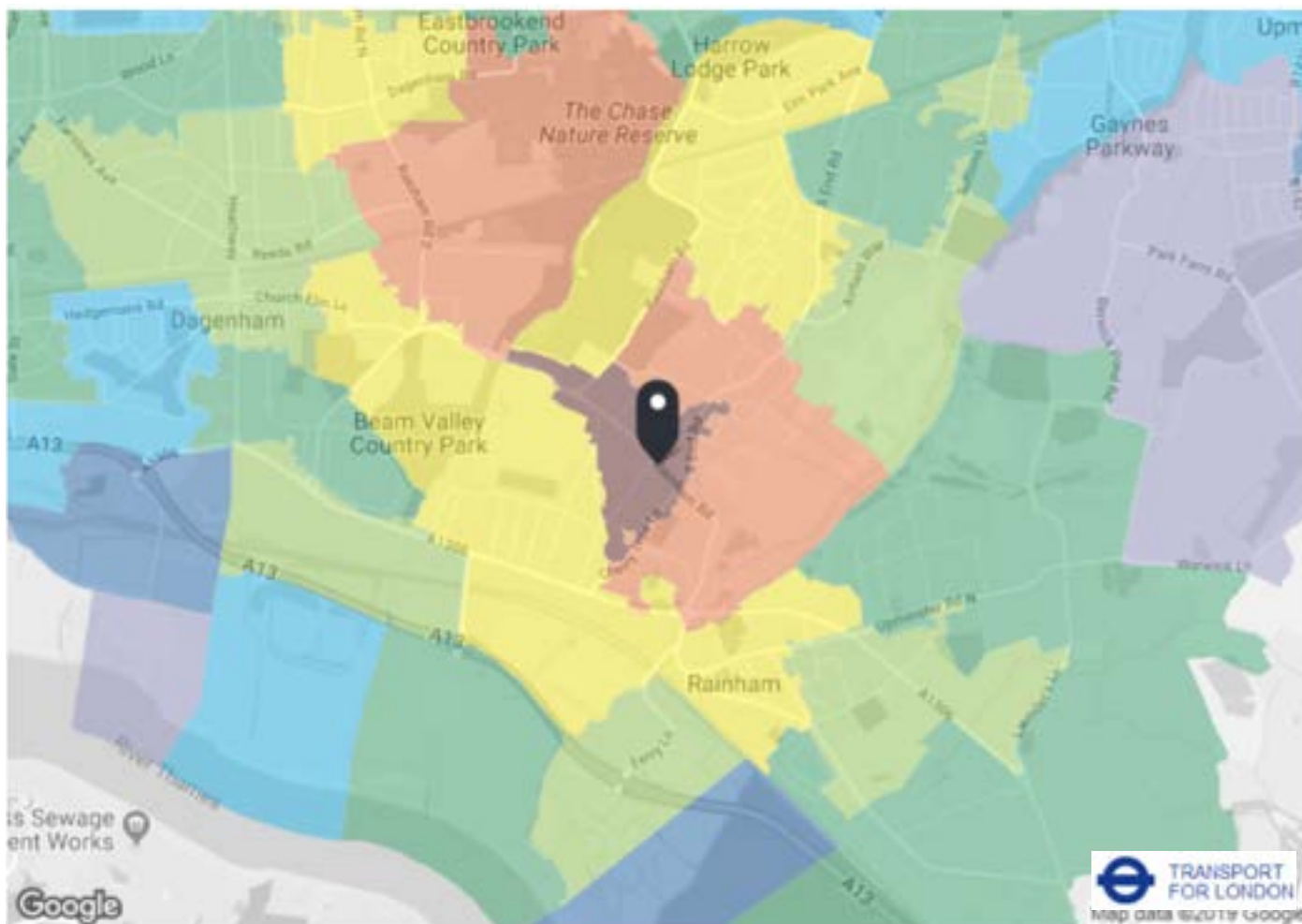
This shows that a wide area of the centre of the borough is within 20 minutes travelling time by public transport, including the areas around Collier Row and Gidea Park libraries.

the Beam Park and South Hornchurch wards. There are no parking spaces at the library but there is abundant chargeable parking nearby.

## Transport links

### South Hornchurch library

South Hornchurch library is located about 200m from a small retail district. The next nearest library is Rainham, 1.1 miles away. There is a bus stop outside the library and three bus routes serve the area, although only one passes the library. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

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### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**South Hornchurch Library**, 138 Rainham Rd, Rainham RM13 7RH, UK

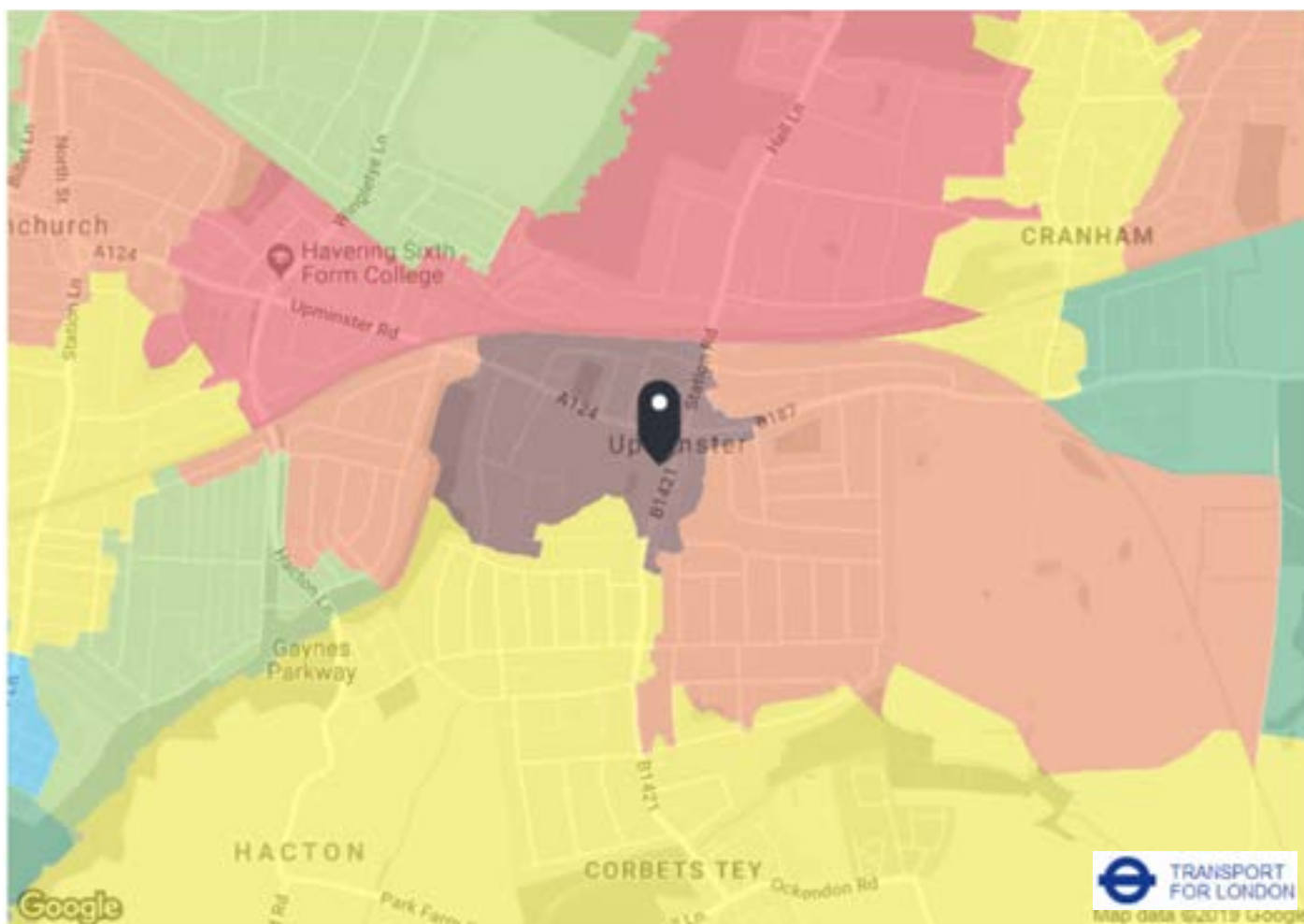
Easting: 551846, Northing: 183529

The map shows that most of the inhabited area of South Hornchurch ward is within 15 minutes travelling time of the library. Significant development and population growth in the Beam Park area is within 20 minutes of the library and a similar time to Rainham library. Off peak bus journeys to Rainham library take between 6 and 14 minutes from South Hornchurch library. 25% of households in South Hornchurch had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was above average for the borough. There are nine parking spaces at the library and free parking

## Transport links

### Upminster library

Upminster library is located within Upminster town centre. The next nearest library is Hornchurch, 1.6 miles away. There is a bus stop outside the library and four bus routes serve the area. Upminster mainline and underground station is around 450 metres away. The map below shows travelling times by public transport to the library outside peak hours.



Code: NT096105A

Copyright 2019, TfL

### TIM output for the Base Year

Scenario Base Year Mode.

All public transport modes, Time of day: Between peak times, Direction: To location

**Upminster Library**, Upminster RM14 2BB, UK  
Easting: 5559533, Northing: 186423

The map shows that the majority of the inhabited parts of Upminster and Cranham wards are within 15 minutes travelling time by public transport, although parts of Cranham and the Corbets Tey areas are less accessible.

15% of households in Cranham and Upminster wards had no access to a vehicle in latest available data. This was the lowest in the borough. There are no parking spaces at the library but there is some free parking nearby.

## Needs Assessment Conclusions

The needs assessment, assessing multiple factors, demonstrates a broad need for libraries across the borough. Every area has some level of need for a library and that with limited resources, difficult decisions need to be made about where the Council spends its resources. We have identified the following conclusions:

- The five main libraries serve three quarters of all visits and issues, the vast majority of wifi access and IT use and are easily accessible for the vast majority of the borough by public transport;
- These main libraries serve catchment areas which include large and growing numbers of children aged 0-15 as well as growing populations of adults aged over 60. They are also in general the libraries in the best condition (although it should be noted that Hornchurch library in particular will require significant investment approaching £500,000 within the next five years in order to maintain its operation.)
- There is therefore a strong evidence, based on the needs assessment and other factors, for the retention of these five main libraries as part of the future delivery model.

Of the remaining branch libraries (in alphabetical order):

- Collier Row branch library is furthest away from a nearby library, with Romford library being the closest venue. Collier Row also serves as a catchment area with relatively high numbers of children living in poverty. Collier Row also serves a larger number of schools in its catchment area. However, the library is in poor and deteriorating condition, cannot provide a comparable facility mix to other libraries and if retained will need to be replaced within the next decade.
- Elm Park branch library is relatively close to a nearby library with good public transport links to Hornchurch. Footfall at the library is higher than at the other branch libraries but significantly lower than the main libraries. Elm Park library is a relatively new building with low ongoing maintenance costs due to its eco-friendly design and features. The library has some scope to generate income through renting out meeting space or through alternate use of the library on non-opening days. There is relatively less deprivation in this library's catchment area than in other areas, but the library serves growing numbers of children and young people and adults aged over 60.
- Gidea Park branch library is relatively close to a nearby library with good public transport links to Romford. Footfall at the library is relatively low compared to other libraries and the condition of the library building is poor and deteriorating with a poor facility mix: the library is approaching the end of its natural life. Gidea Park serves a population with a growing number of children and a relatively high number of adults aged over 60.
- Harold Wood branch library is relatively close to a nearby library with good public transport links to Harold Hill although it provides a poor experience for pedestrians with the A12 having to be crossed. Footfall at the library is low compared to other branch libraries and the condition of the building is poor. The library serves a catchment area experiencing relatively less deprivation than in other areas. The library does have the potential to generate income from meeting space but as the condition of the building declines further it is unlikely income targets can be achieved





- South Hornchurch branch library is relatively close to a nearby library with good public transport links to Rainham. The library has the potential to serve growing populations in the South West of the borough but that has not translated into library use: footfall and issues at South Hornchurch are the lowest across the service. The library's catchment area includes parts of the borough experiencing some of the highest deprivation levels, including numbers of children living in poverty. South Hornchurch library delivers a significant income stream through a modular unit in use as an early years provision.

The impact of closing up to four branch libraries would be:

- The total provision of statutory library services in the borough would reduce from 370 hours to 274 hours per week, a reduction of 26% total hours of provision.
- More residents live further away from their nearest library and journeys that were able to be made on foot would now only be achievable by using public transport or by car or bicycle. More libraries would be further than 2.5 miles away from their neighbour and depending on which libraries were identified for closure some would be up to four miles away from their neighbour.
- Some areas experiencing high levels of deprivation and/or serving large and growing populations of children or older adults would lose a nearby library. This could mean that children are unable to access libraries and the library offer at key points in the year. One potential impact could be uptake of the summer reading challenge and it is feasible that such a reduction in service could have a longer-term impact on educational attainment and adult literacy.
- Concentrating the service on a provision of six fixed sites is likely to make more effective use of available capital funding to adequately maintain the library estate and make future improvements to condition and look and feel at each site.

Some of these impacts are discussed in further detail below.



## Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

We understand that our customers come from all walks of life, with various ages, backgrounds, and abilities, each having their own needs and preferences when it comes to accessing library services. We are committed to providing our library services in a fair and inclusive manner, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, which aims to prevent discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and encourage positive relationships among all individuals.

Our Library Strategy has been shaped by this Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), which help us understand how proposed changes might affect people with different characteristics. Specifically, we have looked at how potential closures of certain libraries and reduced opening hours might impact various groups:

- Some libraries are at risk of closure, affecting their local communities.
- Overall reduction in library hours could affect service accessibility.
- Based on library membership and demographic data, these impact assessments have shown that library closures could particularly affect certain groups, such as:
- Children, older adults, and women are more likely to use libraries facing closure.
- Groups meeting in these libraries are often attended by children, older adults, and women.
- More women than men use the libraries at risk of closure.
- Older or disabled individuals relying on these libraries may struggle to access alternative options, potentially needing the Housebound Service.

To gauge the impact, we have looked at various data sources, including attendance records, membership data, census data, and performance metrics. The closure of libraries could lead to difficulties in accessing books and resources, digital services, and social interactions, impacting mental health and well-being, especially for those who consider libraries a safe community space.

To address these concerns, we are considering measures like guiding people to other nearby libraries, providing travel information, promoting digital services, and offering housebound library services where necessary. However, despite these efforts, we recognize that some individuals with specific needs may still face challenges, potentially limiting their ability to participate in community life through library access.

Potential Negative Impact	Action Required To Mitigate the Potential Negative Impact
<p>The closure of libraries will impact on groups with protected characteristics who are current users, and any person who wishes to access its library provision, whether they live in the community or elsewhere within the Borough.</p> <p>The groups most likely to be affected are disabled people, older people, and families with young children and disabled children.</p>	<p>The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as information for nearby car parks and disabled car parking spaces. Available car parking at libraries will be assessed to ensure that parking is available for those who need it most.</p> <p>We will work with partners to support provision of information on active and alternate travel.</p> <p>Digital support: This will be targeted at those who most need it, including older people, users with a disability (e.g., visual impairment).</p> <p>Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed, as some people may be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices.</p> <p>The Library Service will offer familiarisation visits to other libraries for older people and families with young children who may feel anxious about visiting new libraries. This could help them to feel welcome to visit other libraries, encourage them to continue to attend groups and activities that promote social, emotional, and wellbeing support, and to help with the adjustment to the loss of their familiar library space.</p>
<p>Closure of library sites may increase demand for housebound delivery services which then put unsustainable burdens on staff.</p>	<p>Home Delivery Library Service: The consultation results will be analysed to assist with the referrals process onto the Housebound service, providing people meet the referral criteria as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures.</p> <p>Further work will be done to expand the number of library volunteers able to meet increased housebound delivery demand.</p>
<p>Some disabled people, older people and families with young children and those from BAME communities may find it difficult to travel to other libraries. There is a potential impact for people who share these protected characteristics where their local library will close. Some may find it difficult to travel to other libraries if they are required to walk certain distances, travel lengthy routes, or take a journey which requires them to change bus or train to get to a library. There may also be a financial barrier to accessing alternative travel methods.</p>	<p>Signposting to alternative library provision: The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as car parking arrangements and disabled parking bays for each library.</p> <p>Housebound services will be offered to people as a reasonable adjustment to mitigate any barrier to library service access that they might experience as a direct result of the proposed closures, providing they meet the referral criteria.</p> <p>Digital support will be targeted at those who most need it. Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed, as some people may be able to download books, audio, newspapers, magazines and comics to their own devices.</p>

Potential Negative Impact	Action Required To Mitigate the Potential Negative Impact
<p>Some disabled people, older people, children and people from the BAME community rely on regular visits to their library to socialise and establish friendships and experience social and emotional support. User feedback suggests that many people who share different protected characteristics feel the library is a safe, familiar place in which they are comfortable, included and respected. There is a potential impact for people who share these protected characteristics where their local library will close.</p>	<p>Familiarisation visits to other libraries: These will be offered to disabled people, older people and people with young families who may feel upset and angry that their library is closing and/or anxious about visiting other libraries. This will help them to feel welcome to visit other libraries, encourage them to continue to attend groups that promote social, emotional and wellbeing support and to help with the adjustment to the loss of their familiar library space. Staff will signpost vulnerable residents to additional support agencies.</p>
<p>Some children, in particular children in care or children living in poverty may find it difficult to travel to other libraries, in particular to access school holiday educational activities like participation in the summer reading challenge.</p> <p>Local schools and nurseries who visit libraries that are proposed to close to look at books and find out about the services on offer may be negatively impacted.</p>	<p>Provide an outreach offer targeting schools and community settings which serve communities affected by Library closures, to ensure the continued engagement of young people in initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge. Seek to identify alternate community locations where the service can deliver Library activities.</p>
<p>The closure of libraries may result in an increase in usage of the Digital Library Service if the Strategy is adopted.</p>	<p>Promote the Online Library Service: Better promotion/ awareness of the Online Library. Providing training for customers so they can access the digital library offer at any time of the day. Supporting customers to download books and offering tablet/device loan to access on-line provision. Seek to identify community locations in communities served by libraries that will close where the service can deliver Digital and Information Literacy.</p>
<p>A closure of up to four library sites will not reduce library usage, but rather concentrates nearly one million visits annually in four fewer sites, leading to some buildings becoming increasingly busy and unsatisfactory to use.</p>	<p>We will monitor on an active basis library footfall and look to schedule activities in ways complementary to how libraries are being used.</p> <p>We will consider ways of providing more flexible space in libraries, such as using unbooked meeting room space as study space in busy periods such as examination season.</p>



# HAVING LIBRARY STRATEGY 2024-2029 CONSULTATION REPORT

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## Executive Summary

- 1.1 The London Borough of Havering (Havering Council) has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for the people who live, work and study in the local authority area.
- 1.2 Against a backdrop of continuing significant financial pressures for the Council, which included needed to request exceptional financial support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in order to set a balanced budget for the financial year 2024/25.
- 1.3 That budget included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council's library service by £300,000 over two years. The library service accordingly developed a draft library strategy which included a set of proposals to close a number of libraries in order to deliver that saving.

### The draft strategy

- 1.4 The draft strategy comprised:
  - The proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the service by means to closing four of the five "branch" libraries (Collier Row, Elm Park, Gidea Park, Harold Wood, South Hornchurch);
  - Proposals to reduce the service's book stock budget by 61% (£161,000) in 2024/25 and £30,000 (from the 2023/24 base) in both 2025/26 and 2026/27.
  - A detailed needs and usage assessment which was used to develop the proposals;
  - A refreshed vision and strategic priorities to underpin the statutory service in coming years;
  - Proposals to develop an investment business case seeking capital funding to improve the quality of the library estate;
  - Proposals seeking views on whether a purpose-designed children's library – either at a fixed site or as a mobile provision – could better meet library need in the future.
- 1.5 A copy of the draft strategy is at Appendix A

### The Consultation

- 1.6 The draft strategy was subjected to full public consultation beginning on 10 May 2024 and ending on 2 August 2024. The consultation included:
  - Online consultation on the draft strategy via the Council's *CitizenSpace* portal;
  - Hard copy paper version of the above, copies of which were made available at all libraries in the borough (hard copy consultations were subsequently manually entered on to the electronic portal);
  - A series of 15 public meetings held across the entire library estate;

- “SHOUT about Libraries”, a version of the consultation designed for children and young people. The SHOUT consultation commenced in mid July 2024 and closed in September 2024.

1.7 The consultation attracted a large response: more than 3,000 responses were made via *CitizenSpace* and more than 300 hard copy responses were received during the consultation. The hard copy responses were subsequently manually uploaded on to the *CitizenSpace* system in order that a comprehensive set of results could be analysed. The SHOUT survey saw a further 1,000-plus responses received.

1.8 Public meetings held at each library to discuss the proposals were well-attended.

<b>Meeting type</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date and time</b>
Private (all member briefing)	Online	Tuesday 21 May 1730
Private (Compact briefing for voluntary and charity partners)	Online	TBD
Public	Havering Town Hall	Tuesday 9 July 1830-2000
Public	Gidea Park Library	Thursday 11 July 1730-1900
Public	Collier Row Library	Friday 12 July 1730-1900
Public	Elm Park Library	Thursday 18 July 1730-1900
Public	South Hornchurch	Friday 19 July 1430-1600
Public	Harold Wood Library	Friday 19 July 1730-1900
Public	Gidea Park Library	Wednesday 24 July 1030-1200
Public	Collier Row Library	Thursday 25 July 1730-1900
Public	Elm Park Library	Friday 26 July 1430-1600
Public	South Hornchurch Library	Friday 26 July 1730-1900
Public	Harold Wood Library	Saturday 27 July 1030-1200
Public	Harold Hill Library	Monday 29 July 1100-1230
Public	Hornchurch Library	Tuesday 30 July 1100-1230
Public	Upminster Library	Wednesday 31 July 1100-1230
Public	Rainham Library	Thursday 1 August 1100-1230

1.9 A number of petitions pertaining to individual libraries were received during and after the consultation. Petitions were received on behalf of each of the five branch libraries proposed for closure.



## Consultation Summary

### Introduction

- 2.1 The Havering Council Libraries Consultation gathered insights from 3,399 respondents regarding the usage, importance, and impact of potential closure of libraries within the borough. This report presents a detailed analysis of the responses, highlighting key findings, trends, and concerns raised by the community. This report also details, in a separate section, the analysis of the SHOUT about libraries survey.

### Characteristics of responses

- 2.2 The vast majority of consultation responses – more than 90% of all responses received – came from residents who declared that they are current library members. Almost two thirds of responses (63%) came from residents whose declared “main local library” was one of the five libraries proposed for consideration of closure.
- 2.3 This is relevant because the library needs assessment published as part of the strategy set out that only 23% of library visits in 2023/24 took place at these five libraries. This data speaks to a pattern of residents in areas identified for potential closure being extremely motivated to respond to the consultation whereas residents whose main or only use of a library is one of the sites not proposed for closure may have been less motivated to respond or perceived little direct impact on their library usage from the proposals.
- 2.4 Of the main library sites, there is a statistically relevant difference in the quantum of responses received. Whereas Hornchurch and Upminster library users made up more than 10% each of the total consultation responses, responses from those who cited Harold Hill, Rainham or Romford as their main/only library comprised in sum only 12% of responses received.
- 2.5 As much as the data shows that it was overwhelmingly current library members who chose to respond to the consultation, it also shows that those who responded are regular users of the service. More than 40% of respondents declared that they visit libraries daily or weekly and eight out of ten stated that their usage was at least monthly.
- 2.6 More than 70% of respondents told us that they borrow books or other material from libraries at least as frequently as monthly, but a 26% told us that they did so rarely or never, an indication that the secondary main use of libraries by the public is for events and activities that occur there. This evidence will be relevant for the development of the final strategy as preserving access to and developing events and

activities will be crucial going forward and library usage is discussed in more detail below.

## Demographic makeup of respondents

- 2.7 More than 70% of respondents answered one or more equalities question in the consultation. From this data, we can understand that there is no outlier in the age range of respondents, which reflects a service used regularly by a broad cross-section of residents. The age range with the largest volume of responses – 19%, was from those who told us they are between 35 and 44 years of age. Respondents aged 65-74 (14%), 55-64 and 45-64 (both 13%) were next highest in volume. Residents aged 75 and over (7%) and 25-34 (6%) followed, with just 1.5% of responses coming from those who told us they were aged up to 24. 22% of responses either did not answer the question or selected that they preferred not to say.
- 2.8 Nearly 25% of respondents did not tell us their gender. 57% of responses came from people who told us they are female and 18% from people who told us they are male.
- 2.9 More than 2,500 responses were received from residents who told us whether or not they have a disability, impairment or health condition. Of that figure, 19% told us they do have a disability, impairment or health condition. Declaration of a long-term illness or health condition accounted for most responses (7%), followed by sensory disability or impairment (5%), mental health condition (4%) and physical impairment or disability (4%).
- 2.10 In total 851 respondents told us they did have a disability, impairment or health condition. However, far more respondents answered questions in the main part of the consultation about the specific services in libraries used by people with such conditions, suggesting that either some respondents feel the need for some form of assistance but do not qualify that formally as a “disability, impairment or health condition” and/or that some respondents were also remarking on the services used by a household member who perhaps did not themselves respond to the consultation.
- 2.11 More than 2,000 respondents told us they use some form of assistance in accessing library services. This ranged from use of accessible formats (large print, audiobooks) at 20%, accessible facilities like ramps and elevators (17%), and assistive technology (screen readers, magnifiers) at 9%.
- 2.12 A significant majority of respondents (nearly 75% of responses received) told us they were concerned or significantly concerned about the availability of alternative accommodations or services for individuals with disabilities if the library were to close. More than 750 responses (23%) were received telling us that the closure of a nearest library impact would impact or significantly impact ability to access other libraries due to a disability.

## Views expressed on the proposal to close four libraries and reduce the book stock budget

- 2.13 As could be expected from the difficult choices presented in the consultation, the vast majority of responses (more than 82%) declared that they either disagreed or

strongly disagreed with the proposal to close four of the five branch libraries. Just under 10% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the proposals and 7% told us they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals.

- 2.14 Proposals to reduce the book stock budget were also opposed in the consultation responses, albeit by a smaller margin. The stock budget reduction proposals were either disagreed or strongly disagreed with by 57% of respondents, with 19% agreeing and 23% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

### Draft library vision

- 2.15 Two thirds of responses endorsed the service's proposed refreshed vision, with 20% disagreeing. Library members provided valuable evidence on the activities they enjoy and pursue in libraries and on what other services libraries could provide. Despite the broad range of services that libraries provide, books are still the bedrock of the service and remain as the most frequently used service at a library. Children's activities, computer use and personal/school study were also cited by large numbers of residents. This is relevant as outside of the professional library world books tend to be overlooked by policymakers as key drivers of why people visit libraries. This may seem counterintuitive given for many it is the *raison d'être* of the library but it is clear from the consultation that books as a driver of library visits and therefore satisfaction with and efficiency of libraries is still vital. Any future estate development will need to have regard to the reasons why residents use libraries.
- 2.16 More community programmes and events (59%) more digital and online resources (26%), job search assistance (24%) and enhanced language learning resources (21%) were cited by respondents as events or activities they wanted to see more of in libraries. This evidence provides an imperative to look at partnership work across the borough to meet demand.

### A Children's Library for Havering?

- 2.17 The consultation provided for early engagement with library users on a proposal to explore whether a purpose-designed Children's Library – either at a fixed site in the borough or as a mobile service – could contribute to service development and respond to demographic change in future years. The draft strategy was clear that any development would require growth and was not proposed at the expense of the loss of any current library site.
- 2.18 In consultation, respondents gave mixed views on the proposal. 32% of responses told us they were likely or very likely to use such a facility and gave feedback on the range of facilities such a library could contain. There was a particularly strong response from those indicating that such a facility should contain opportunities to develop more activities and materials for children with special educational needs and disabilities. However, the proposal was, as could be expected, overshadowed by the consultation on library closures. Many attendees of meetings told us they would prefer children's sections of libraries to be improved rather than a new library to be commissioned. There was no consensus on what form that library should take either – some residents accepted that a mobile library for children could mitigate anticipated reductions in classroom visits to local libraries in the event of closures, while others

questioned whether a mobile provision could replace a building. The geography of the borough, one based on localities rather than an acknowledged centre, was cited by those who did not feel a fixed site library to be workable.

### Quality of library buildings and views on a business case to secure capital improvements

- 2.19 In spite of the condition survey for the library estate setting out significant challenges in coming years with the quality of and facility mix in current buildings, respondents told us that they are broadly content with the comfort of buildings.
- 2.20 Two thirds of respondents told us the condition and comfort of buildings was very or extremely important to their overall satisfaction with library services. More than 90% told us they were satisfied or very satisfied with the condition and cleanliness of their local library building and more than 90% also told us that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the comfort and amenities available within the library.
- 2.21 While the data sets out a level of satisfaction with library buildings that

### Means of access to current libraries and impact of closure

- 2.22 The draft strategy identified that those whose means of access to the library is currently on foot (with a particular focus on the elderly, disabled people, parents and children) were likely to be negatively impacted by library closures as proposed. In the consultation we asked a number of questions to develop evidence on transport options.
- 2.23 A large majority of respondents, more than 76% of all responses received, told us that their usual mode of travel to the library was on foot. 29% told us they travel usually by car and 20% by bus or train.
- 2.24 More than 58% of respondents told us they were somewhat or very reliant on public transport if they had to access another library in the event of their local site closing. 59% told us they had some or significant concerns about the reliability or availability of local transport options for accessing alternative libraries.
- 2.25 The qualitative data received during the consultation, either via free text boxes in the consultation or at public meetings, echoed these concerns. We heard very clearly from a large number of residents, particularly older residents, who travel on a limited basis in the borough and usually visit only familiar places – shopping districts, restaurants, supermarkets etc. Some residents told us that they would not be able to visit a different library if their nearest one was to close, while others told us that crossing major arterial routes (such as the A12 to reach Harold Hill library in the event of Harold Wood closing) would be a significant barrier.

### Other alternative library models not proposed in the consultation

- 2.26 A theme that emerged particularly during the consultation public meetings was the possibility that library closures could be avoided or limited if individuals or community groups donated time, energy and skills in volunteering and contributing to the running of libraries. This was particularly prevalent at consultation events in Collier Row, Gidea Park and Harold Wood.

- 2.27 The consultation did not develop evidence as to whether alternate models are viable and could deliver the same or increased revenue budget savings as closures, but the service considers that unlikely, certainly in the short term.
- 2.28 Alternate models of libraries – in particular libraries that benefit in some way from council grant funding and professional librarian support but are run by community groups or charities on a day-to-day basis have been set up to varying degrees of success in other parts of the country. Further work and consultation would need to be developed if the council wishes to take this forward.

### Positive impact of libraries on community health and wellbeing

- 2.29 Respondents gave clear and compelling evidence on the benefits they believe regular use of libraries brings them. To the question “*Are there specific benefits to your health and wellbeing that you have identified as a direct result of regular attendance at your local library or activities within libraries?*” 57% agreed that their mental health and 25% that their physical health had improved. More than 50% agreed that they felt less lonely or had made more friends because of regular attendance at their local library.
- 2.30 The public meetings held during the consultation built on this. We found residents prepared to talk with passion and no little emotion about the positive impact of libraries on their lives and those of people they know and love.
- 2.31 The conclusions and recommendations section of this report builds on the issue of library impact on health and wellbeing.

### Evidential drawbacks of the consultation

- 2.32 Although the consultation saw a significant response in numbers, there are issues which will be material to future political decisions on the future of the service that the consultation either did not touch on or on which a clear picture has not emerged.
- 2.33 The consultation did not seek to identify evidence from respondents about why one library should remain open at the expense of another. Rather, the consultation was designed to evidence impact from geographic communities about the usage of and impact of losing a specific library. It did not, for example, ask residents to express a preference to retain one library over another. The service believes that the needs and usage assessment published in the draft strategy, combined with condition surveys, information about the facility mix of buildings which includes income-generating potential, plus the response to this consultation, provides sufficient evidence to make an informed and evidenced decision on the future of the service. However, in other recent closure proposals elsewhere in the country a second phase of consultation seeking more detail has been taken forward. Members and senior officers may want to consider this moving forward.
- 2.34 Further to the above, the consultation did not seek views on any of the alternate library operating models outlined in the draft strategy, nor on whether respondents are prepared to volunteer time in order to make any of those models viable. For reasons set out in the strategy the service did not consider achieving the savings through means of reducing opening hours across the entire service but not closing

libraries as satisfactory or likely to meet statutory obligations. If this is revisited further public consultation will be essential.

- 2.35 Any consultation is only informed by those who choose to take part. Although the council considers that it did take active steps to promote the consultation and exhort residents to respond, and taking into account the volume of response being one of the largest responses in recent council history, a large majority of residents and in particular non-library users (but residents whose council tax still contributes to library services) chose not to respond.

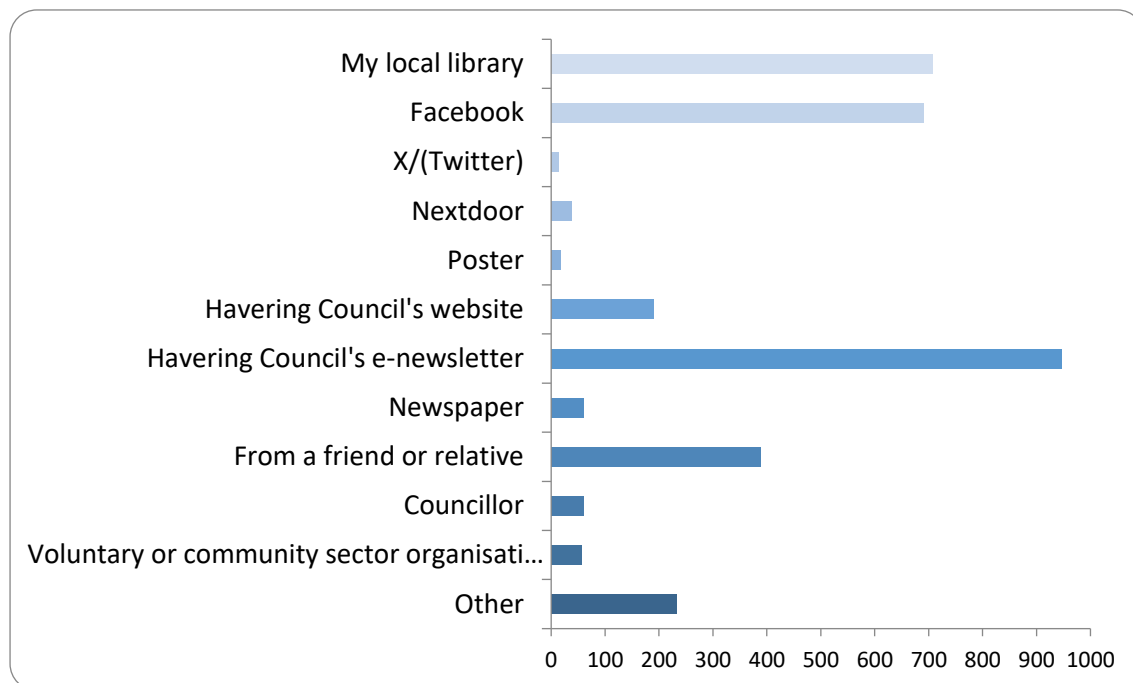
## Acknowledgements

- 2.36 We would like to thank the residents who took part in the consultation, whether through signing a petition, coming to a public meeting, commenting on social media or responding to the consultation questions.
- 2.37 We are grateful to members for their engagement and interest in the consultation and their efforts to encourage responses to it.
- 2.38 Above all, we thank library service and communications and engagement team staff for their dedication, support and hard work throughout the consultation.

## Consultation response detail

How did you find about this consultation?

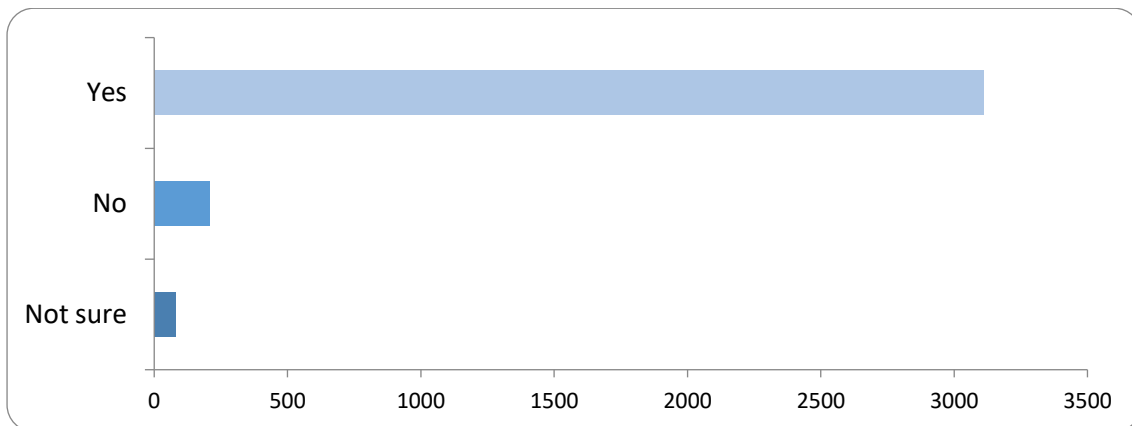
There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
My local library	708	20.83%
Facebook	691	20.33%
X/(Twitter)	13	0.38%
Nextdoor	38	1.12%
Poster	17	0.50%
Havering Council's website	190	5.59%
Havering Council's e-newsletter	946	27.83%
Newspaper	60	1.77%
From a friend or relative	388	11.42%
Councillor	60	1.77%
Voluntary or community sector organisation	56	1.65%
Other	232	6.83%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Are you a Havering Library member?

There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.

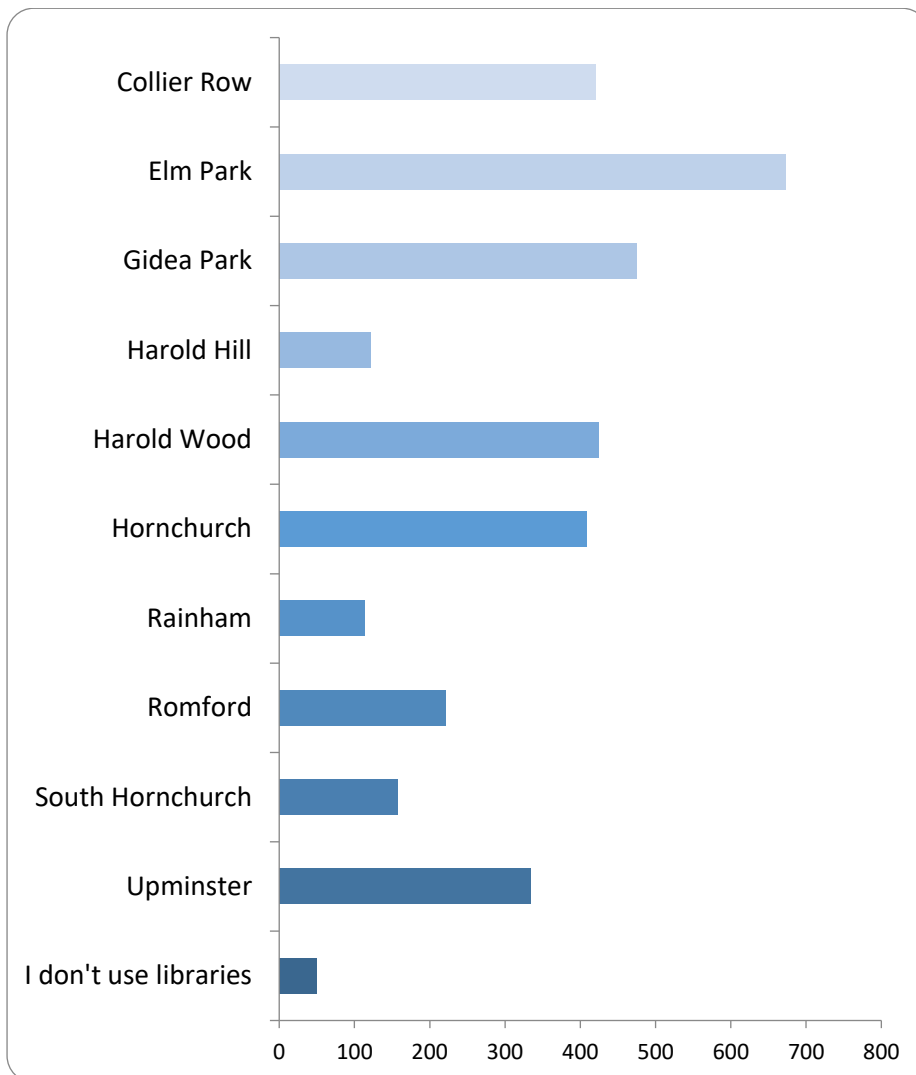


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	3111	91.53%
No	208	6.12%
Not sure	80	2.35%
Not Answered	0	0.00%



Which is your main local library, that is, the one that you use most frequently?

There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.

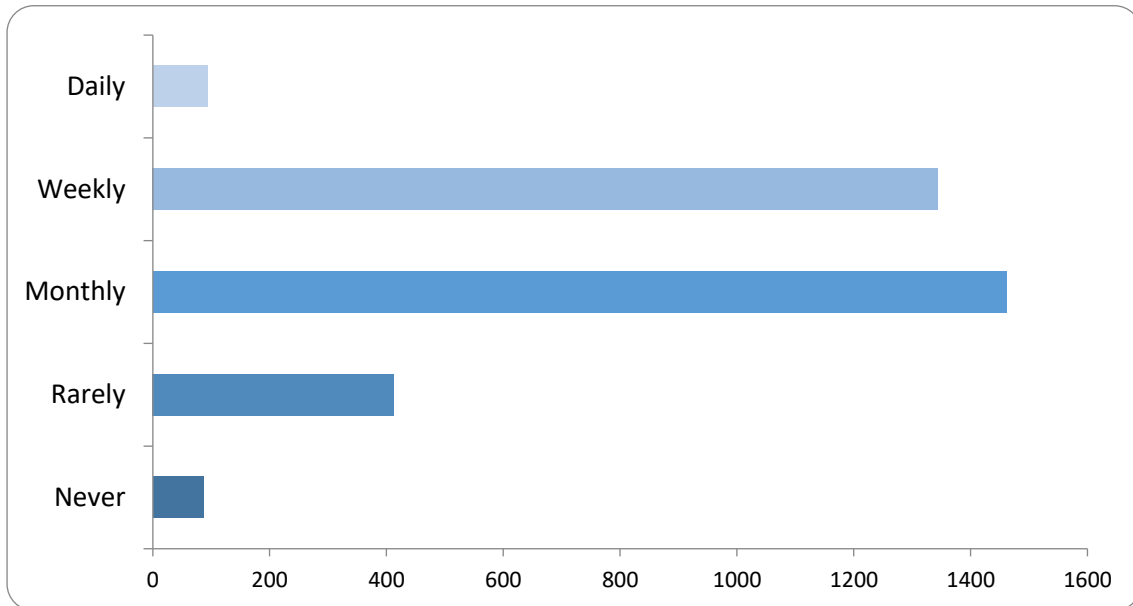


Option	Total	Percent
Collier Row	421	12.39%
Elm Park	673	19.80%
Gidea Park	475	13.97%
Harold Hill	121	3.56%
Harold Wood	424	12.47%
Hornchurch	408	12.00%
Rainham	114	3.35%
Romford	221	6.50%
South Hornchurch	158	4.65%

Upminster	334	9.83%
I don't use libraries	50	1.47%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Please tell us how often you visit your main local library and how often you borrow books.

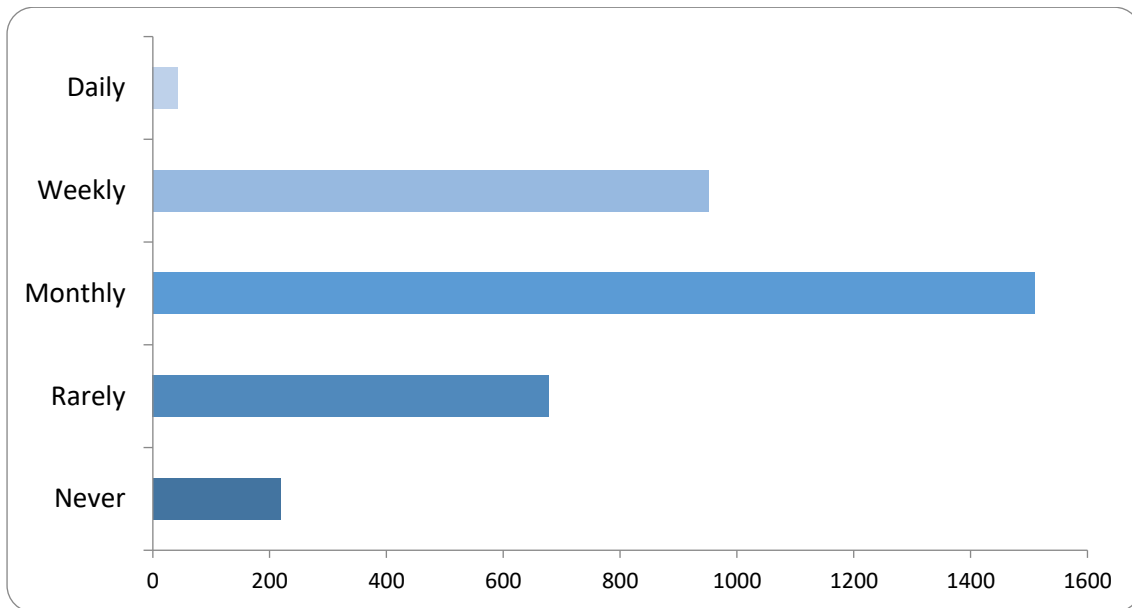
There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Daily	94	2.77%
Weekly	1344	39.54%
Monthly	1461	42.98%
Rarely	413	12.15%
Never	87	2.56%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

How often do you borrow books or other materials from your main local library?

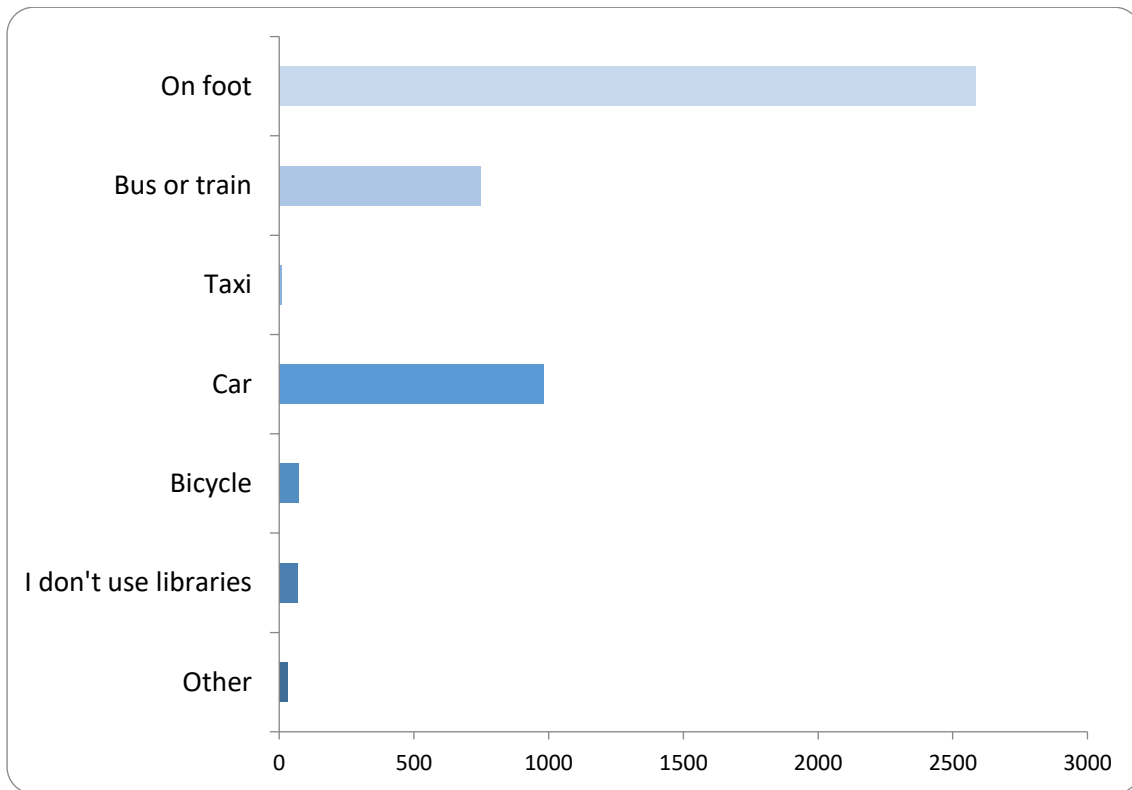
There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Daily	43	1.27%
Weekly	951	27.98%
Monthly	1509	44.40%
Rarely	678	19.95%
Never	218	6.41%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### How do you usually travel to the library?

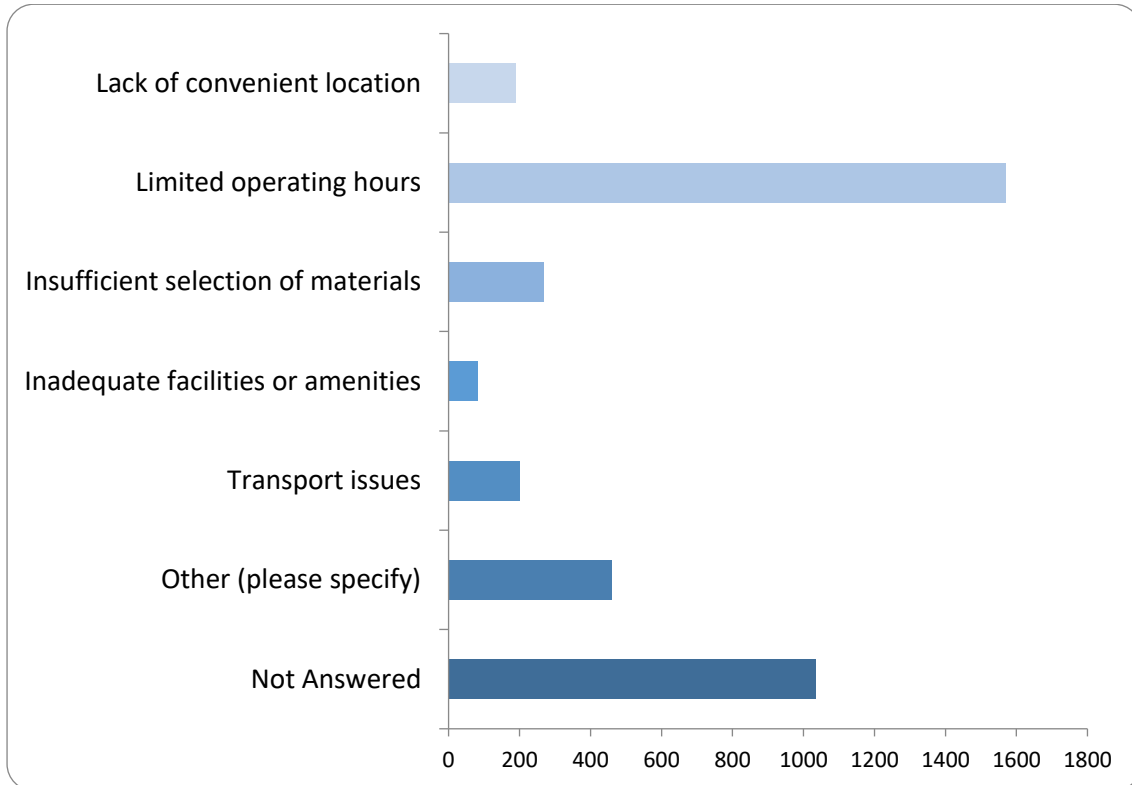
There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
On foot	2586	76.08%
Bus or train	749	22.04%
Taxi	8	0.24%
Car	980	28.83%
Bicycle	71	2.09%
I don't use libraries	68	2.00%
Other	33	0.97%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

## Is there anything that prevents you from using libraries more?

There were 2364 responses to this part of the question.

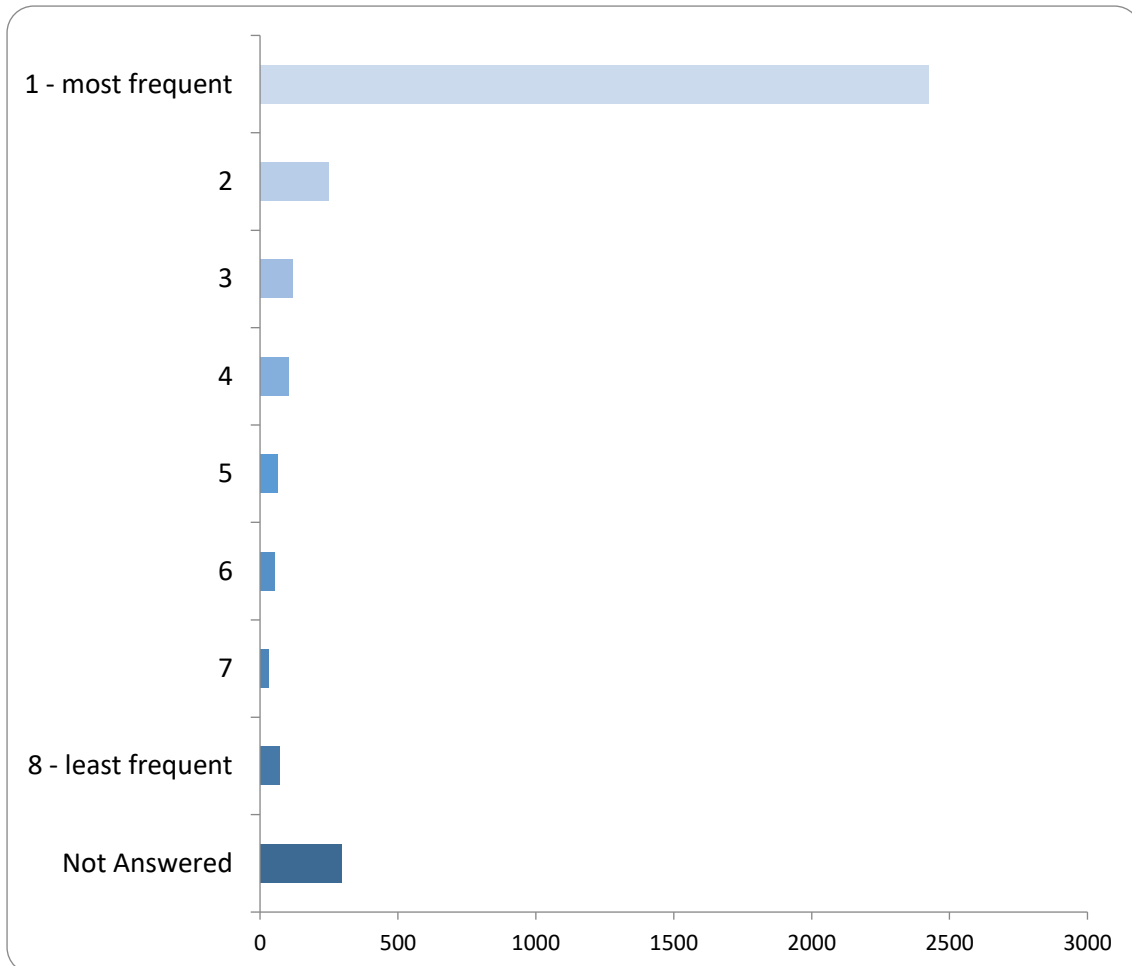


Option	Total	Percent
Lack of convenient location	189	5.56%
Limited operating hours	1570	46.19%
Insufficient selection of materials	270	7.94%
Inadequate facilities or amenities	84	2.47%
Transport issues	200	5.88%
Other (please specify)	461	13.56%
Not Answered	1035	30.45%

What services or resources do you use at your local library?

### Books

There were 3105 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	2422	71.26%
2	248	7.30%
3	119	3.50%
4	102	3.00%
5	62	1.82%
6	52	1.53%
7	30	0.88%
8 - least frequent	70	2.06%

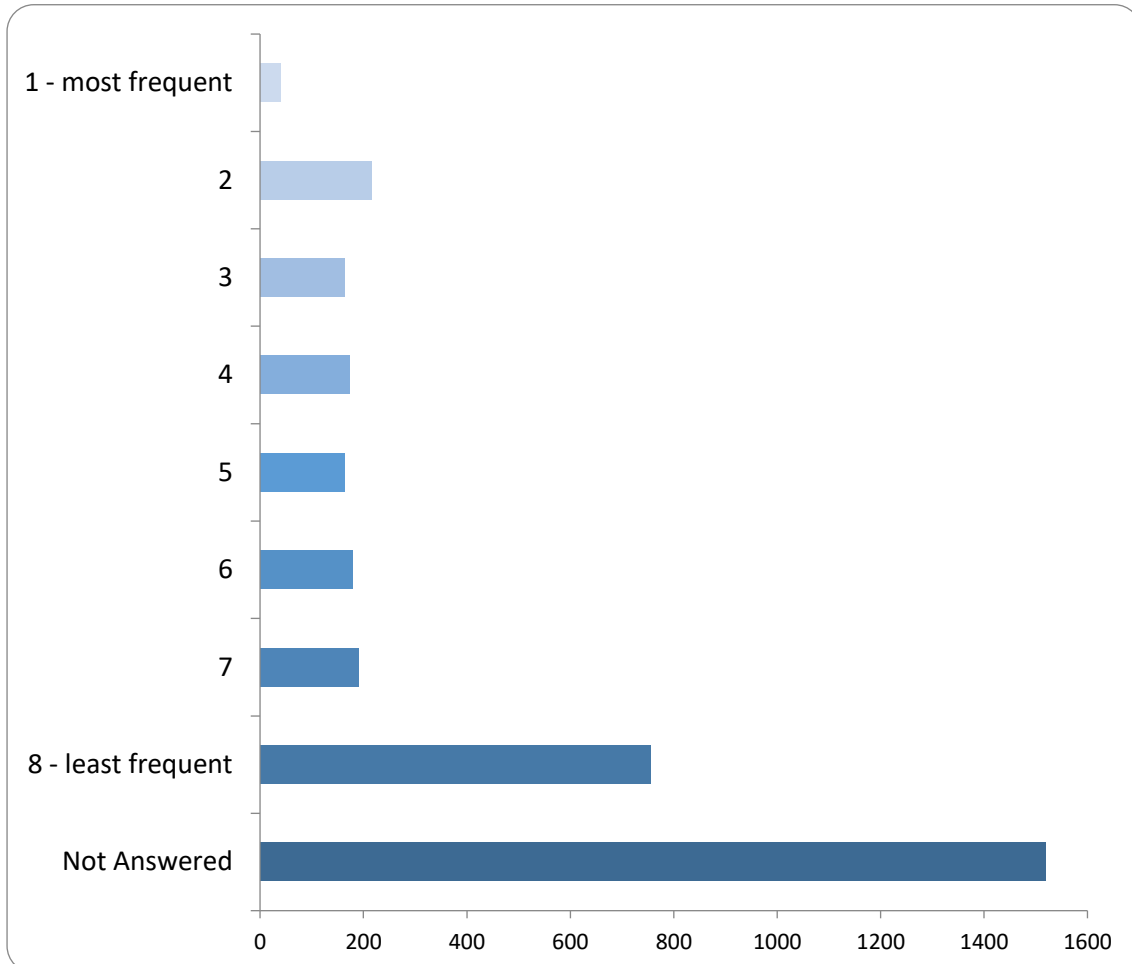
Not Answered

294

8.65%

### Newspapers, periodicals and magazines

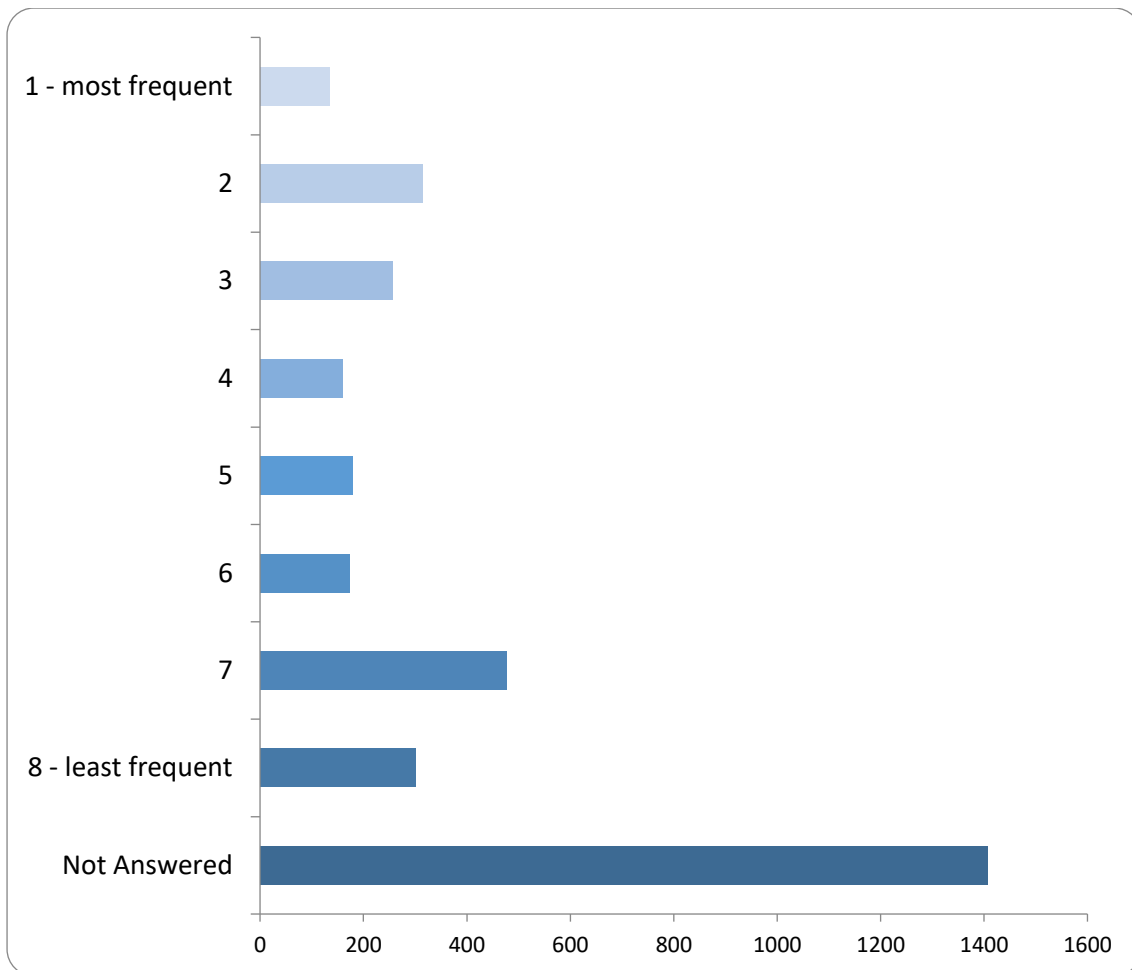
There were 1881 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	39	1.15%
2	215	6.33%
3	164	4.82%
4	174	5.12%
5	164	4.82%
6	179	5.27%
7	191	5.62%
8 - least frequent	755	22.21%
Not Answered	1518	44.66%

### Internet and computer access

There were 1993 responses to this part of the question.

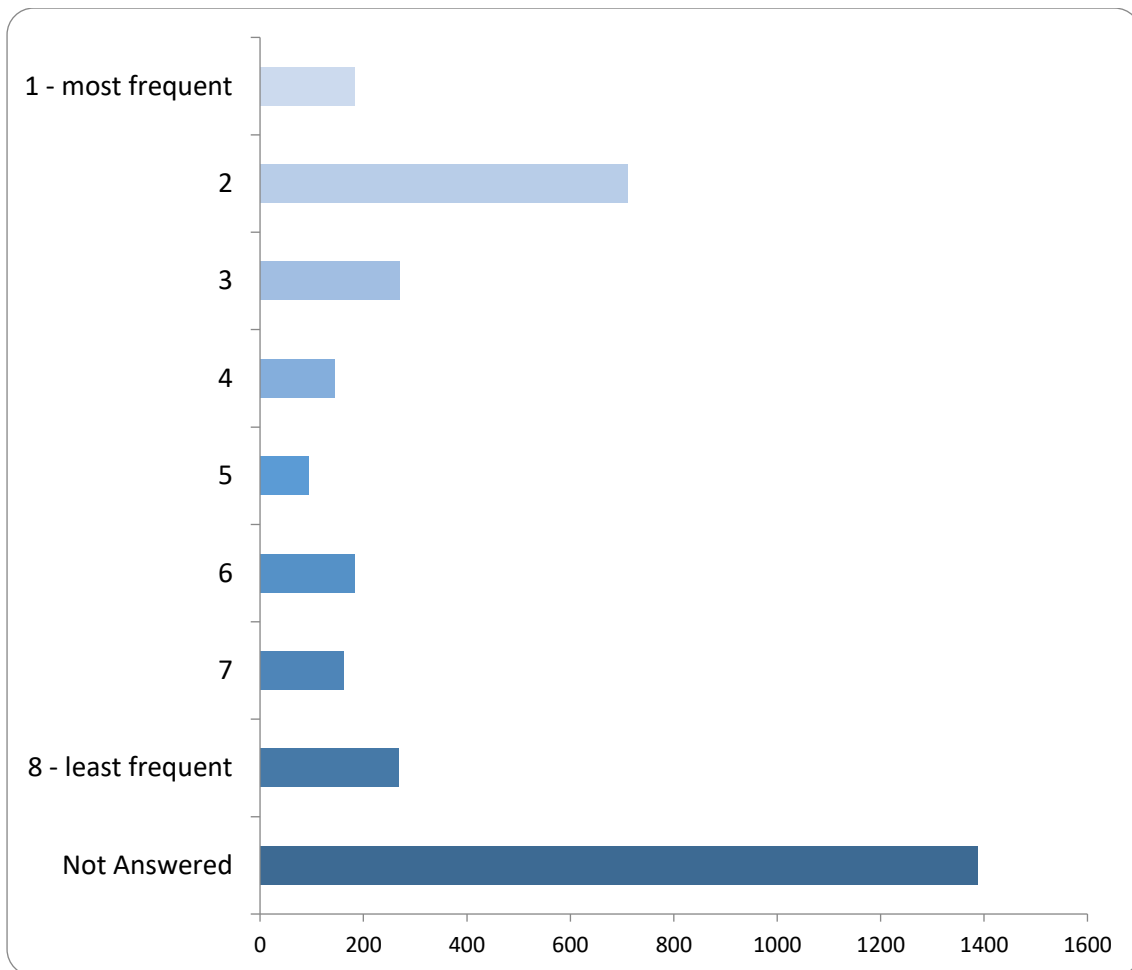


Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	134	3.94%
2	315	9.27%
3	257	7.56%
4	160	4.71%
5	178	5.24%
6	173	5.09%
7	476	14.00%
8 - least frequent	300	8.83%
Not Answered	1406	41.37%



## Children's activities

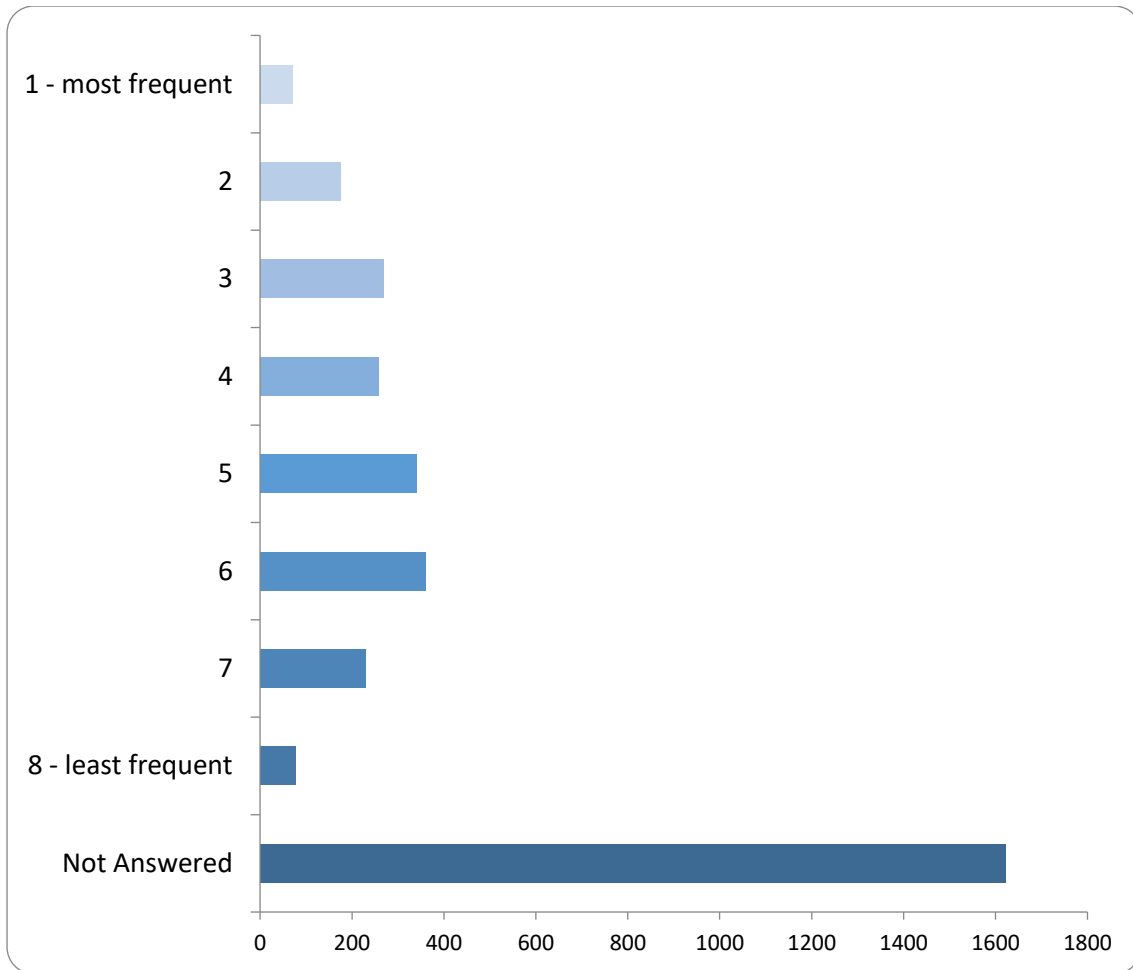
There were 2011 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	182	5.35%
2	711	20.92%
3	269	7.91%
4	144	4.24%
5	94	2.77%
6	182	5.35%
7	162	4.77%
8 - least frequent	267	7.86%
Not Answered	1388	40.84%

### Adult activities

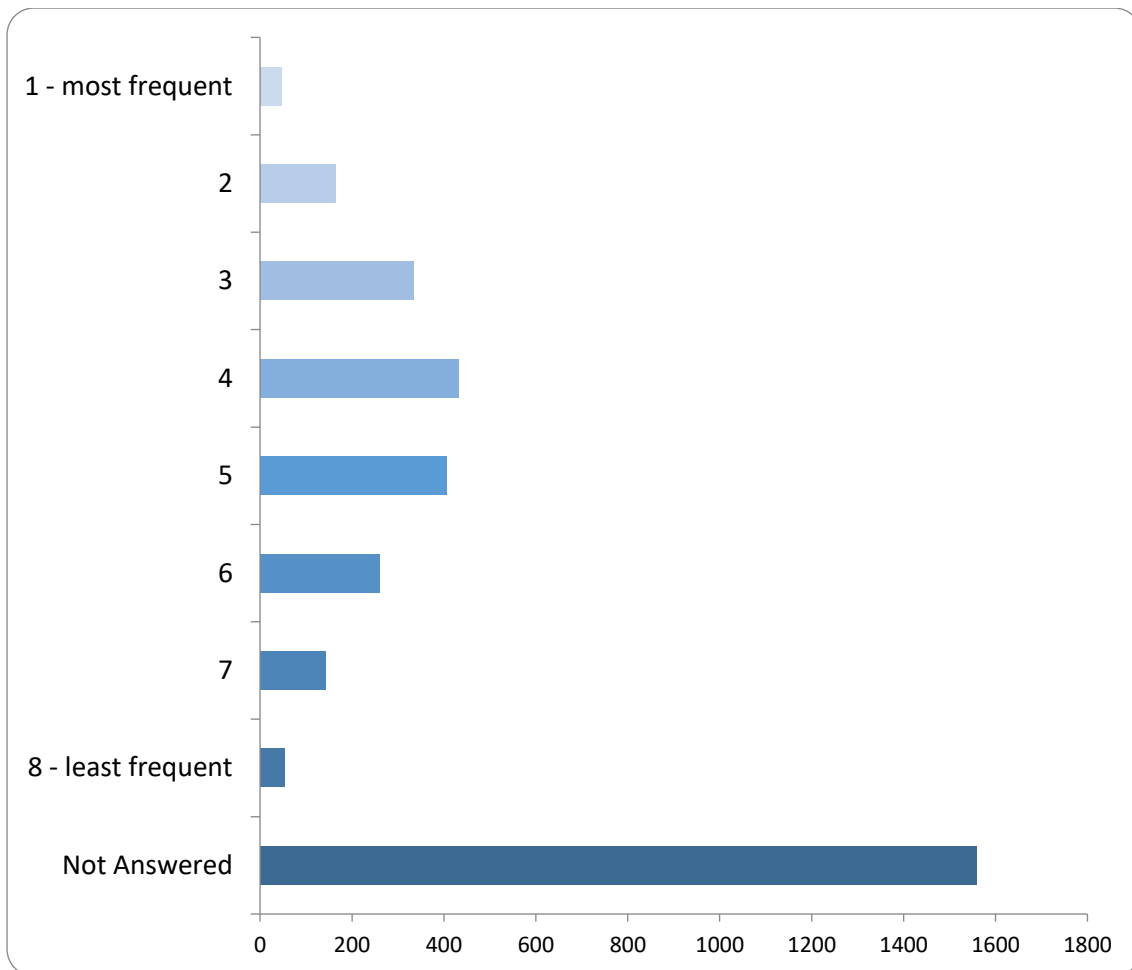
There were 1778 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	71	2.09%
2	175	5.15%
3	269	7.91%
4	258	7.59%
5	340	10.00%
6	359	10.56%
7	229	6.74%
8 - least frequent	77	2.27%
Not Answered	1621	47.69%

### Community events and meetings

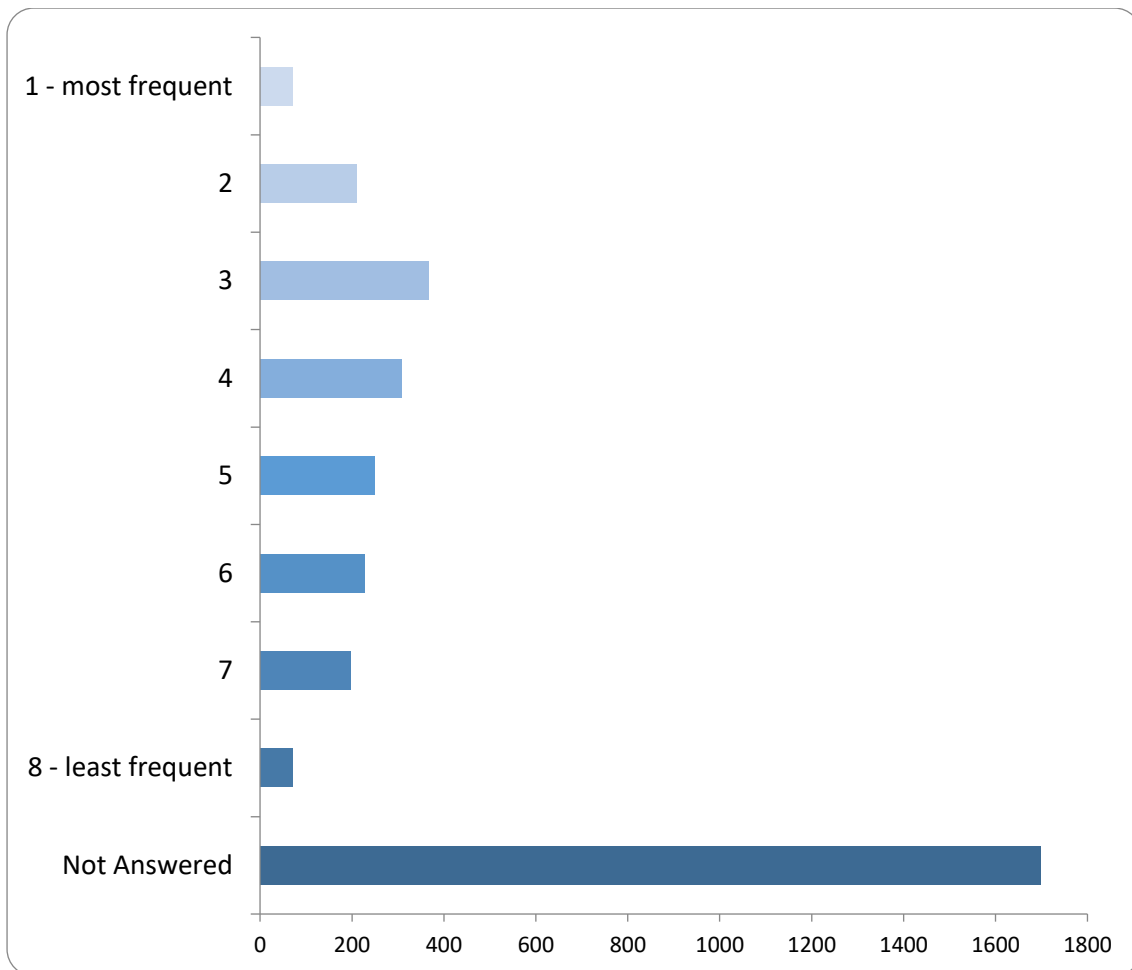
There were 1841 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	46	1.35%
2	165	4.85%
3	335	9.86%
4	432	12.71%
5	406	11.94%
6	261	7.68%
7	142	4.18%
8 - least frequent	54	1.59%
Not Answered	1558	45.84%

### Personal or school study

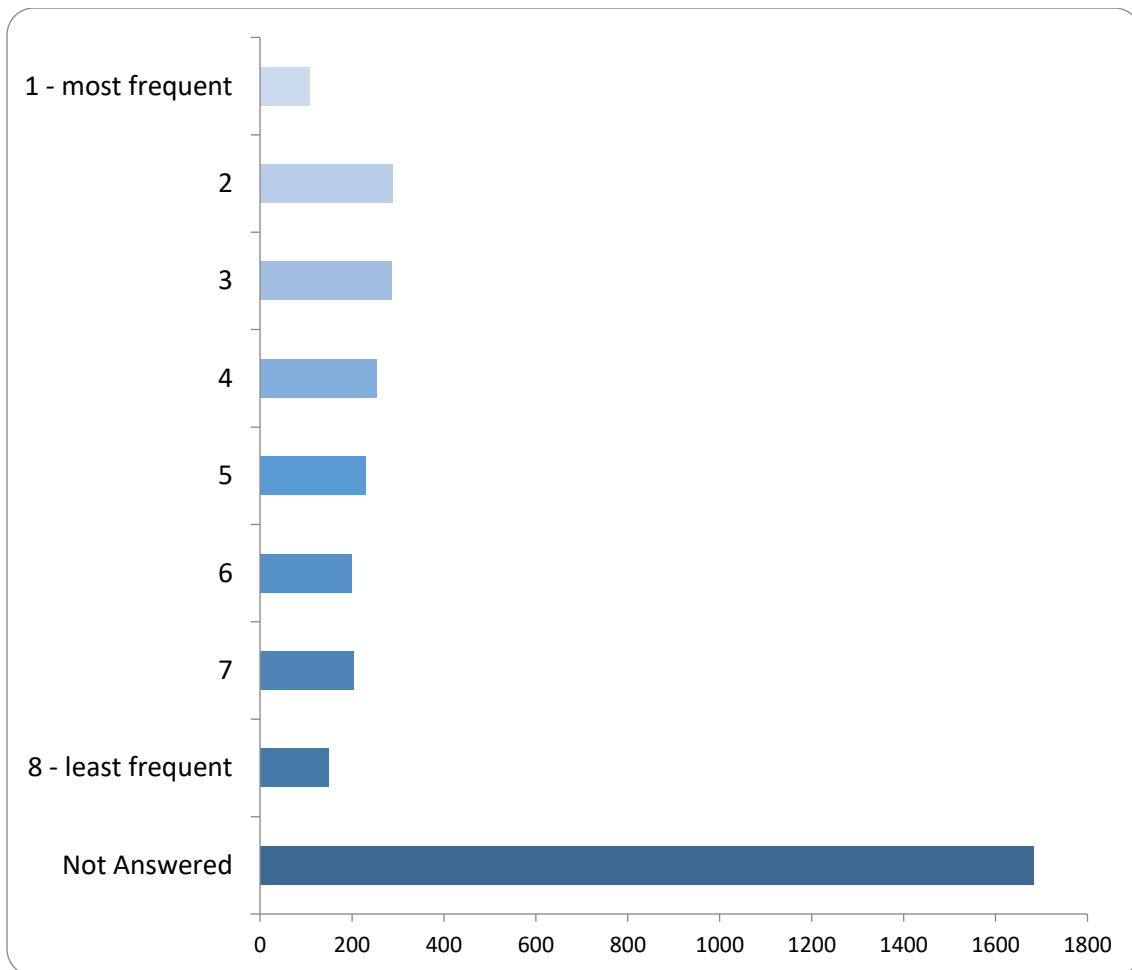
There were 1702 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	71	2.09%
2	211	6.21%
3	367	10.80%
4	308	9.06%
5	250	7.36%
6	228	6.71%
7	196	5.77%
8 - least frequent	71	2.09%
Not Answered	1697	49.93%

### Online resources such as e-books or audiobooks

There were 1716 responses to this part of the question.

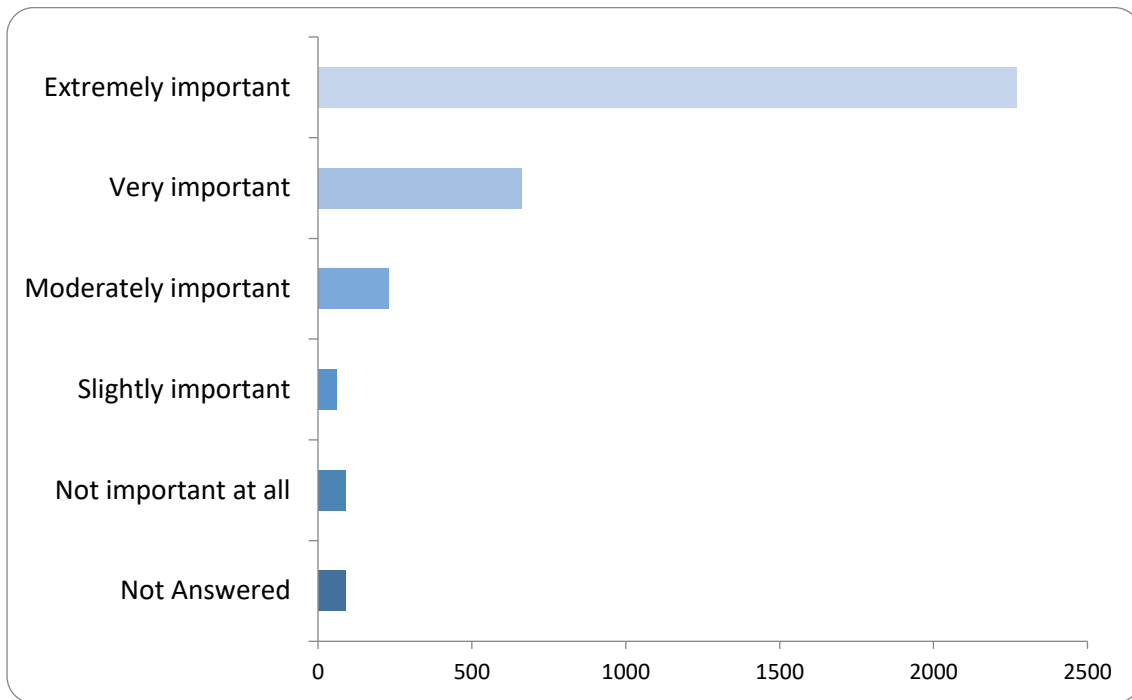


Option	Total	Percent
1 - most frequent	107	3.15%
2	289	8.50%
3	286	8.41%
4	254	7.47%
5	229	6.74%
6	199	5.85%
7	203	5.97%
8 - least frequent	149	4.38%
Not Answered	1683	49.51%

How important have you found libraries are for health and wellbeing?:

**Fostering a sense of community in your area**

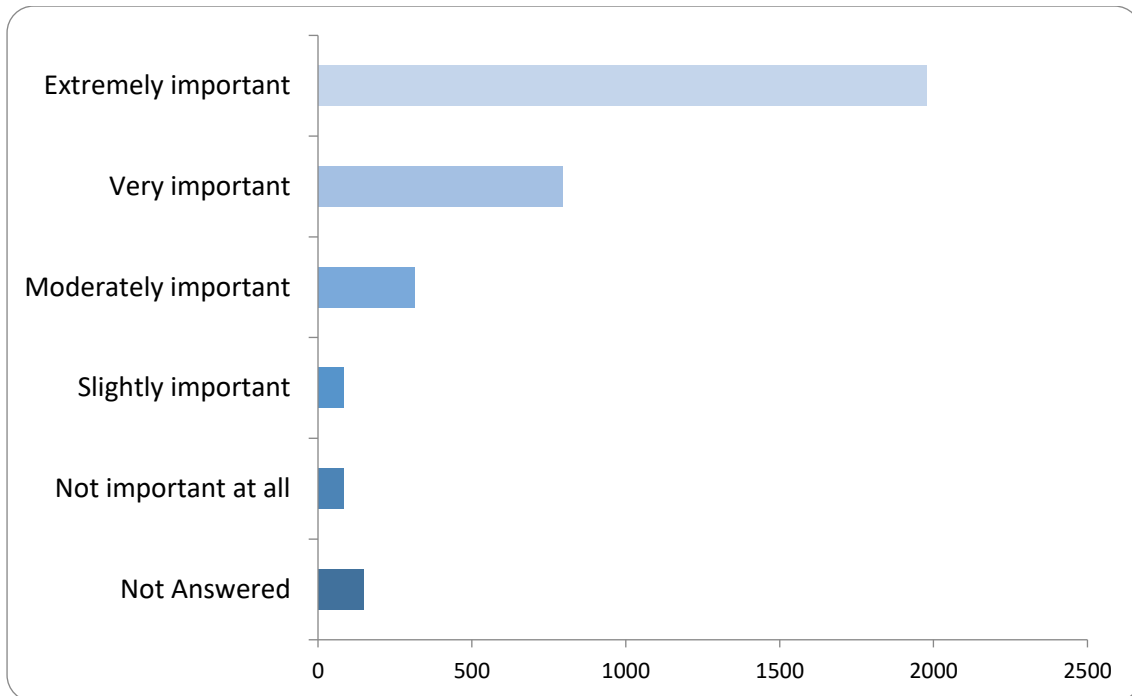
There were 3311 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	2270	66.78%
Very important	662	19.48%
Moderately important	228	6.71%
Slightly important	61	1.79%
Not important at all	90	2.65%
Not Answered	88	2.59%

### Improving health and wellbeing in your area

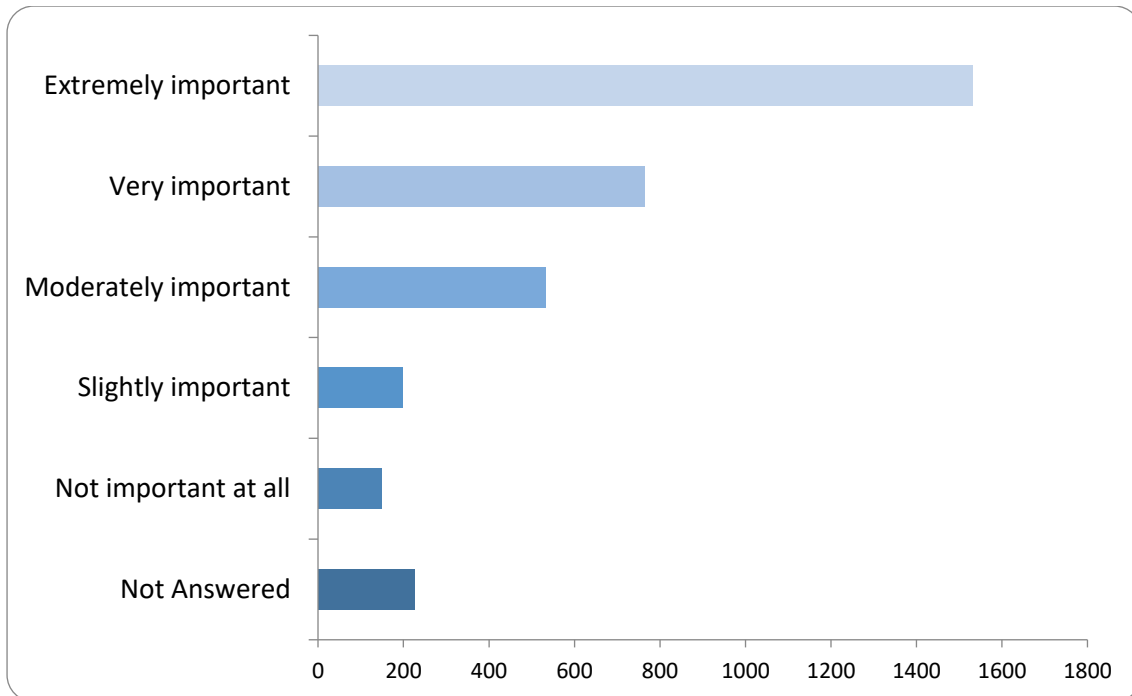
There were 3250 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	1976	58.13%
Very important	795	23.39%
Moderately important	314	9.24%
Slightly important	82	2.41%
Not important at all	83	2.44%
Not Answered	149	4.38%

### Positively impacting the local job economy or job market

There were 3173 responses to this part of the question.

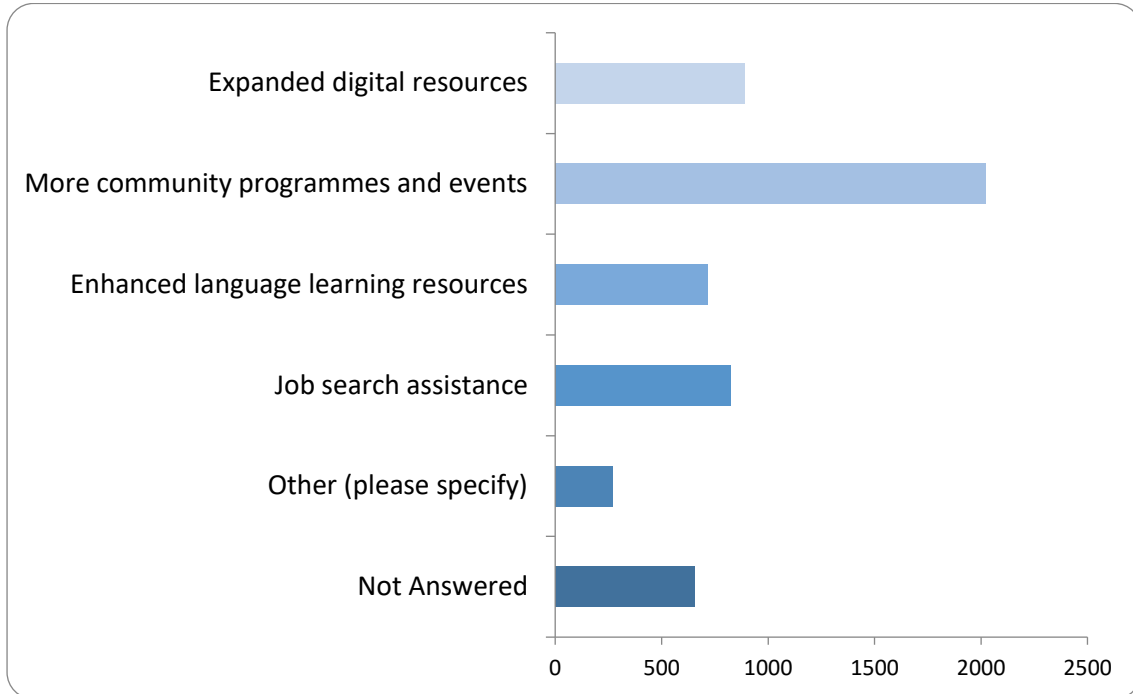


Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	1532	45.07%
Very important	763	22.45%
Moderately important	533	15.68%
Slightly important	197	5.80%
Not important at all	148	4.35%
Not Answered	226	6.65%



Are there any additional services or resources that you would like to see provided by your local library to better meet the needs of the community?

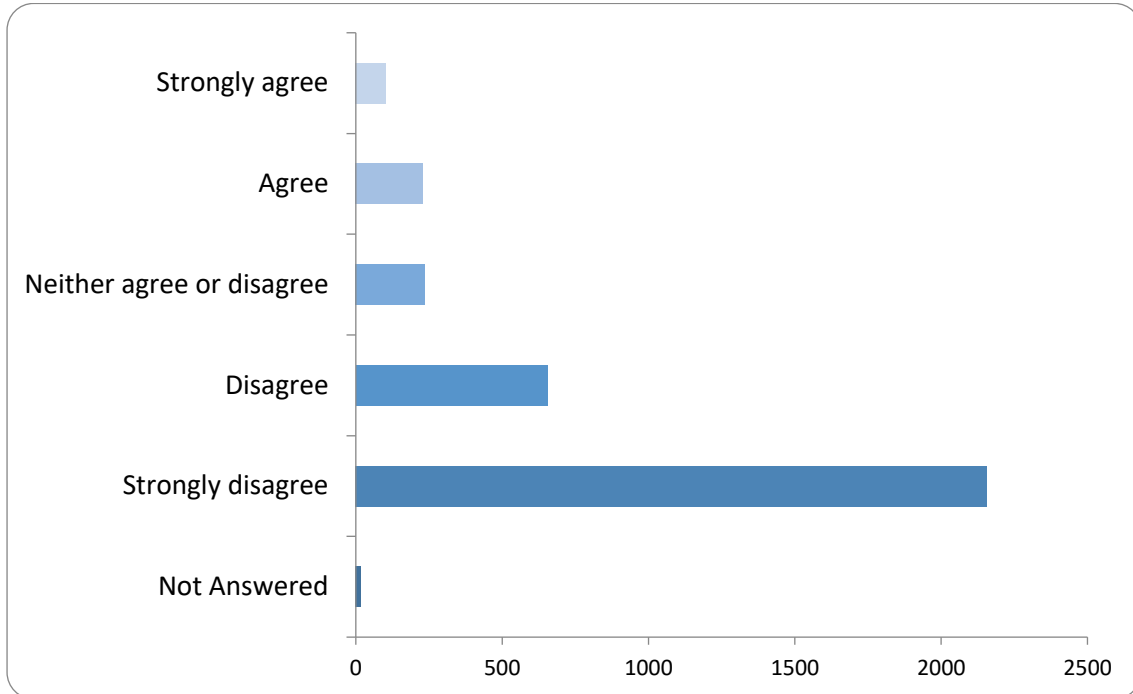
There were 2743 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Expanded digital resources	892	26.24%
More community programmes and events	2020	59.43%
Enhanced language learning resources	718	21.12%
Job search assistance	825	24.27%
Other (please specify)	268	7.88%
Not Answered	656	19.30%

Do you agree with our proposals that in order to meet the Council’s financial savings targets we need to close up to four branch libraries?

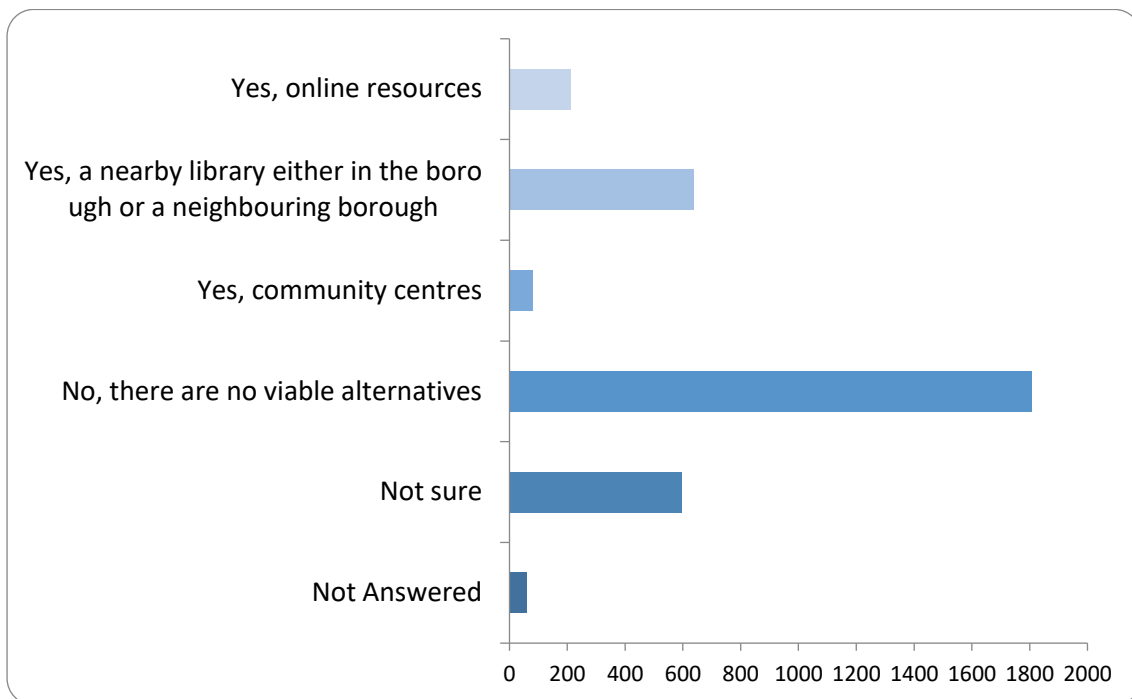
There were 3381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	103	3.03%
Agree	229	6.74%
Neither agree or disagree	236	6.94%
Disagree	656	19.30%
Strongly disagree	2157	63.46%
Not Answered	18	0.53%

Are there any alternative means of accessing some or all of the services provided by your local library that you could use if it were to close?

There were 3338 responses to this part of the question.

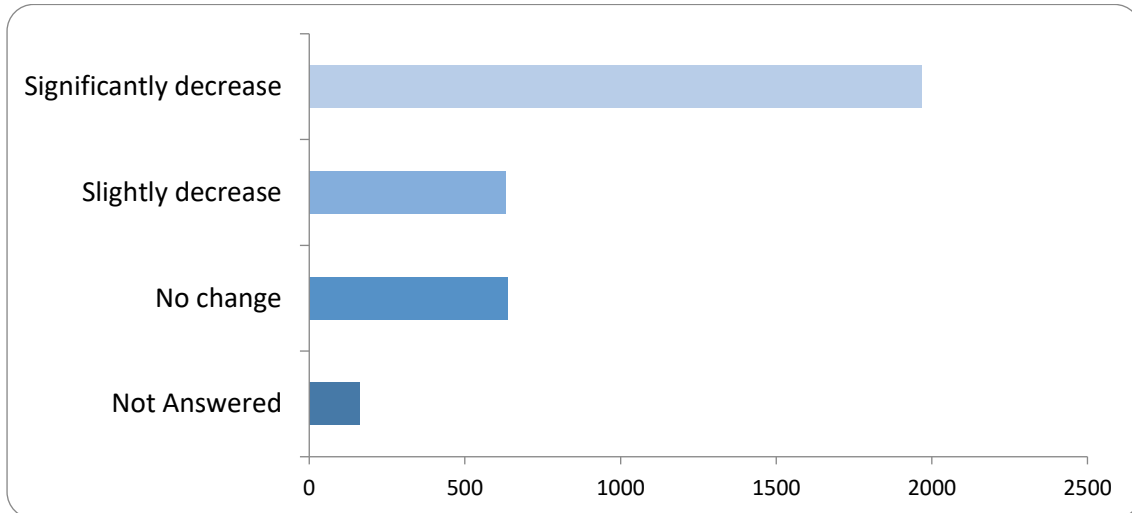


Option	Total	Percent
Yes, online resources	214	6.30%
Yes, a nearby library either in the borough or a neighbouring borough	640	18.83%
Yes, community centres	81	2.38%
No, there are no viable alternatives	1807	53.16%
Not sure	596	17.53%
Not Answered	61	1.79%

How would the closure of up to four branch libraries affect your ability to access these services or participate in these activities?

**Accessing information and resources**

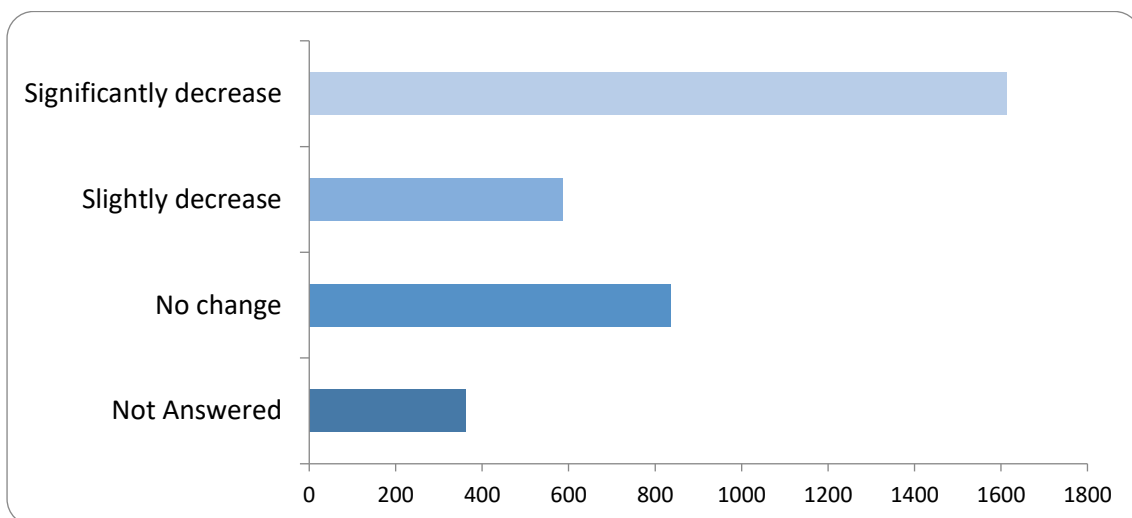
There were 3238 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	1968	57.90%
Slightly decrease	631	18.56%
No change	639	18.80%
Not Answered	161	4.74%

**Accessing educational materials or support**

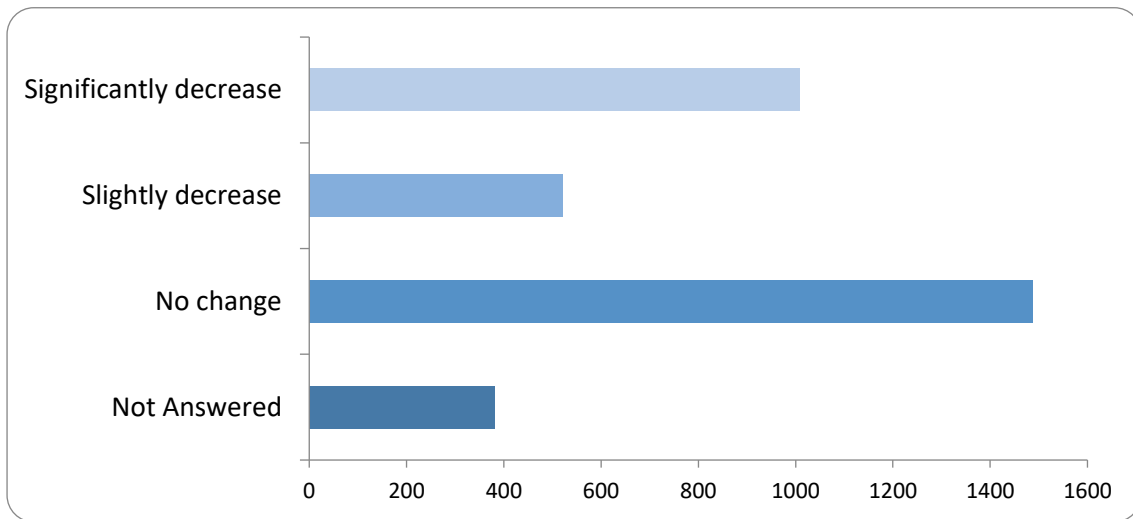
There were 3037 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	1614	47.48%
Slightly decrease	586	17.24%
No change	837	24.62%
Not Answered	362	10.65%

**Accessing computers or the internet**

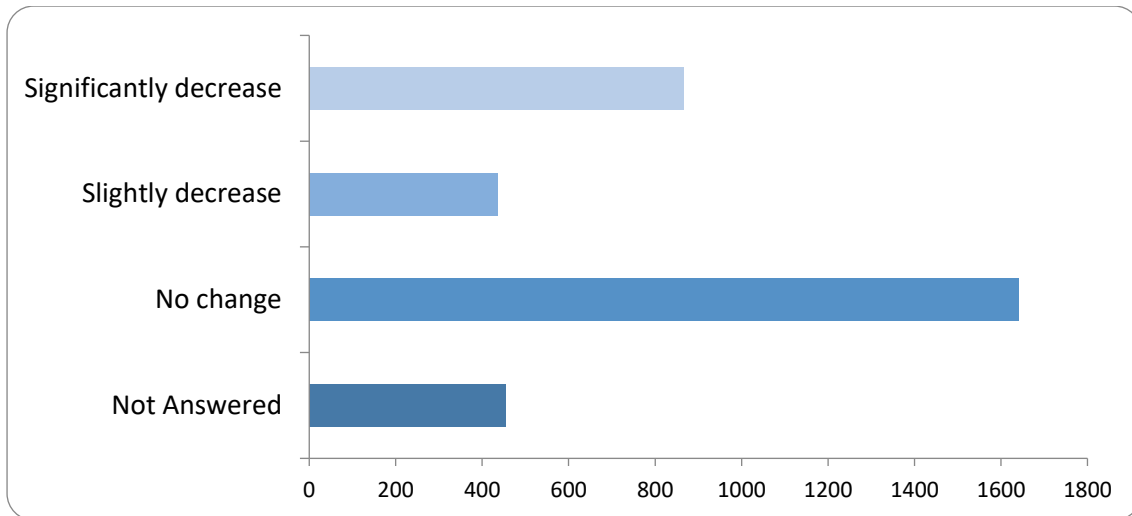
There were 3018 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	1009	29.69%
Slightly decrease	521	15.33%
No change	1488	43.78%
Not Answered	381	11.21%

### Accessing support for job searching or career development

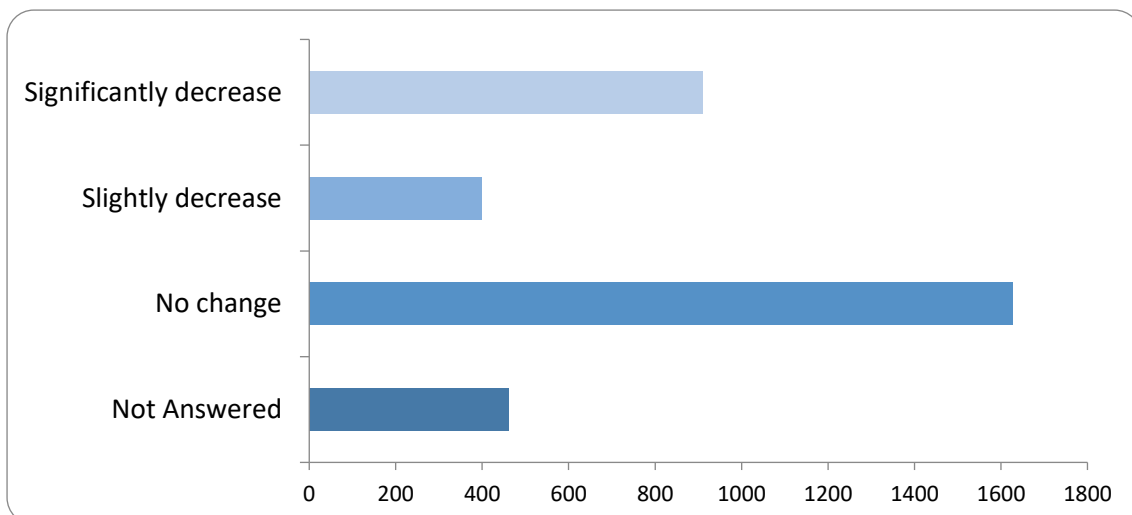
There were 2944 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	866	25.48%
Slightly decrease	436	12.83%
No change	1642	48.31%
Not Answered	455	13.39%

### Accessing materials or support for learning English or other languages

There were 2937 responses to this part of the question.

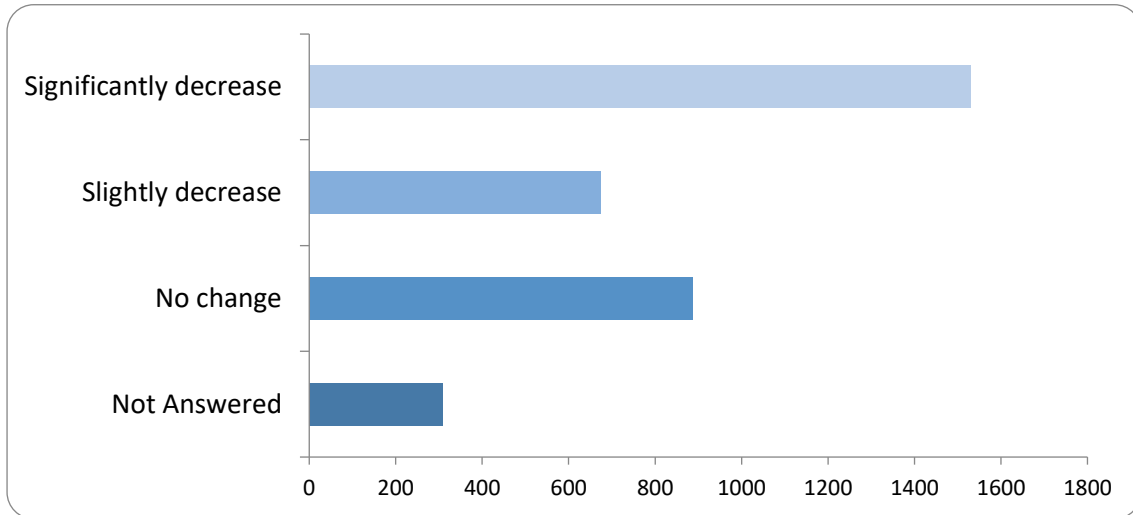


Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	911	26.80%
Slightly decrease	399	11.74%

No change	1627	47.87%
Not Answered	462	13.59%

**Participation in cultural or recreational activities**

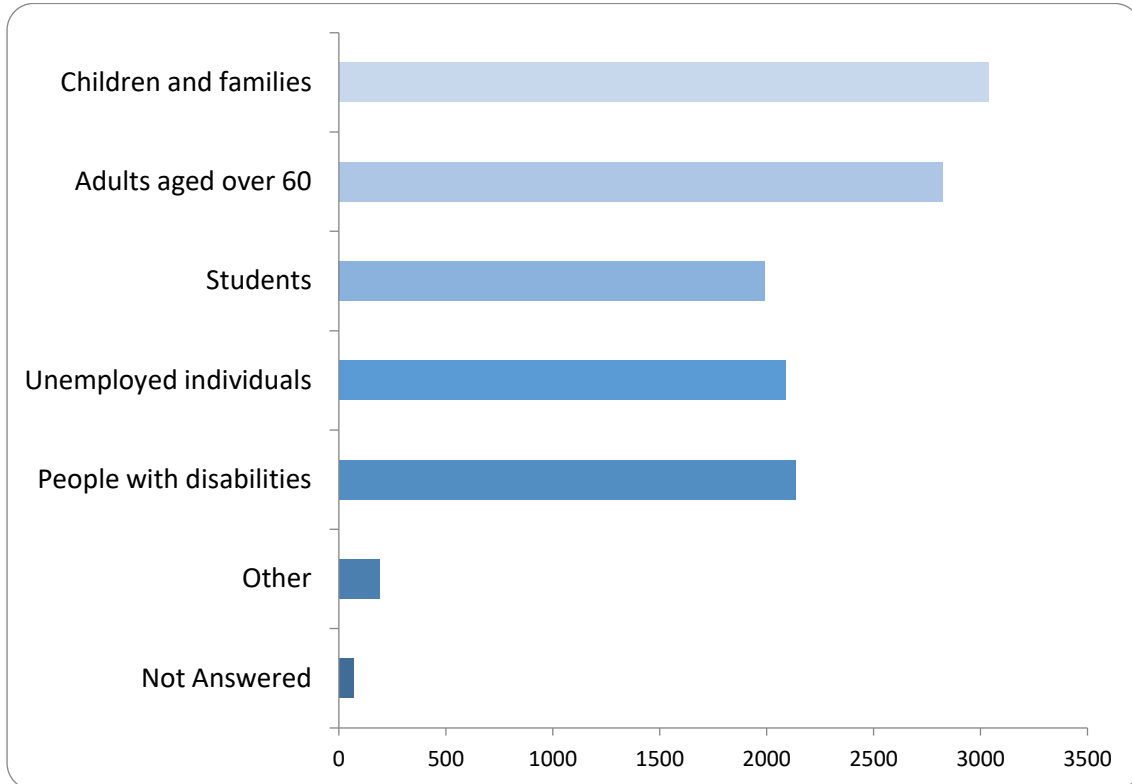
There were 3091 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly decrease	1529	44.98%
Slightly decrease	674	19.83%
No change	888	26.13%
Not Answered	308	9.06%

Are there any specific groups within the community that you believe would be disproportionately affected by the closure of the library?

There were 3330 responses to this part of the question.

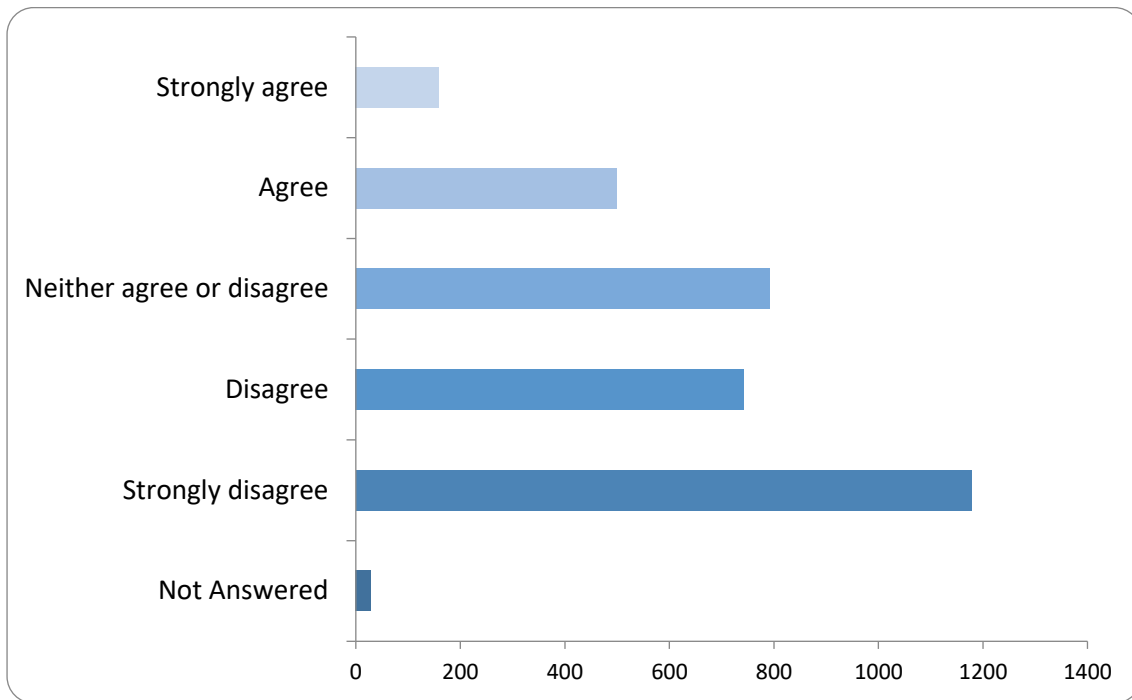


Option	Total	Percent
Children and families	3037	89.35%
Adults aged over 60	2822	83.02%
Students	1992	58.61%
Unemployed individuals	2087	61.40%
People with disabilities	2134	62.78%
Other	190	5.59%
Not Answered	69	2.03%



We propose that in order to contribute to the savings the Council needs to make, the library budget to buy new stock should reduce by a one-off 61% (£161,000) in 2024/25 and £30,000 in each of the two following years. Do you agree with our proposal?

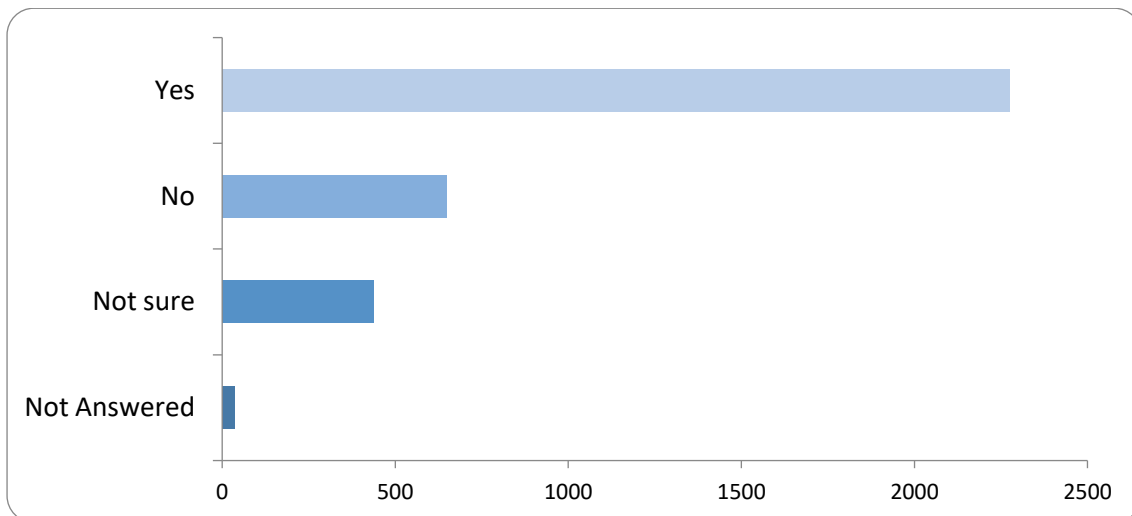
There were 3370 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	159	4.68%
Agree	499	14.68%
Neither agree or disagree	791	23.27%
Disagree	743	21.86%
Strongly disagree	1178	34.66%
Not Answered	29	0.85%

Do you agree that the library service has published an appropriate vision?

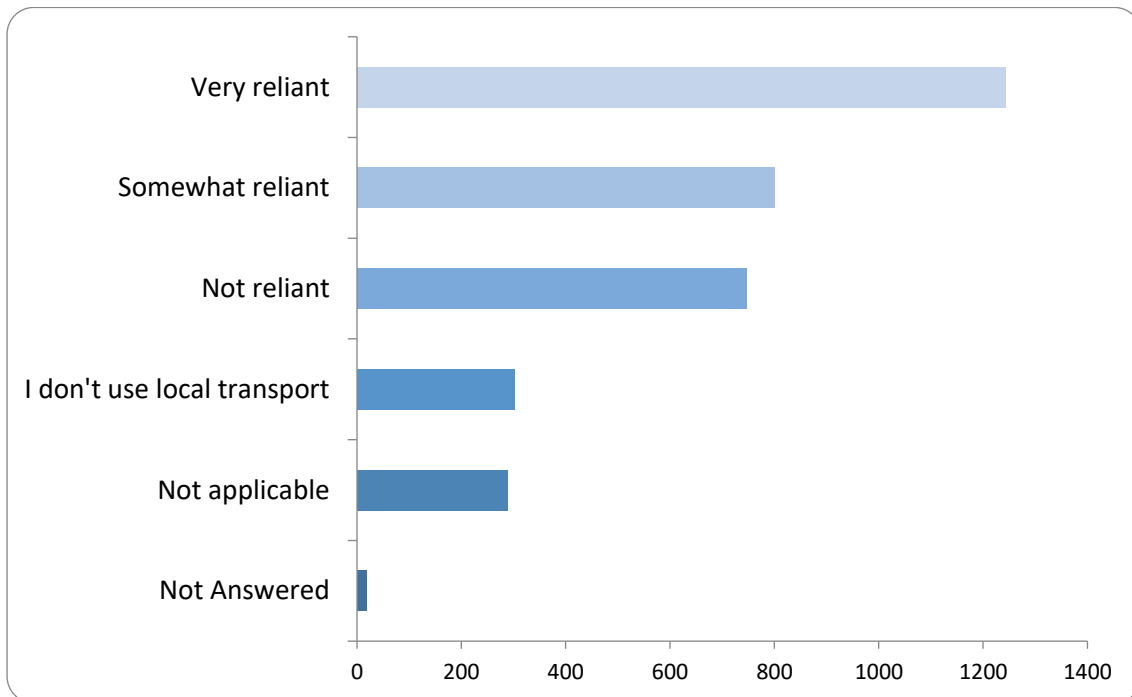
There were 3363 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	2275	66.93%
No	650	19.12%
Not sure	438	12.89%
Not Answered	36	1.06%

How reliant are you on local public transport links to access other nearby libraries if your nearest library were to close?

There were 3380 responses to this part of the question.

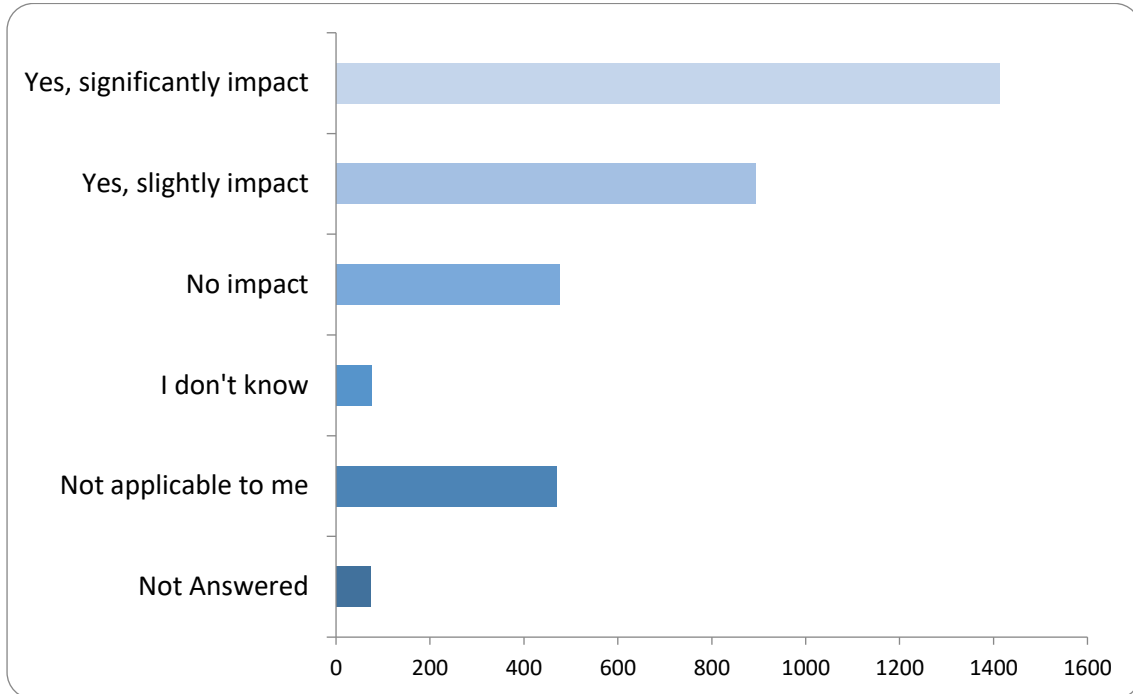


Option	Total	Percent
Very reliant	1242	36.54%
Somewhat reliant	801	23.57%
Not reliant	747	21.98%
I don't use local transport	301	8.86%
Not applicable	289	8.50%
Not Answered	19	0.56%

Would the closure of your nearest library impact your ability to access other libraries due to transportation limitations or a disability?

**Transport limitations**

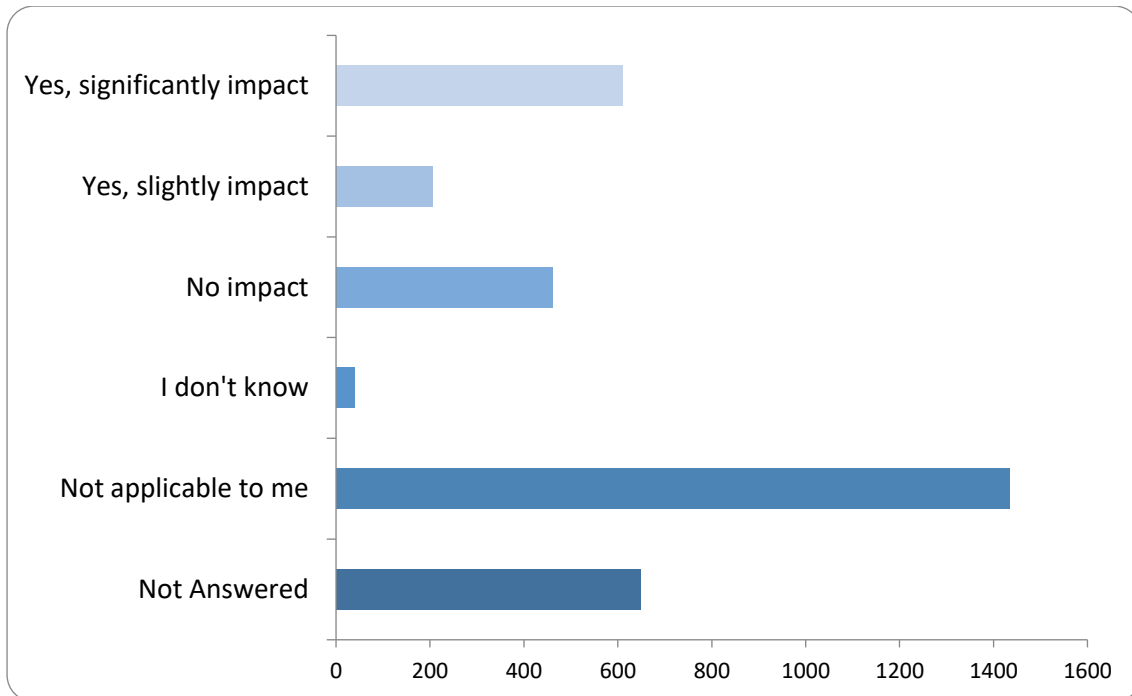
There were 3326 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, significantly impact	1412	41.54%
Yes, slightly impact	893	26.27%
No impact	476	14.00%
I don't know	75	2.21%
Not applicable to me	470	13.83%
Not Answered	73	2.15%

## Disability

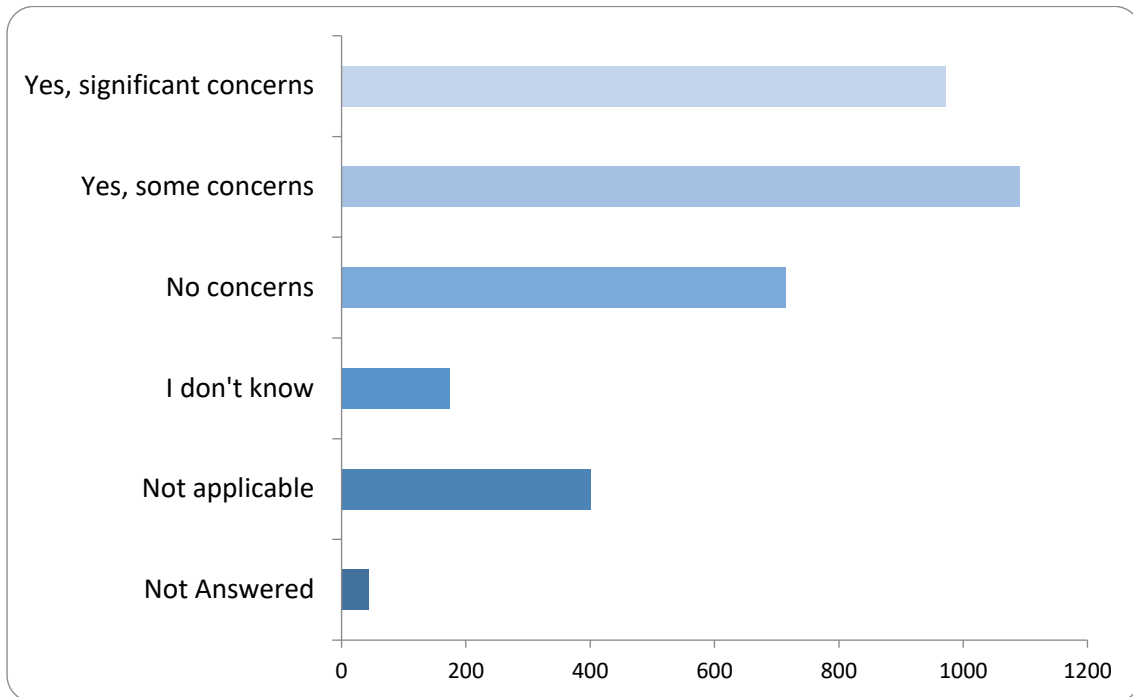
There were 2750 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, significantly impact	611	17.98%
Yes, slightly impact	205	6.03%
No impact	461	13.56%
I don't know	40	1.18%
Not applicable to me	1433	42.16%
Not Answered	649	19.09%

Do you have any concerns about the reliability or availability of local transport options for accessing alternative libraries?

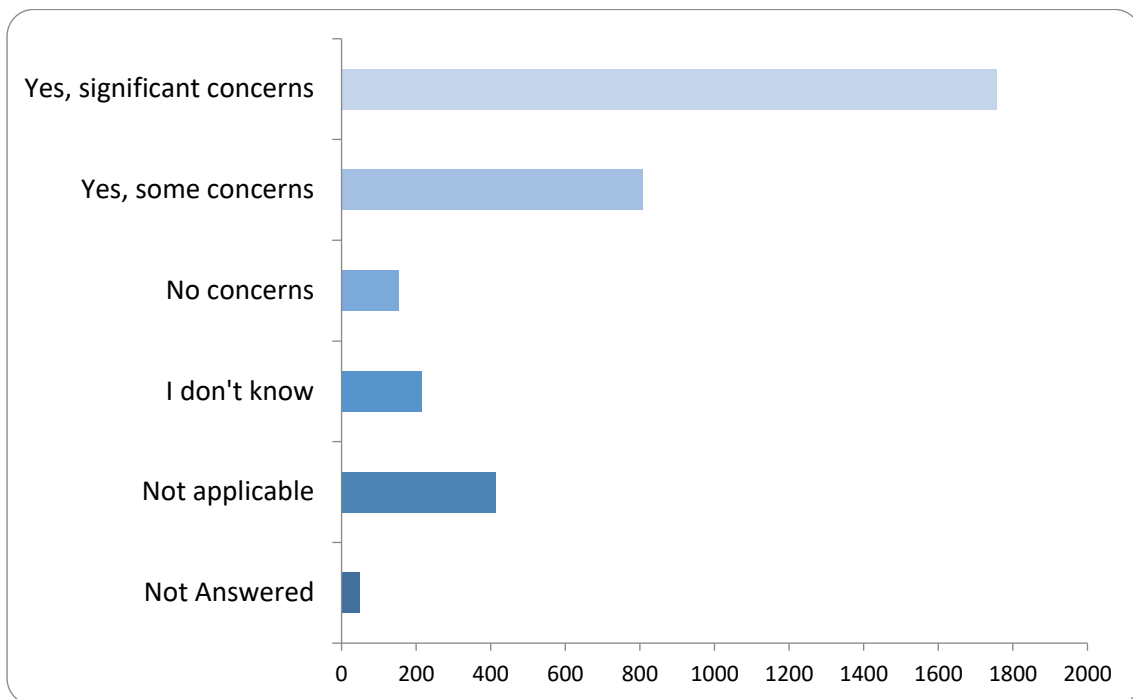
There were 3355 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, significant concerns	972	28.60%
Yes, some concerns	1091	32.10%
No concerns	715	21.04%
I don't know	175	5.15%
Not applicable	402	11.83%
Not Answered	44	1.29%

Do you have any concerns about the availability of alternative accommodations or services for individuals with disabilities if the library were to close?

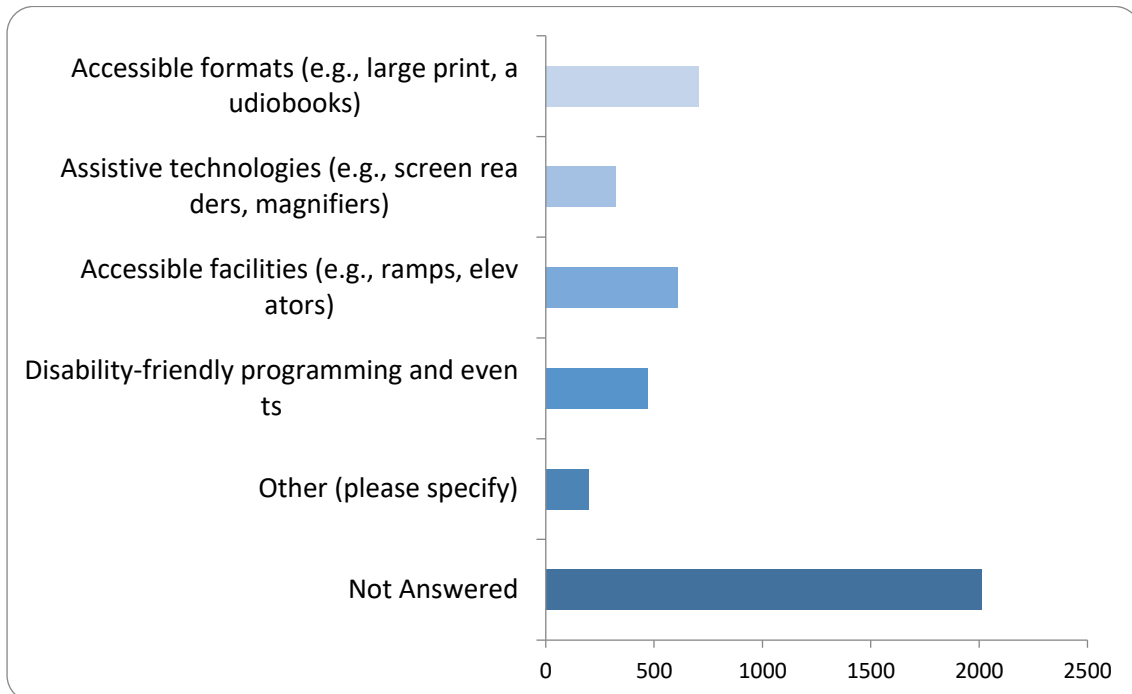
There were 3350 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, significant concerns	1757	51.69%
Yes, some concerns	808	23.77%
No concerns	154	4.53%
I don't know	216	6.35%
Not applicable	415	12.21%
Not Answered	49	1.44%

Are there any specific disability accommodations or services provided by your local library that you or a household member rely on?

There were 1388 responses to this part of the question.

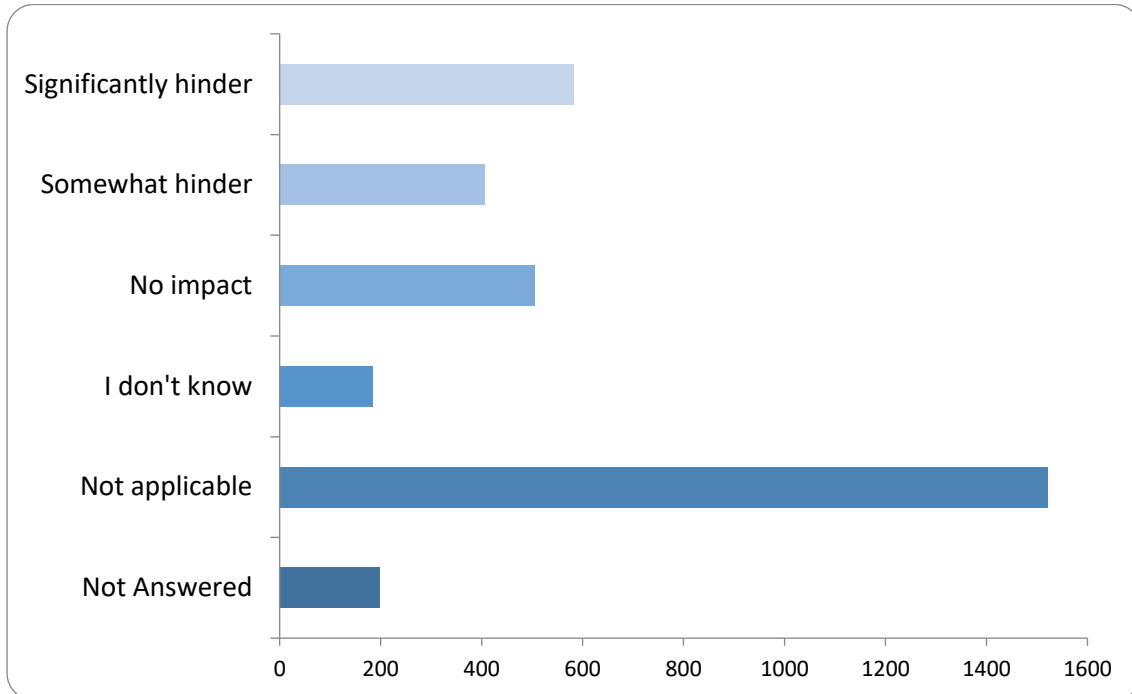


Option	Total	Percent
Accessible formats (e.g., large print, audiobooks)	708	20.83%
Assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers, magnifiers)	323	9.50%
Accessible facilities (e.g., ramps, elevators)	610	17.95%
Disability-friendly programming and events	470	13.83%
Other (please specify)	196	5.77%
Not Answered	2011	59.16%



Would the closure of the library impact your ability, or a household member's ability to access disability-specific resources or accommodations?

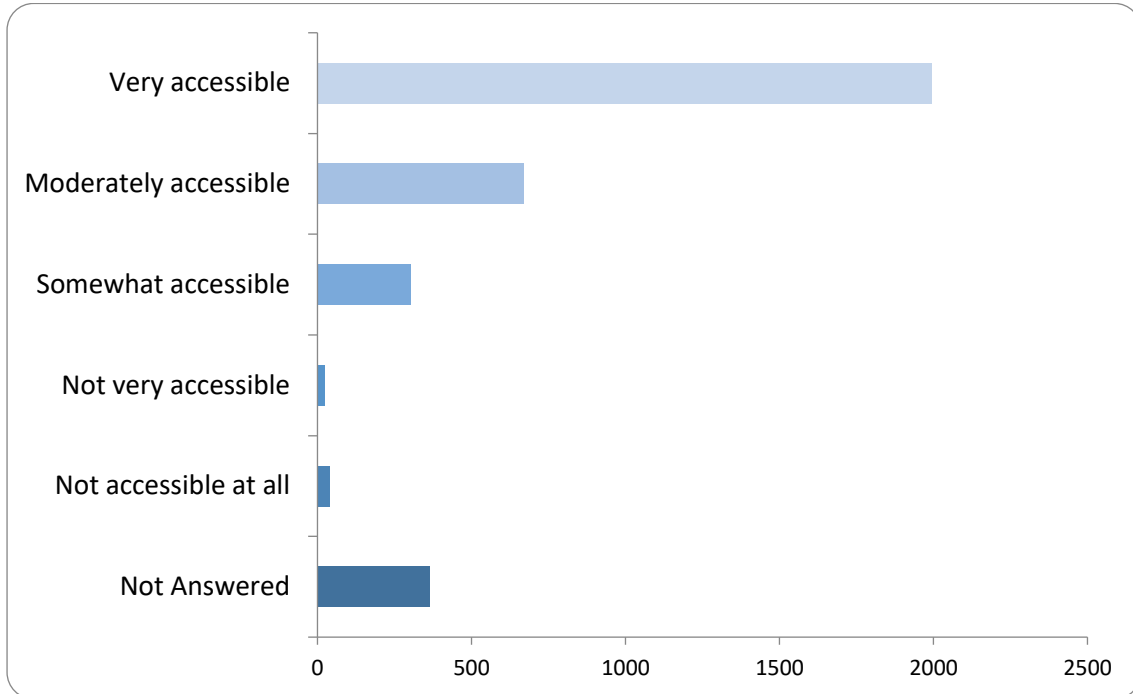
There were 3200 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Significantly hinder	583	17.15%
Somewhat hinder	406	11.94%
No impact	505	14.86%
I don't know	185	5.44%
Not applicable	1521	44.75%
Not Answered	199	5.85%

How accessible do you find the current library facilities and services for individuals with disabilities?

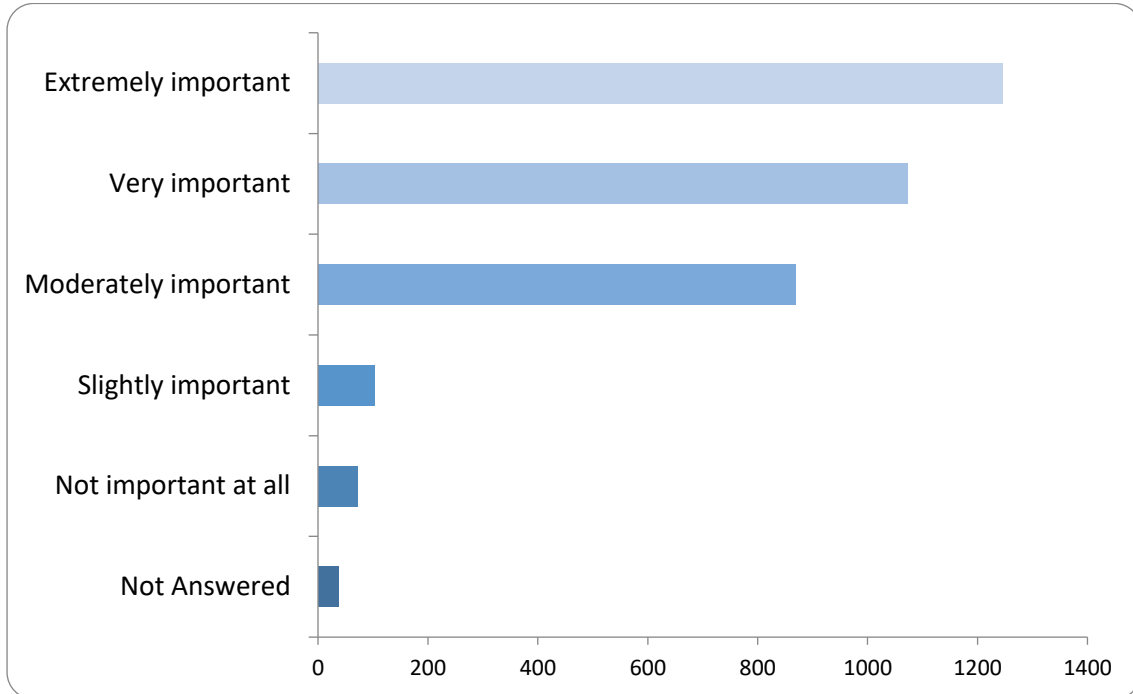
There were 3033 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very accessible	1996	58.72%
Moderately accessible	671	19.74%
Somewhat accessible	303	8.91%
Not very accessible	24	0.71%
Not accessible at all	39	1.15%
Not Answered	366	10.77%

How important is the condition and comfort of the library building to your overall satisfaction with library services?

There were 3362 responses to this part of the question.

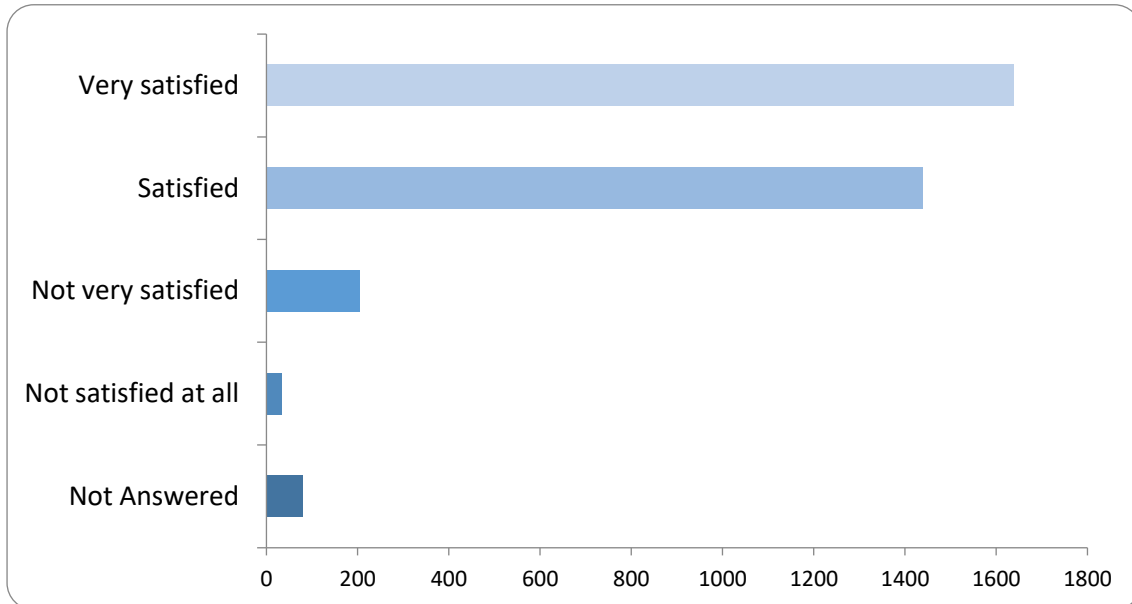


Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	1246	36.66%
Very important	1073	31.57%
Moderately important	869	25.57%
Slightly important	103	3.03%
Not important at all	71	2.09%
Not Answered	37	1.09%

Please tell us how satisfied you are with our current library facilities

**The variety and quality of books available at your local library**

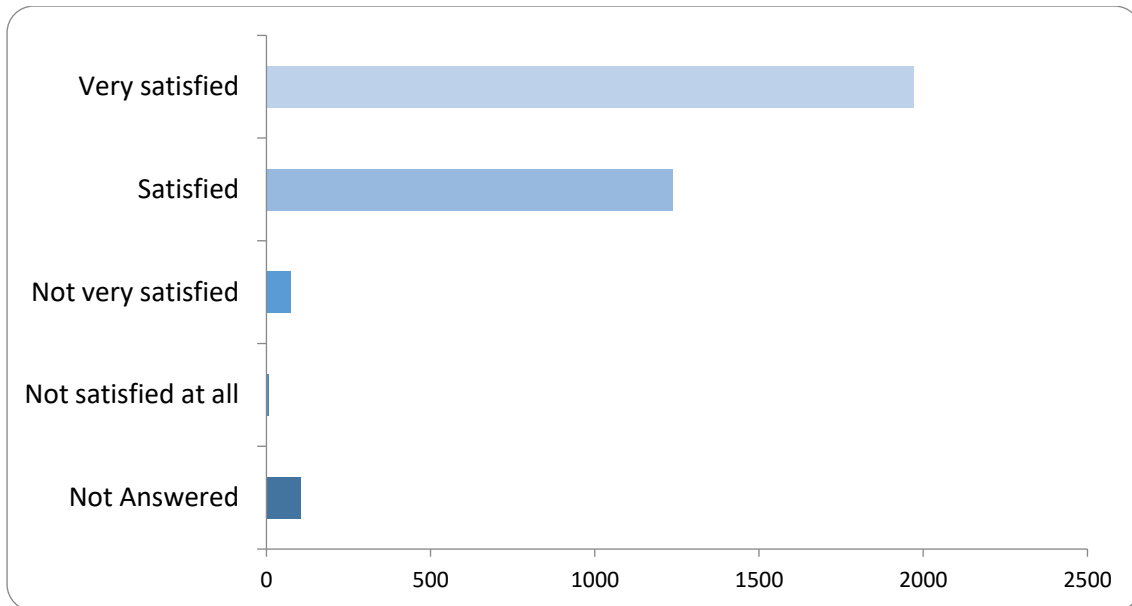
There were 3319 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	1639	48.22%
Satisfied	1439	42.34%
Not very satisfied	206	6.06%
Not satisfied at all	35	1.03%
Not Answered	80	2.35%

### The condition and cleanliness of your local library building

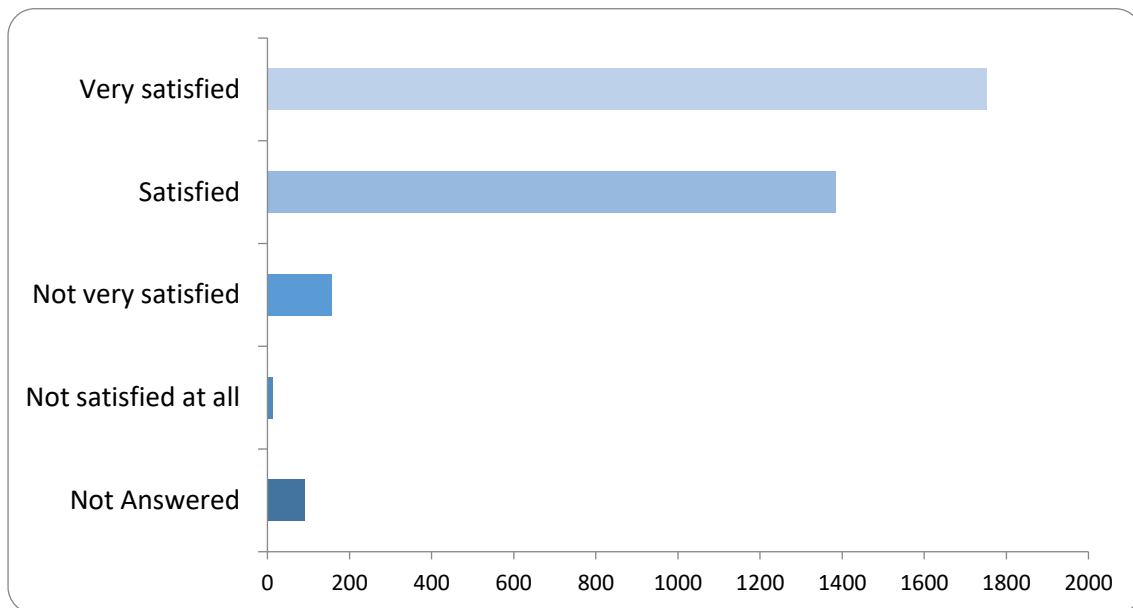
There were 3294 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	1972	58.02%
Satisfied	1238	36.42%
Not very satisfied	75	2.21%
Not satisfied at all	9	0.26%
Not Answered	105	3.09%

**Comfort and amenities available within the library building (eg seating, lighting, heating/cooling etc)**

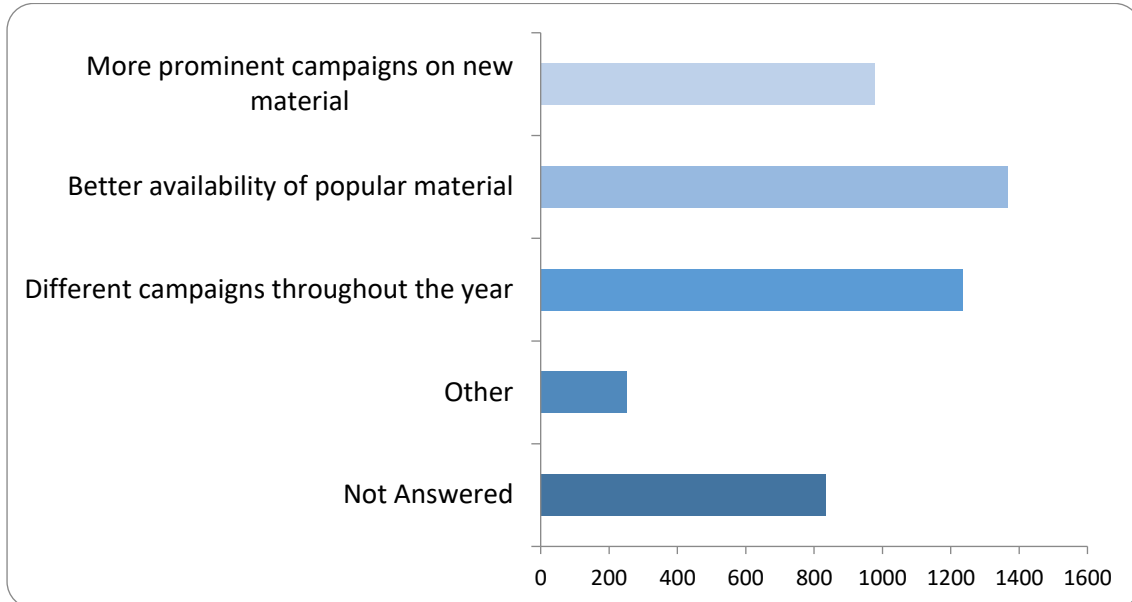
There were 3308 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	1753	51.57%
Satisfied	1385	40.75%
Not very satisfied	156	4.59%
Not satisfied at all	14	0.41%
Not Answered	91	2.68%

Do you have any specific suggestions for improving the variety and quality of books available at the library?

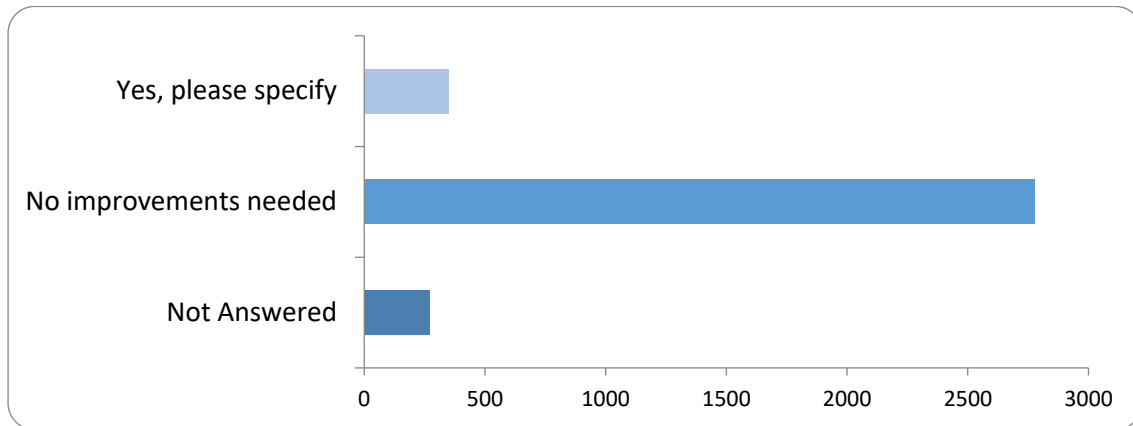
There were 2564 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
More prominent campaigns on new material	977	28.74%
Better availability of popular material	1367	40.22%
Different campaigns throughout the year	1234	36.30%
Other	253	7.44%
Not Answered	835	24.57%

Are there any specific improvements you would like to see in the condition and cleanliness of the library building?

There were 3128 responses to this part of the question.

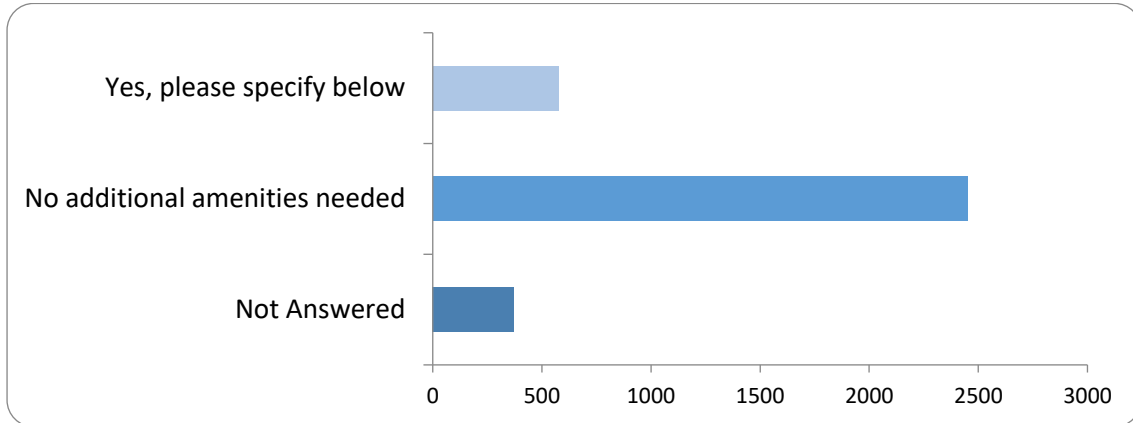


Option	Total	Percent
Yes, please specify	351	10.33%
No improvements needed	2777	81.70%
Not Answered	271	7.97%



Are there any additional amenities or facilities you would like to see added to enhance the comfort and usability of the library building?

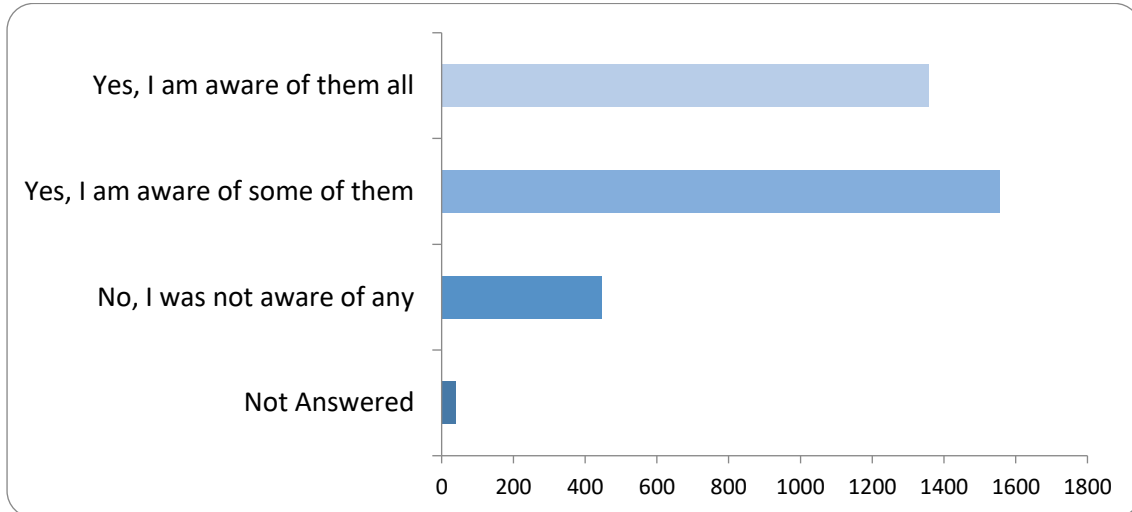
There were 3027 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, please specify below	576	16.95%
No additional amenities needed	2451	72.11%
Not Answered	372	10.94%

Are you aware of the various activities and programmes offered at your local library, such as Baby Bounce, Wiggle and Giggle, Stay and Play, and Knit and Natter?

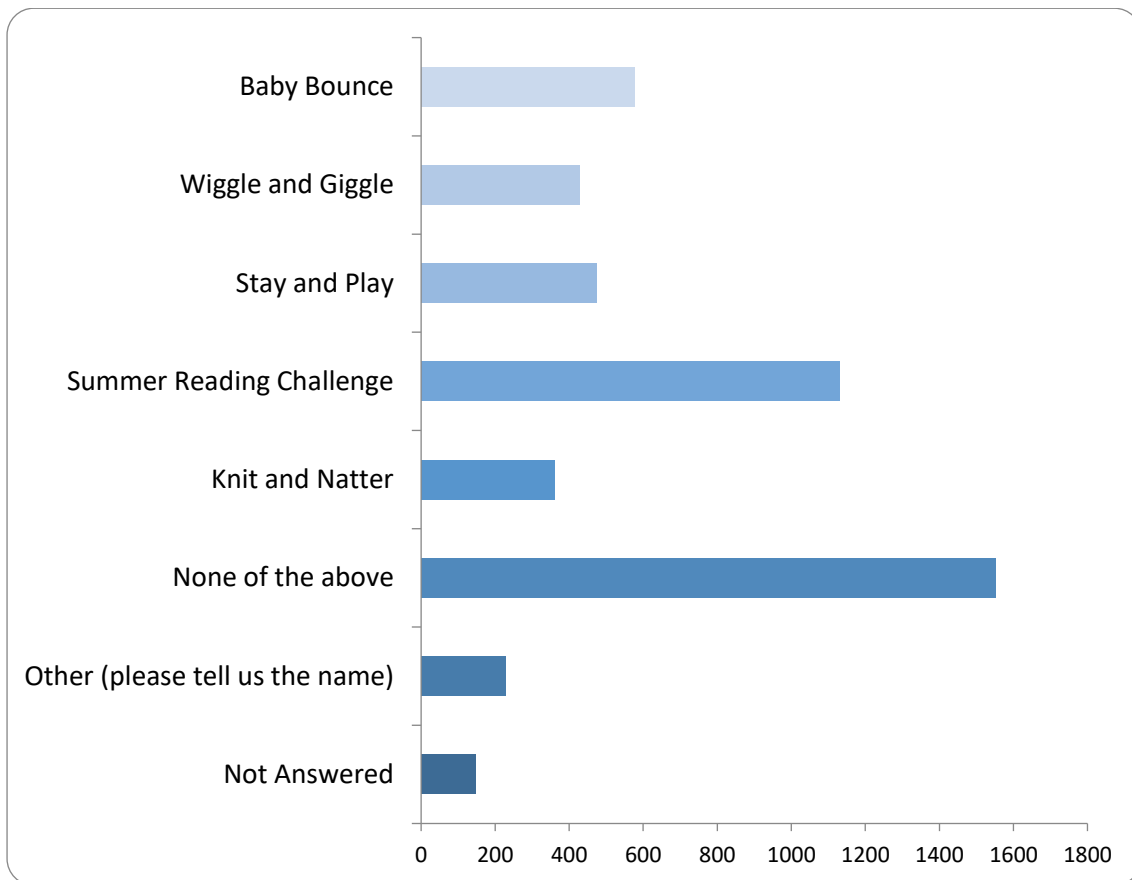
There were 3360 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I am aware of them all	1359	39.98%
Yes, I am aware of some of them	1555	45.75%
No, I was not aware of any	446	13.12%
Not Answered	39	1.15%

Have you participated in any of the following library activities in the past year?

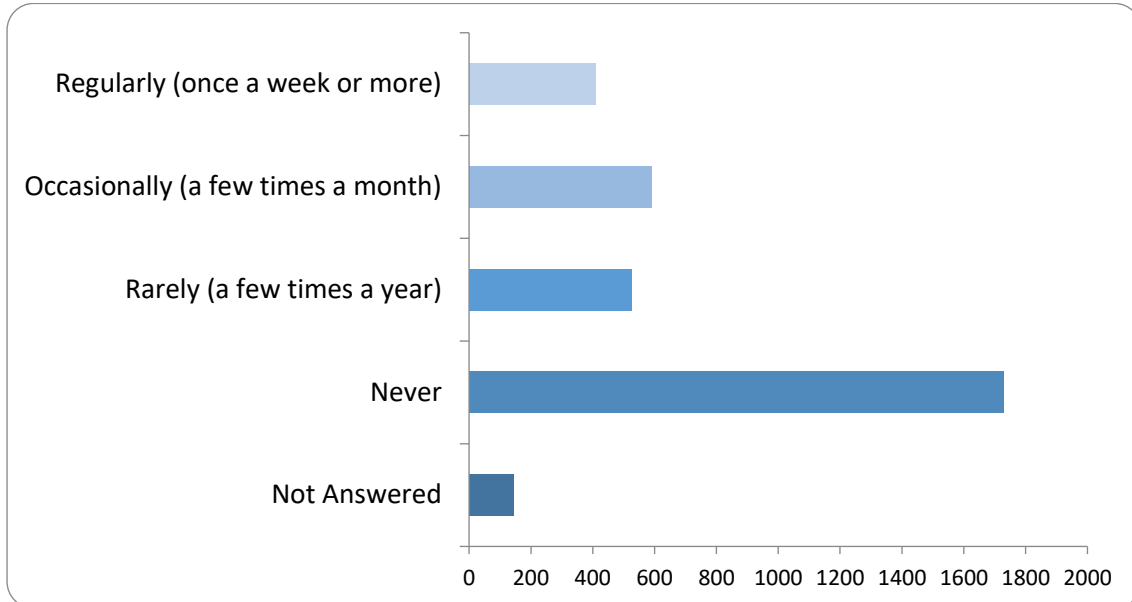
There were 3251 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Baby Bounce	576	16.95%
Wiggle and Giggle	429	12.62%
Stay and Play	473	13.92%
Summer Reading Challenge	1131	33.27%
Knit and Natter	361	10.62%
None of the above	1553	45.69%
Other (please tell us the name)	228	6.71%
Not Answered	148	4.35%

How often do you participate in library activities such as Baby Bounce, Wiggle and Giggle, Stay and Play, or Knit and Natter?

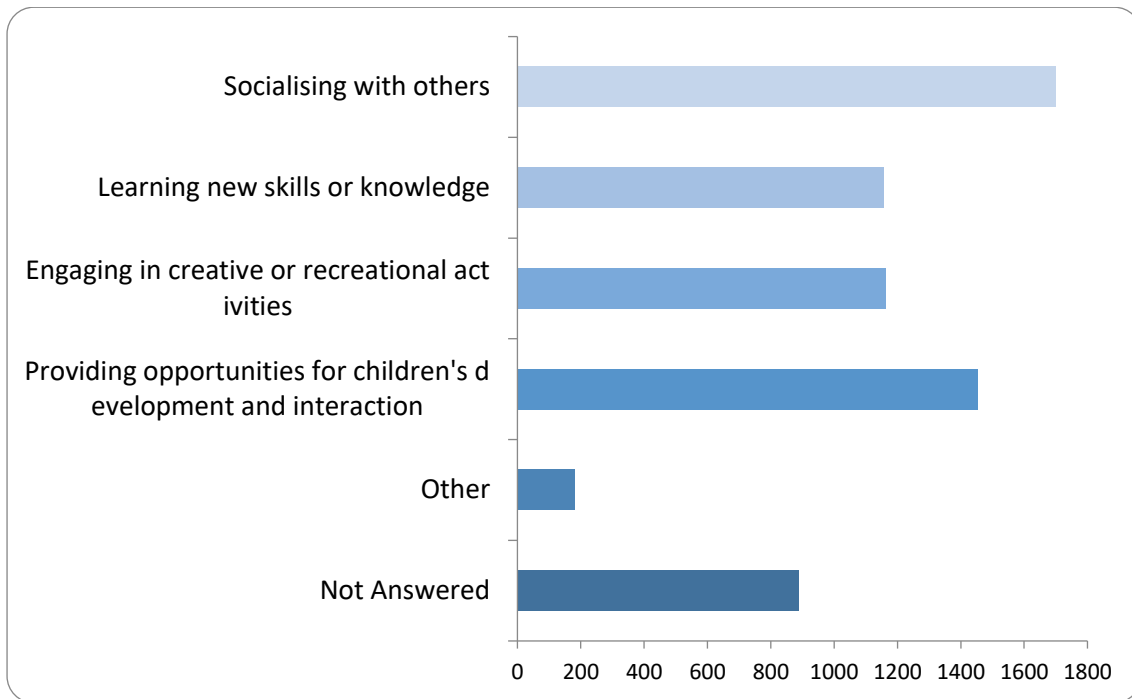
There were 3254 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Regularly (once a week or more)	410	12.06%
Occasionally (a few times a month)	589	17.33%
Rarely (a few times a year)	525	15.45%
Never	1730	50.90%
Not Answered	145	4.27%

What do you enjoy most about the library activities you have participated in?

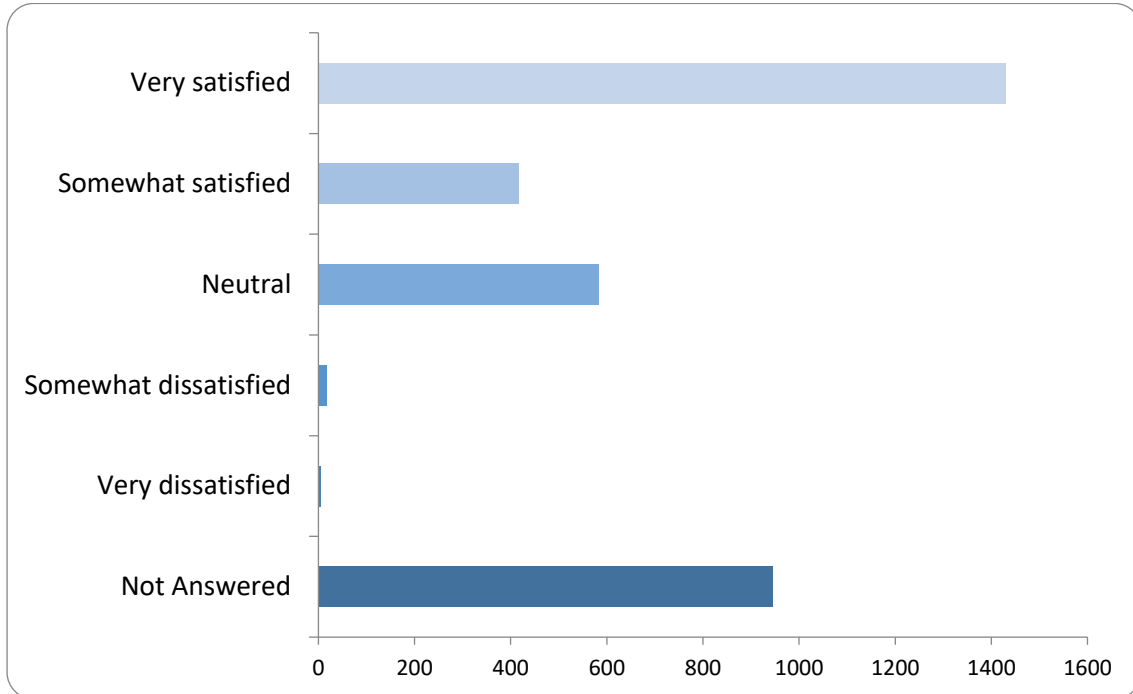
There were 2510 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Socialising with others	1701	50.04%
Learning new skills or knowledge	1158	34.07%
Engaging in creative or recreational activities	1165	34.27%
Providing opportunities for children's development and interaction	1455	42.81%
Other	181	5.33%
Not Answered	889	26.15%

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the library activities you have participated in (e.g., Baby Bounce, Wiggle and Giggle, Stay and Play, Knit and Natter)?

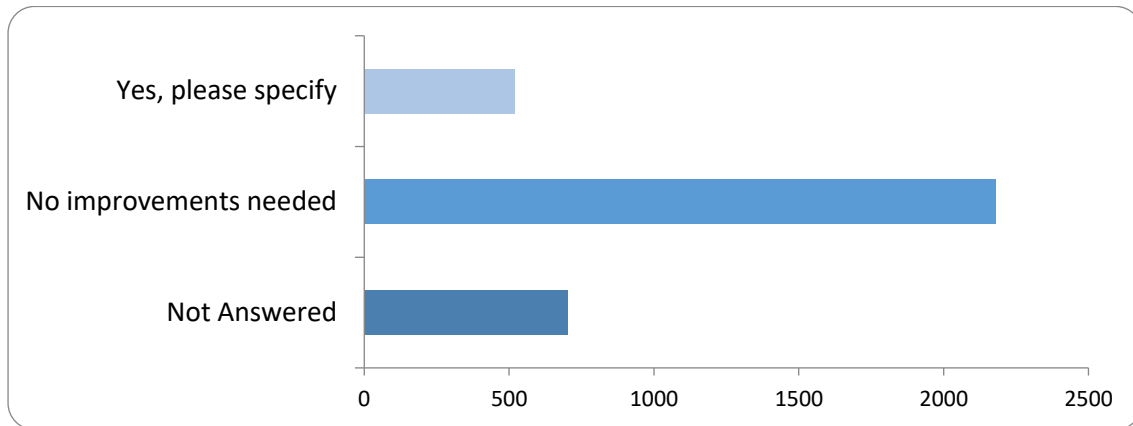
There were 2454 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	1431	42.10%
Somewhat satisfied	417	12.27%
Neutral	583	17.15%
Somewhat dissatisfied	18	0.53%
Very dissatisfied	5	0.15%
Not Answered	945	27.80%

Are there any improvements or changes you would like to see in the library activities to enhance your experience?

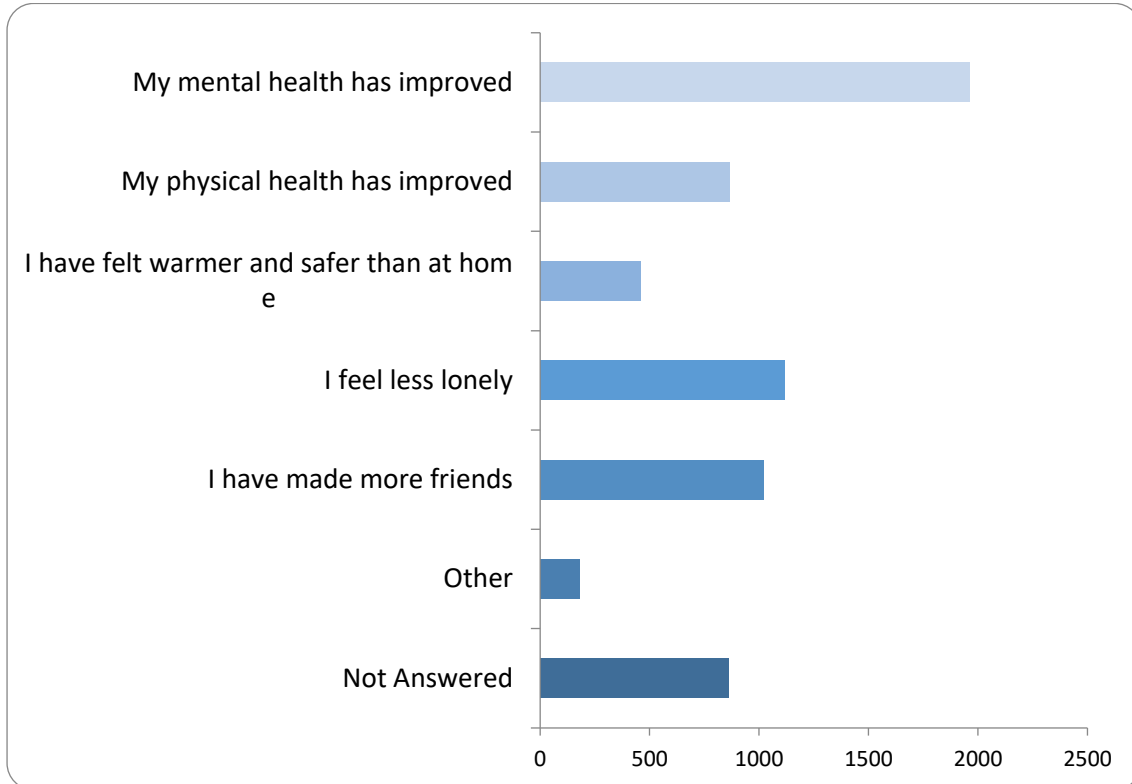
There were 2697 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, please specify	518	15.24%
No improvements needed	2179	64.11%
Not Answered	702	20.65%

Are there specific benefits to your health and wellbeing that you have identified as a direct result of regular attendance at your local library or activities within libraries?

There were 2538 responses to this part of the question.

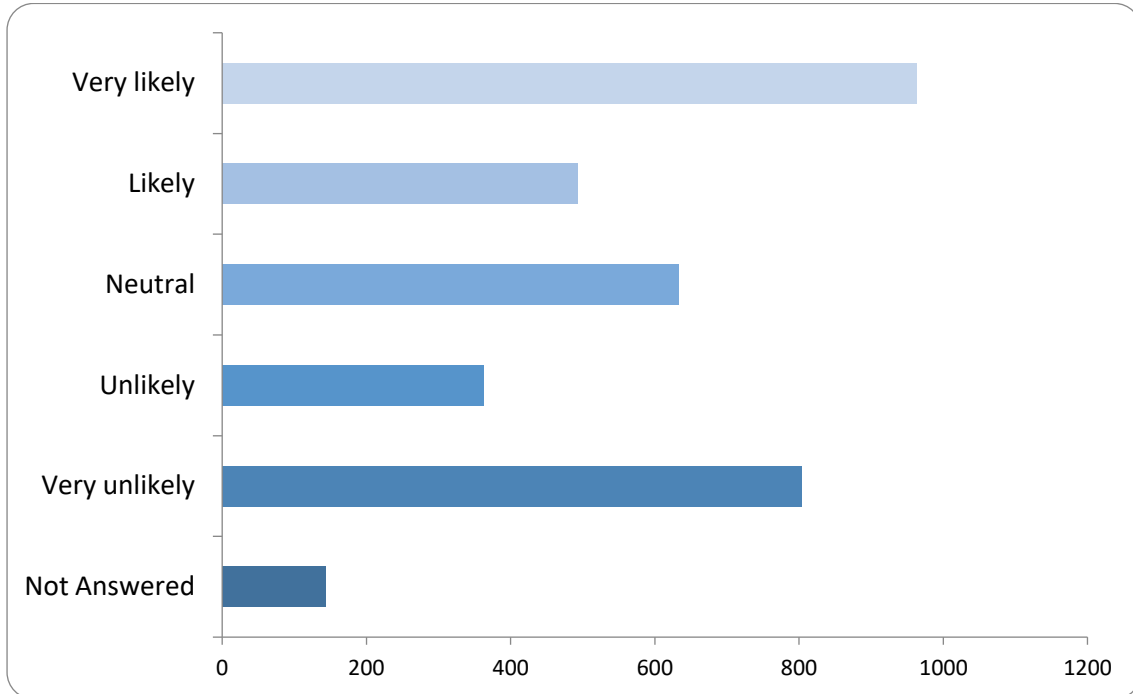


Option	Total	Percent
My mental health has improved	1963	57.75%
My physical health has improved	866	25.48%
I have felt warmer and safer than at home	461	13.56%
I feel less lonely	1119	32.92%
I have made more friends	1022	30.07%
Other	182	5.35%
Not Answered	861	25.33%



We think there may be a case to develop proposals for a new Havering Children’s Library. How likely would you or your family be to use a dedicated children's library in Havering?

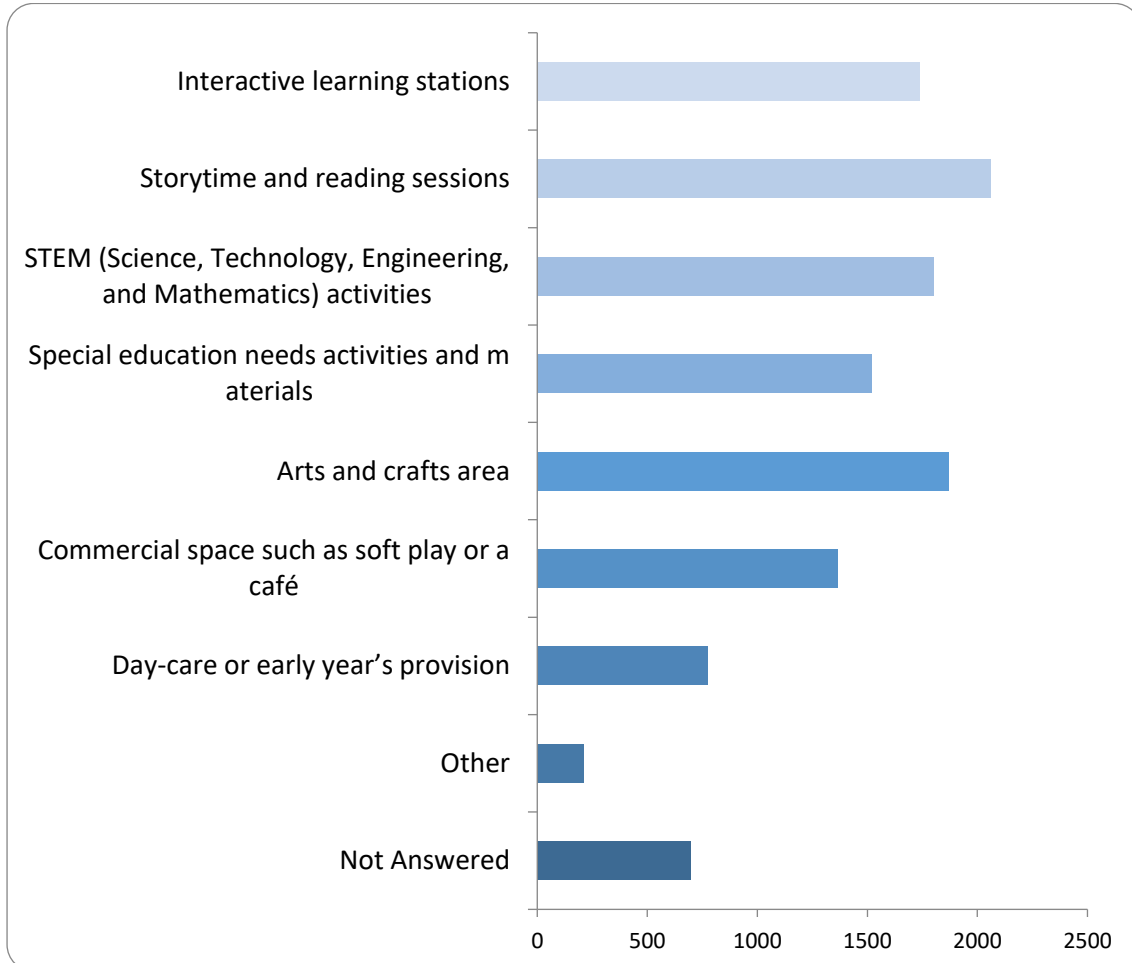
There were 3255 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very likely	963	28.33%
Likely	493	14.50%
Neutral	633	18.62%
Unlikely	363	10.68%
Very unlikely	803	23.62%
Not Answered	144	4.24%

What specific features or resources would you like to see included in the new Children's library to best serve the needs of Havering's young readers?

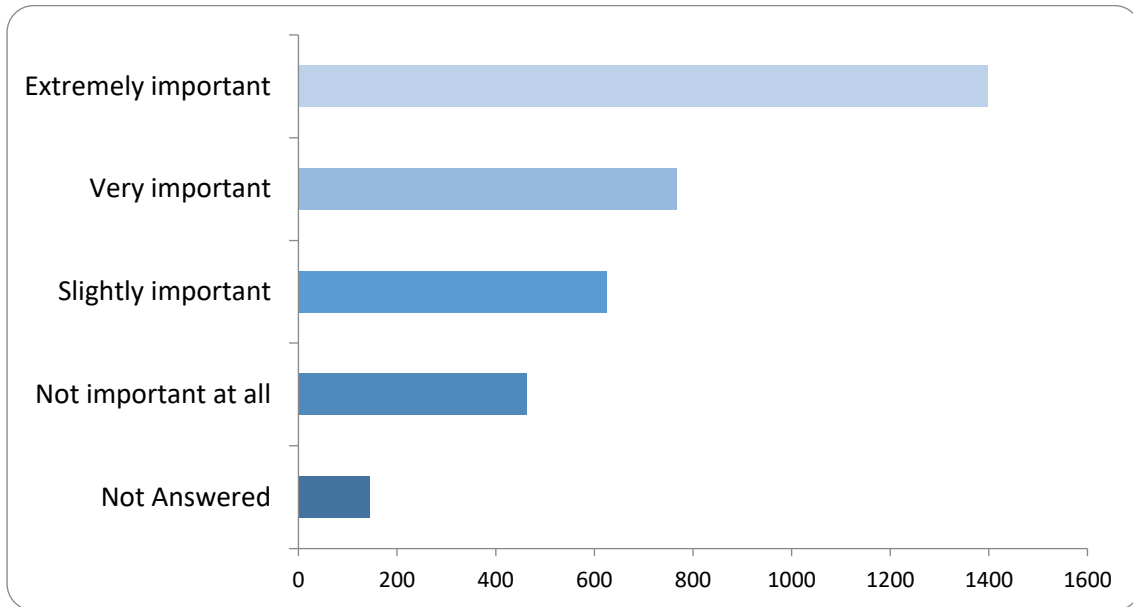
There were 2701 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Interactive learning stations	1736	51.07%
Storytime and reading sessions	2060	60.61%
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) activities	1800	52.96%
Special education needs activities and materials	1521	44.75%
Arts and crafts area	1869	54.99%
Commercial space such as soft play or a café	1366	40.19%
Day-care or early year's provision	776	22.83%
Other	213	6.27%
Not Answered	698	20.54%

How important do you think it is to have a specialised library space dedicated to children in Havering?

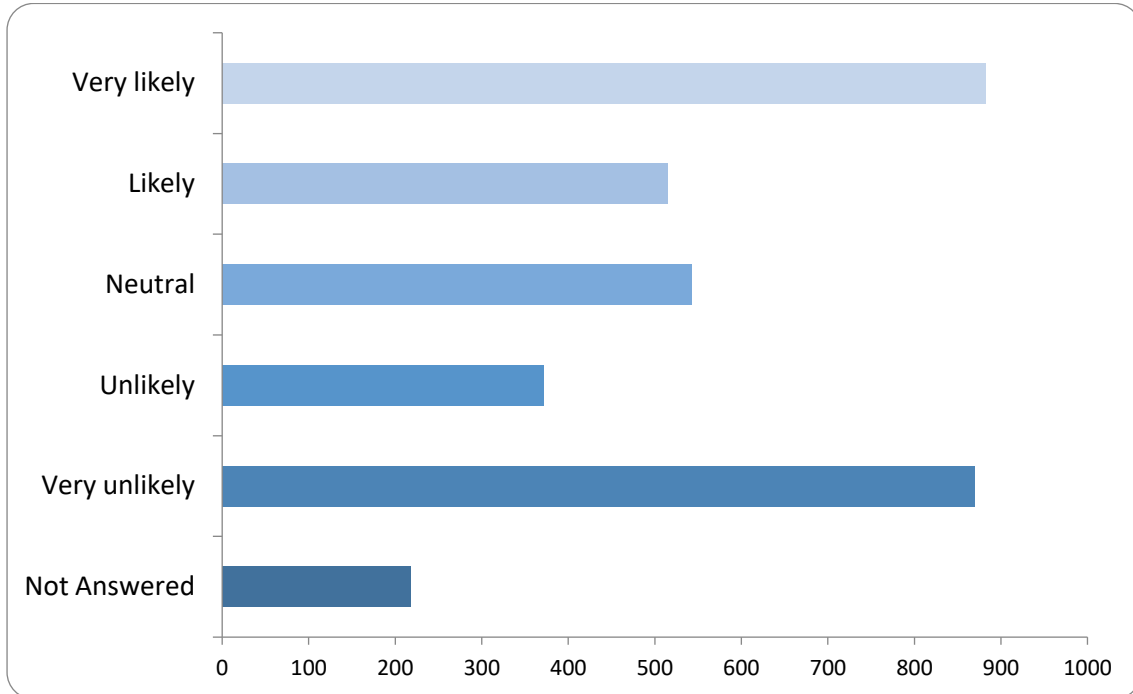
There were 3255 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	1398	41.13%
Very important	768	22.59%
Slightly important	626	18.42%
Not important at all	463	13.62%
Not Answered	144	4.24%

How likely would you be to attend or participate in children's literacy and educational programmes and activities offered at a new Children's library?

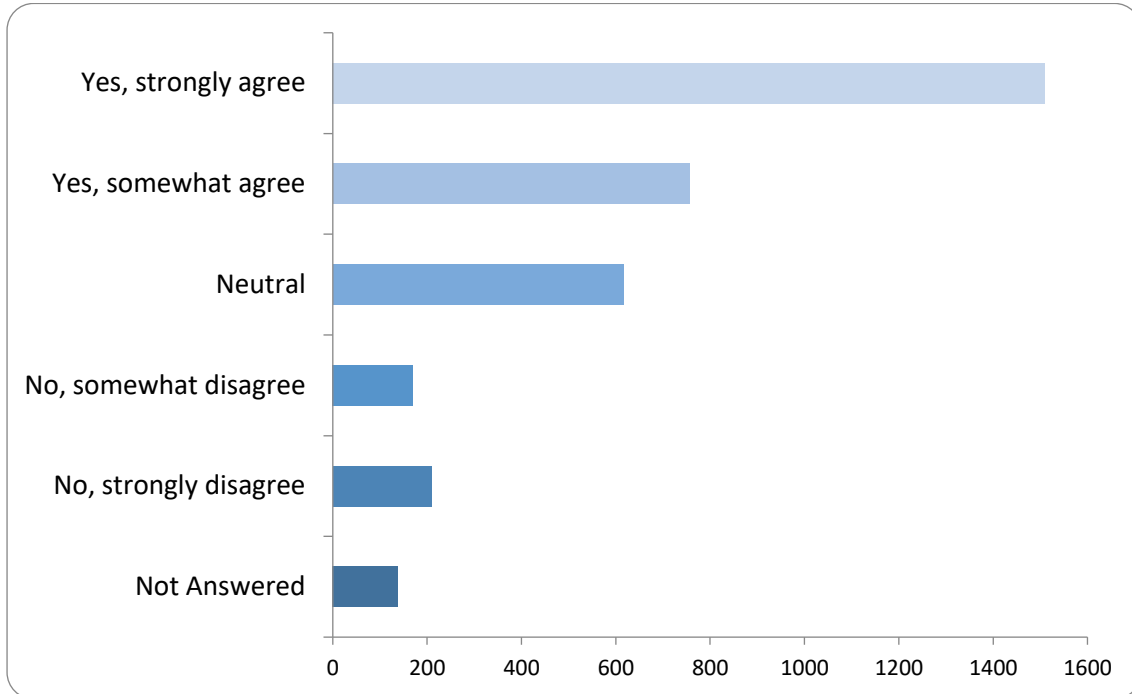
There were 3181 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Very likely	882	25.95%
Likely	515	15.15%
Neutral	543	15.98%
Unlikely	371	10.91%
Very unlikely	870	25.60%
Not Answered	218	6.41%

Do you believe that the establishment of a Children's library in Havering would positively impact literacy rates and educational outcomes for local children?

There were 3261 responses to this part of the question.



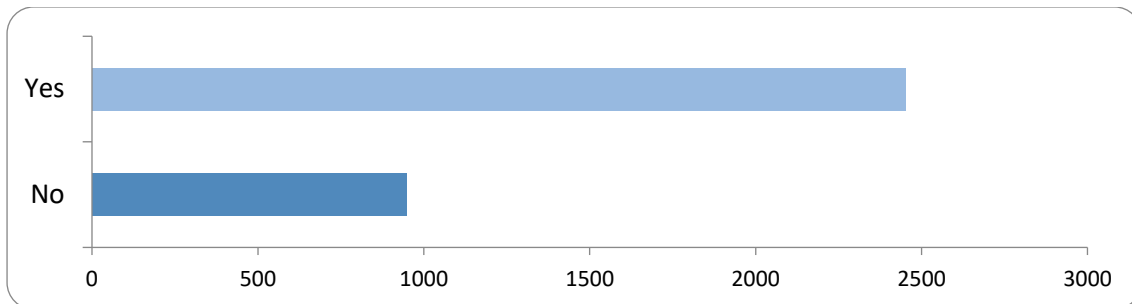
Option	Total	Percent
Yes, strongly agree	1510	44.42%
Yes, somewhat agree	756	22.24%
Neutral	616	18.12%
No, somewhat disagree	170	5.00%
No, strongly disagree	209	6.15%
Not Answered	138	4.06%

## Equalities data captured in the consultation

I am happy to answer equalities questions

### Equalities questions y/n

There were 3399 responses to this part of the question.

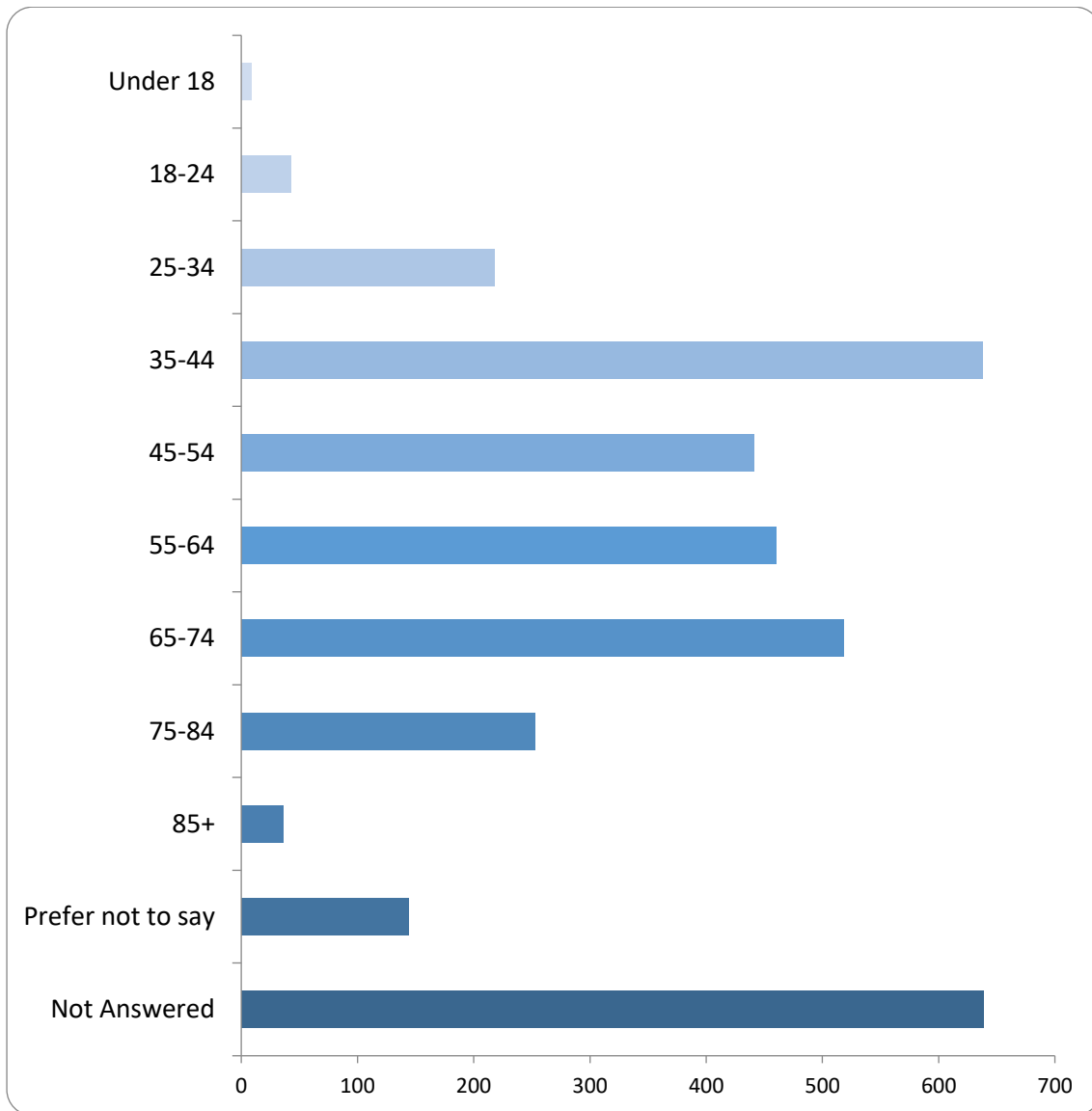


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	2451	72.11%
No	948	27.89%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

How old are you?

**Age**

There were 2760 responses to this part of the question.

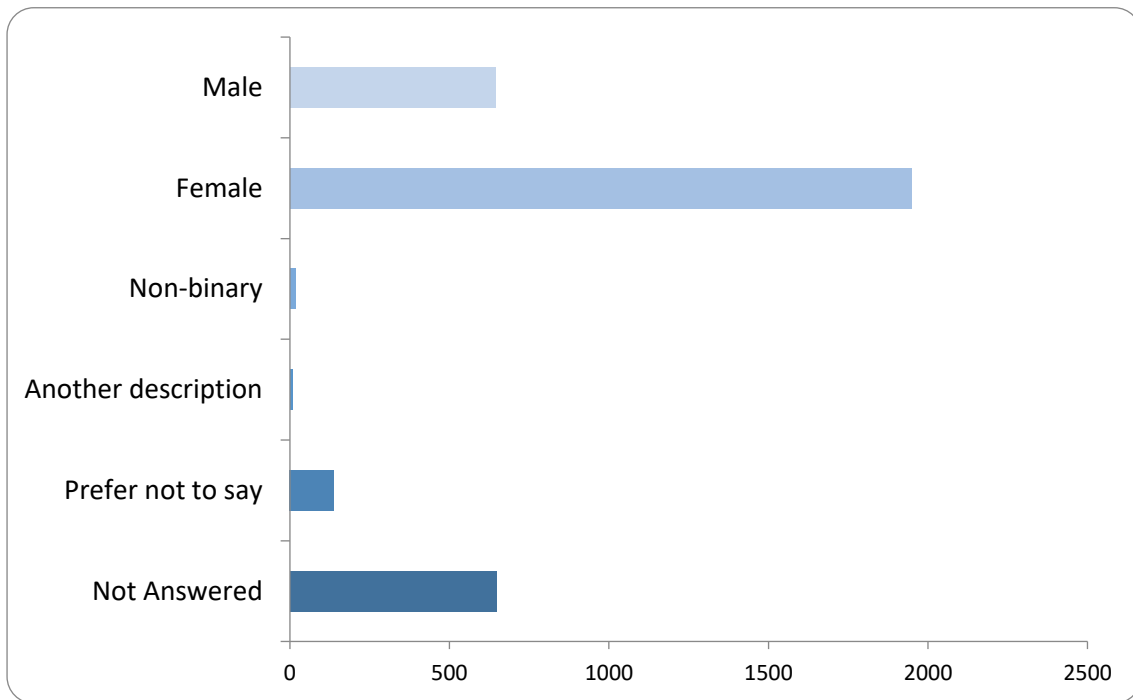


Option	Total	Percent
Under 18	9	0.26%
18-24	43	1.27%
25-34	218	6.41%
35-44	638	18.77%
45-54	441	12.97%
55-64	460	13.53%
65-74	518	15.24%

75-84	253	7.44%
85+	36	1.06%
Prefer not to say	144	4.24%
Not Answered	639	18.80%

How would you describe your gender identity?

There were 2752 responses to this part of the question.

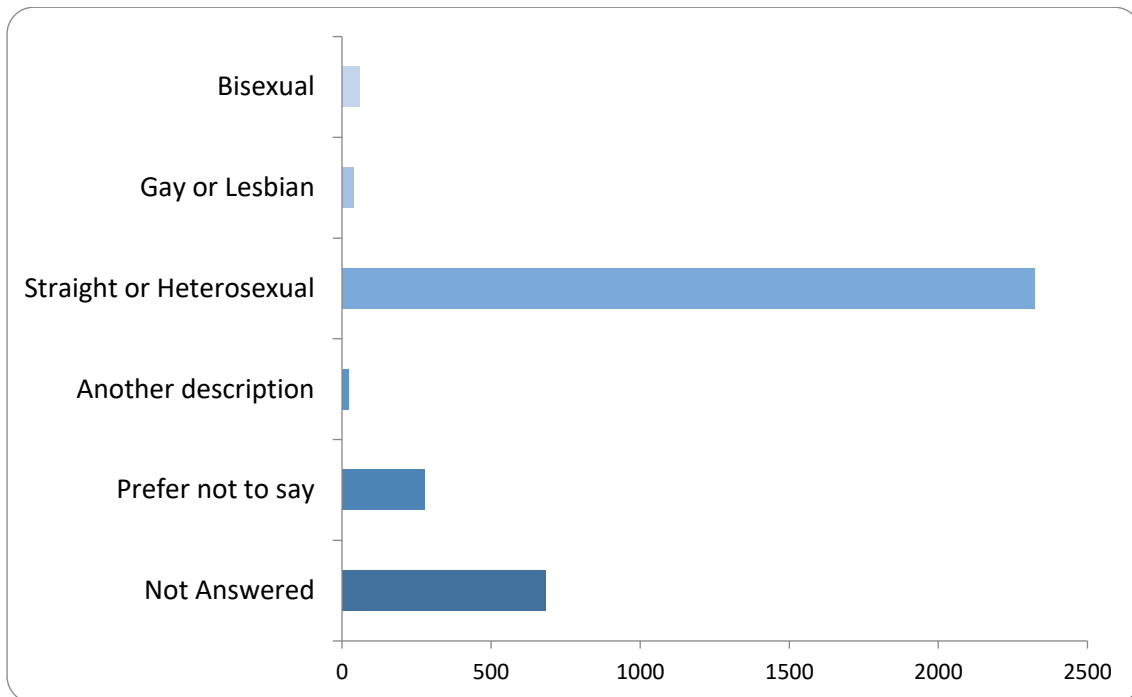


Option	Total	Percent
Male	643	18.92%
Female	1947	57.28%
Non-binary	17	0.50%
Another description	7	0.21%
Prefer not to say	138	4.06%
Not Answered	647	19.04%



Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

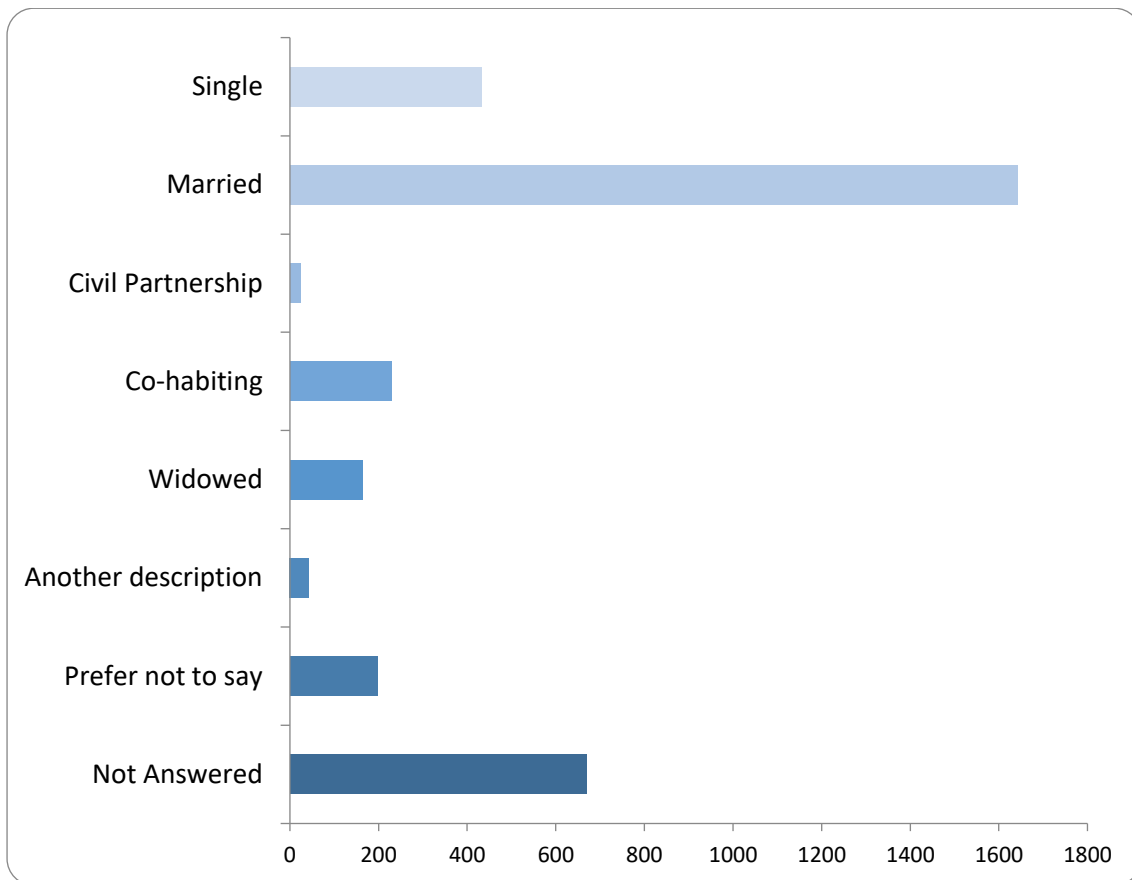
There were 2717 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Bisexual	58	1.71%
Gay or Lesbian	40	1.18%
Straight or Heterosexual	2323	68.34%
Another description	21	0.62%
Prefer not to say	275	8.09%
Not Answered	682	20.06%

### What is your marital or civil partnership status?

There were 2730 responses to this part of the question.

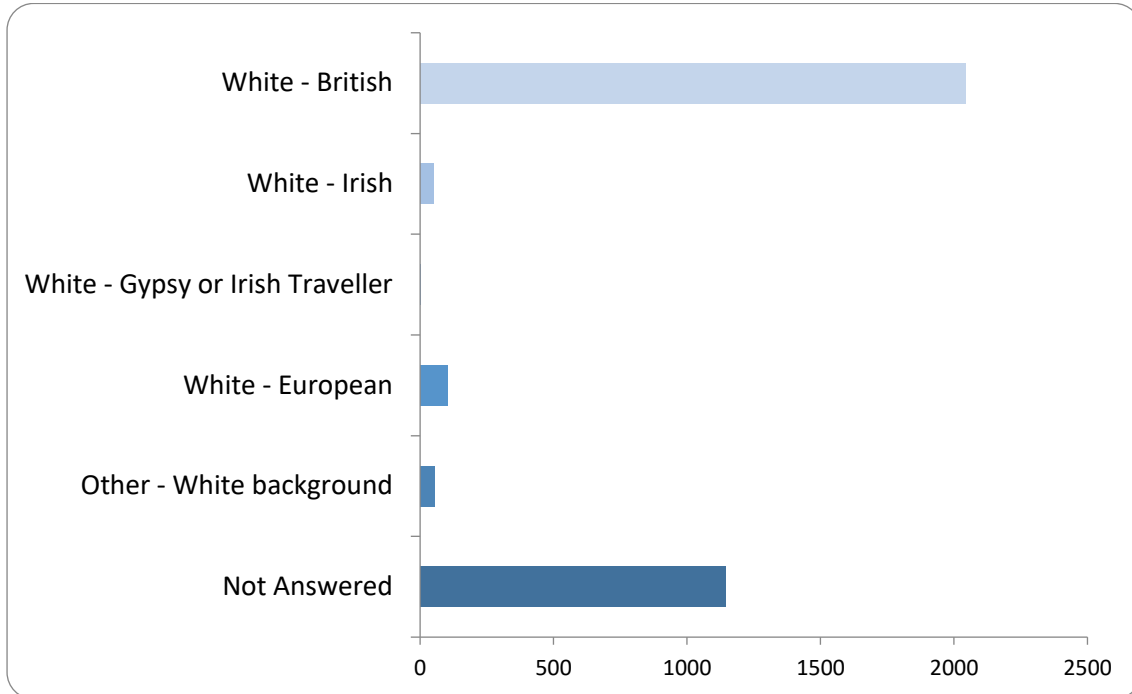


Option	Total	Percent
Single	432	12.71%
Married	1642	48.31%
Civil Partnership	23	0.68%
Co-habiting	229	6.74%
Widowed	163	4.80%
Another description	43	1.27%
Prefer not to say	198	5.83%
Not Answered	669	19.68%

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong.

**White**

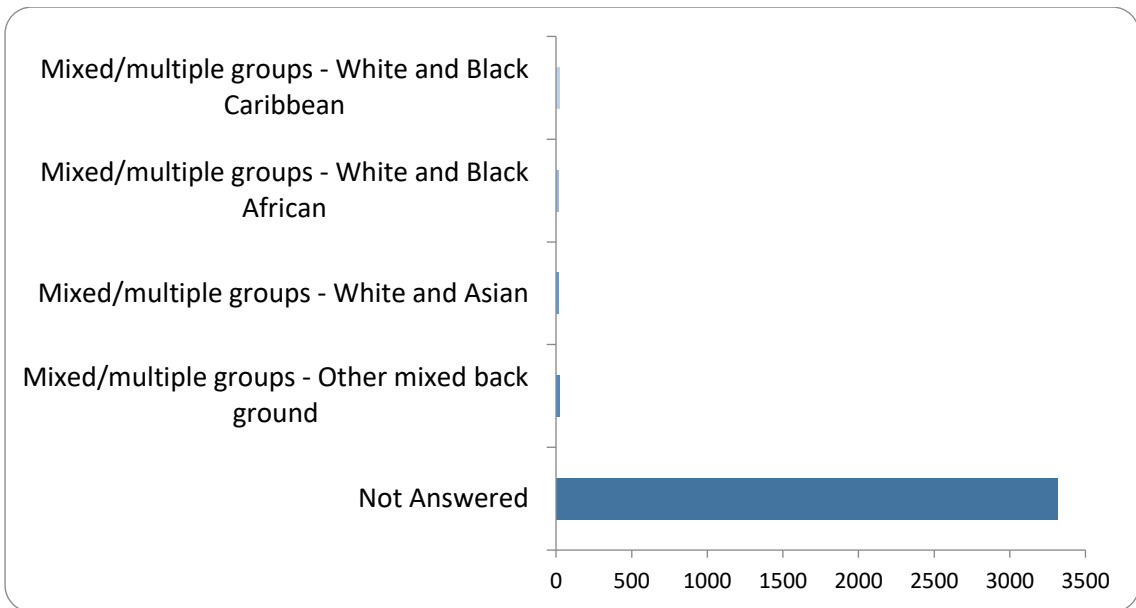
There were 2255 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
White - British	2043	60.11%
White - Irish	52	1.53%
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2	0.06%
White - European	102	3.00%
Other - White background	56	1.65%
Not Answered	1144	33.66%

**Mixed/multiple groups**

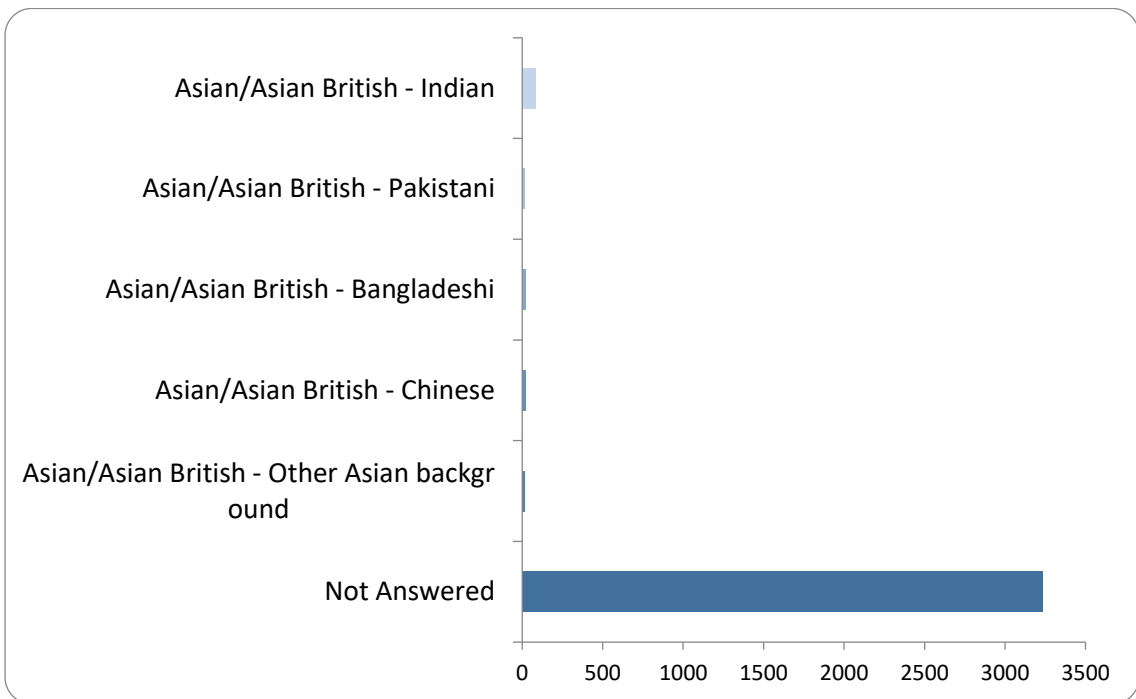
There were 81 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Mixed/multiple groups - White and Black Caribbean	26	0.76%
Mixed/multiple groups - White and Black African	14	0.41%
Mixed/multiple groups - White and Asian	15	0.44%
Mixed/multiple groups - Other mixed background	26	0.76%
Not Answered	3318	97.62%

### Asian/Asian British

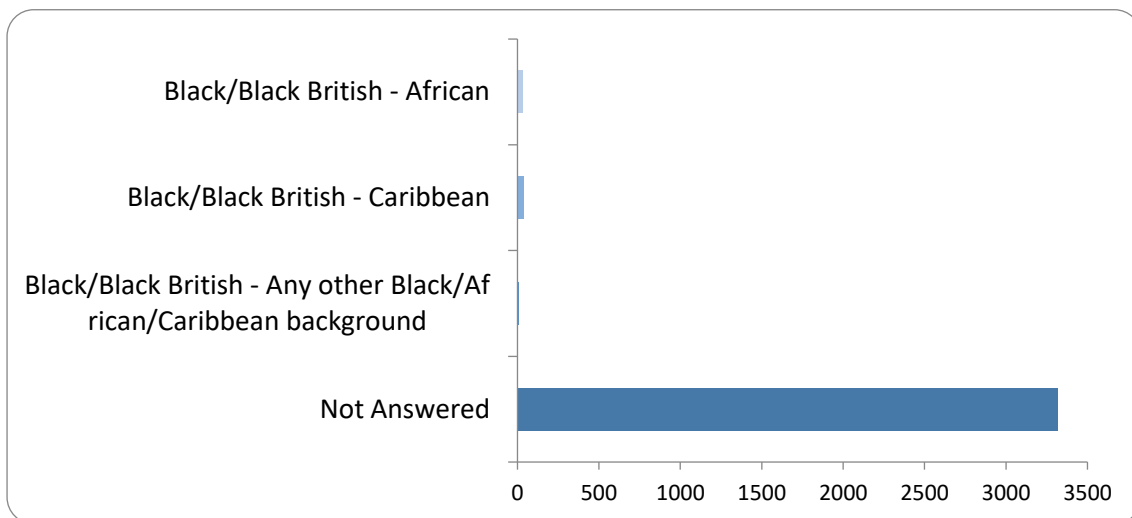
There were 162 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Asian/Asian British - Indian	86	2.53%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	16	0.47%
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	22	0.65%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	24	0.71%
Asian/Asian British - Other Asian background	14	0.41%
Not Answered	3237	95.23%

### Black/Black British

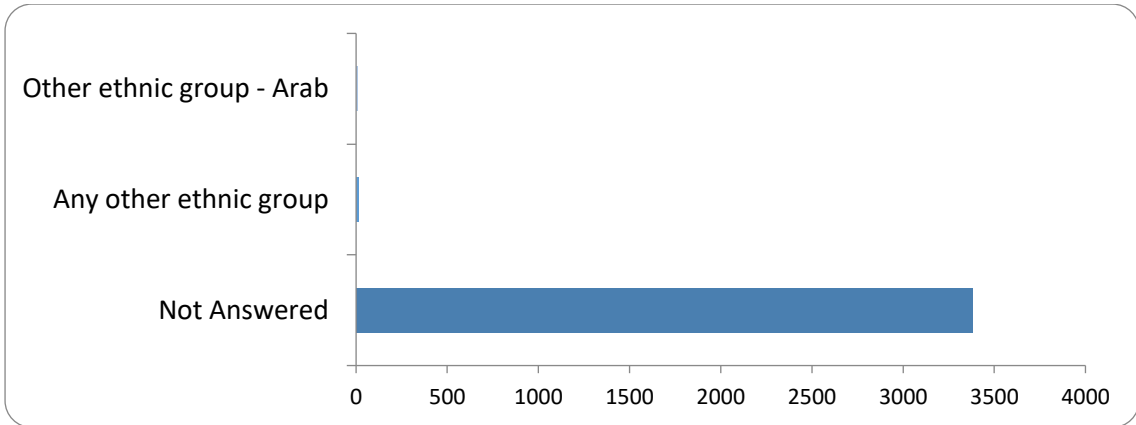
There were 79 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Black/Black British - African	31	0.91%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	38	1.12%
Black/Black British - Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	10	0.29%
Not Answered	3320	97.68%

### Other ethnic group

There were 17 responses to this part of the question.



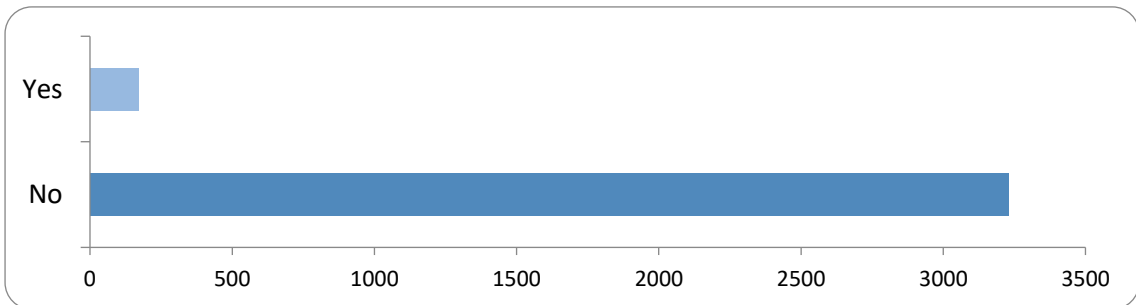
Option	Total	Percent
Other ethnic group - Arab	6	0.18%
Any other ethnic group	11	0.32%
Not Answered	3382	99.50%

**Other - ethnic origin**

There were 28 responses to this part of the question.

**Prefer not to say ethnicity**

There were 171 responses to this part of the question.

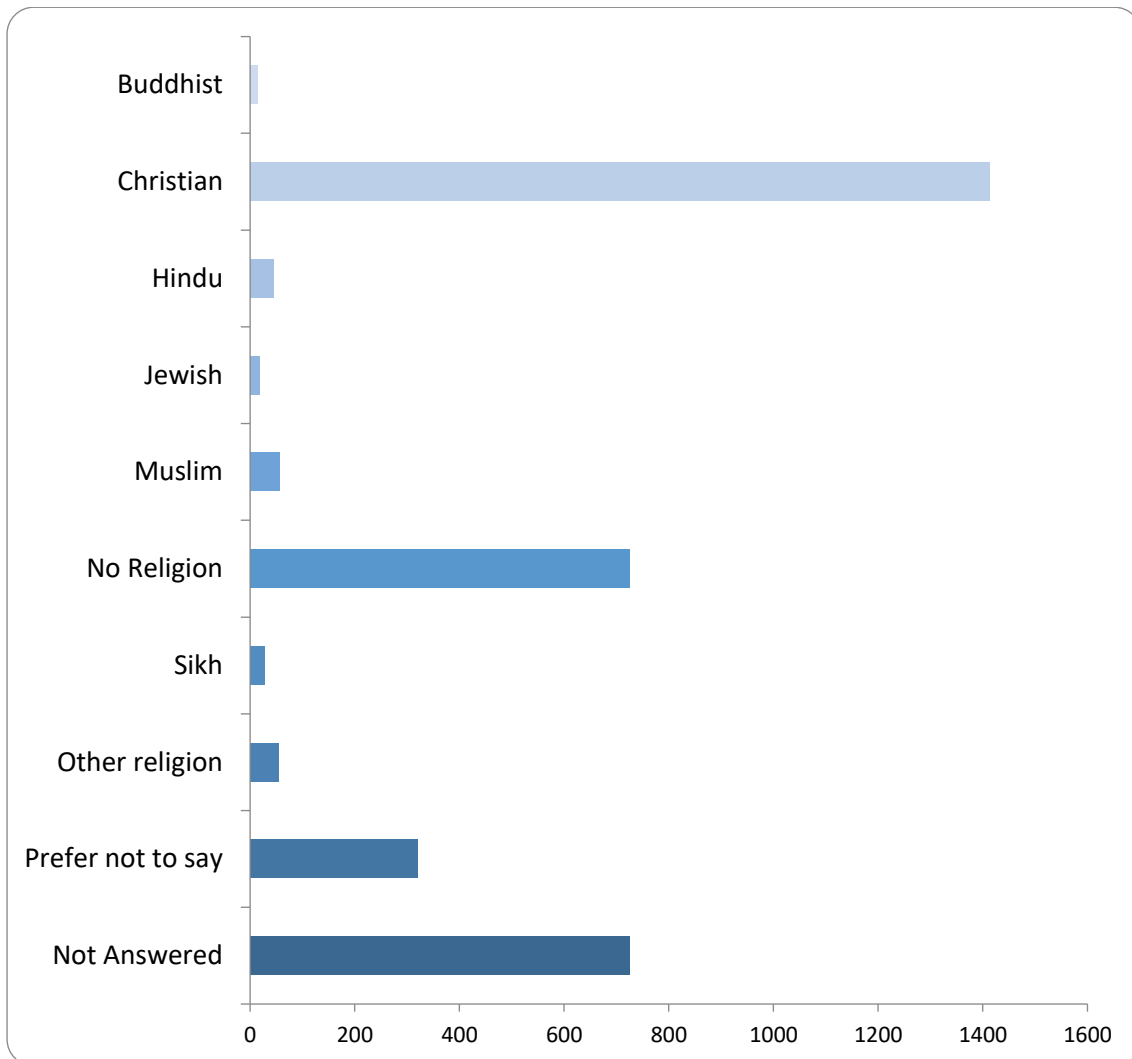


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	171	5.03%
No	3228	94.97%

## Faith, Religion or Belief

### Religion

There were 2674 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Buddhist	15	0.44%
Christian	1413	41.57%
Hindu	45	1.32%
Jewish	18	0.53%
Muslim	56	1.65%
No Religion	725	21.33%
Sikh	27	0.79%
Other religion	54	1.59%
Prefer not to say	321	9.44%

Not Answered

725

21.33%

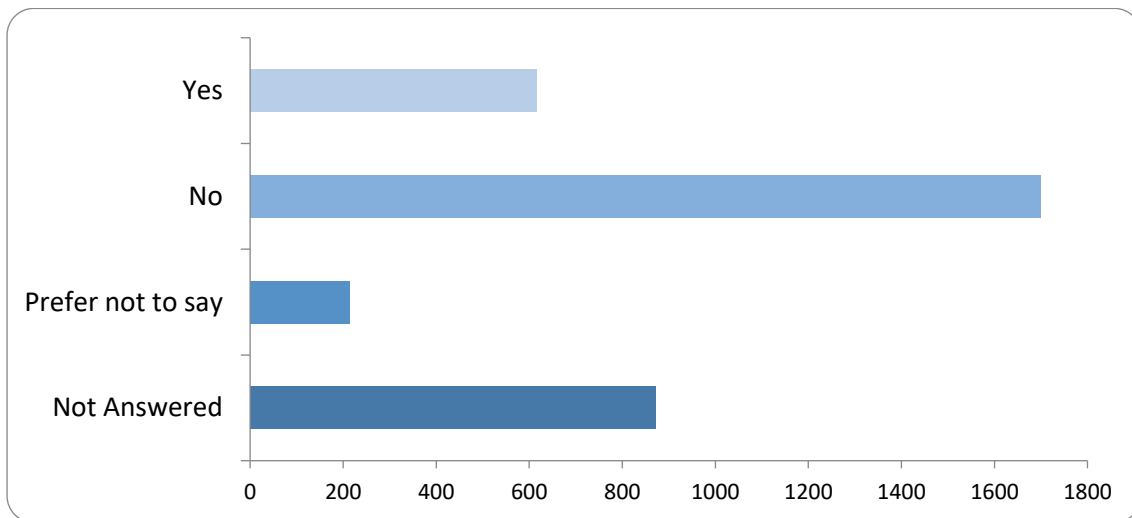
**Other - religion**

There were 63 responses to this part of the question.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment or health condition?

**Disability**

There were 2528 responses to this part of the question.

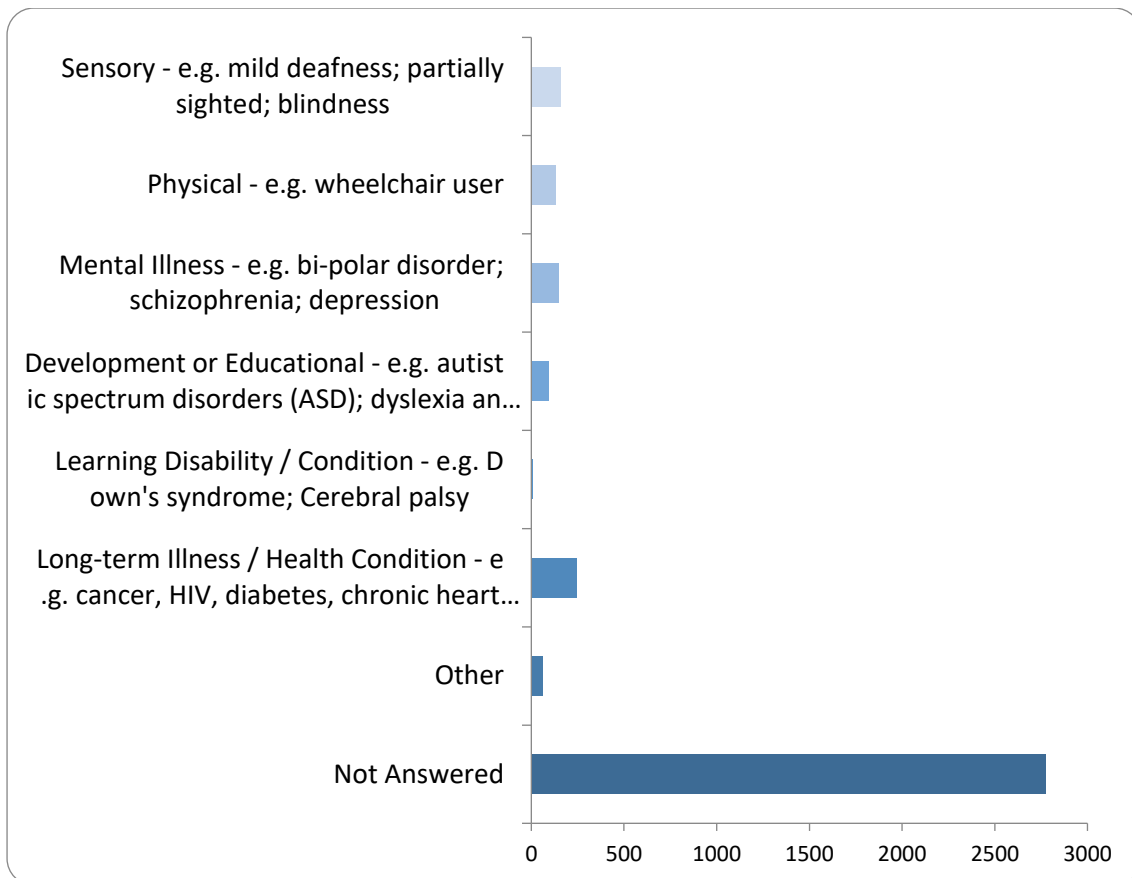


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	615	18.09%
No	1699	49.99%
Prefer not to say	214	6.30%
Not Answered	871	25.63%



## Impairment

There were 623 responses to this part of the question.

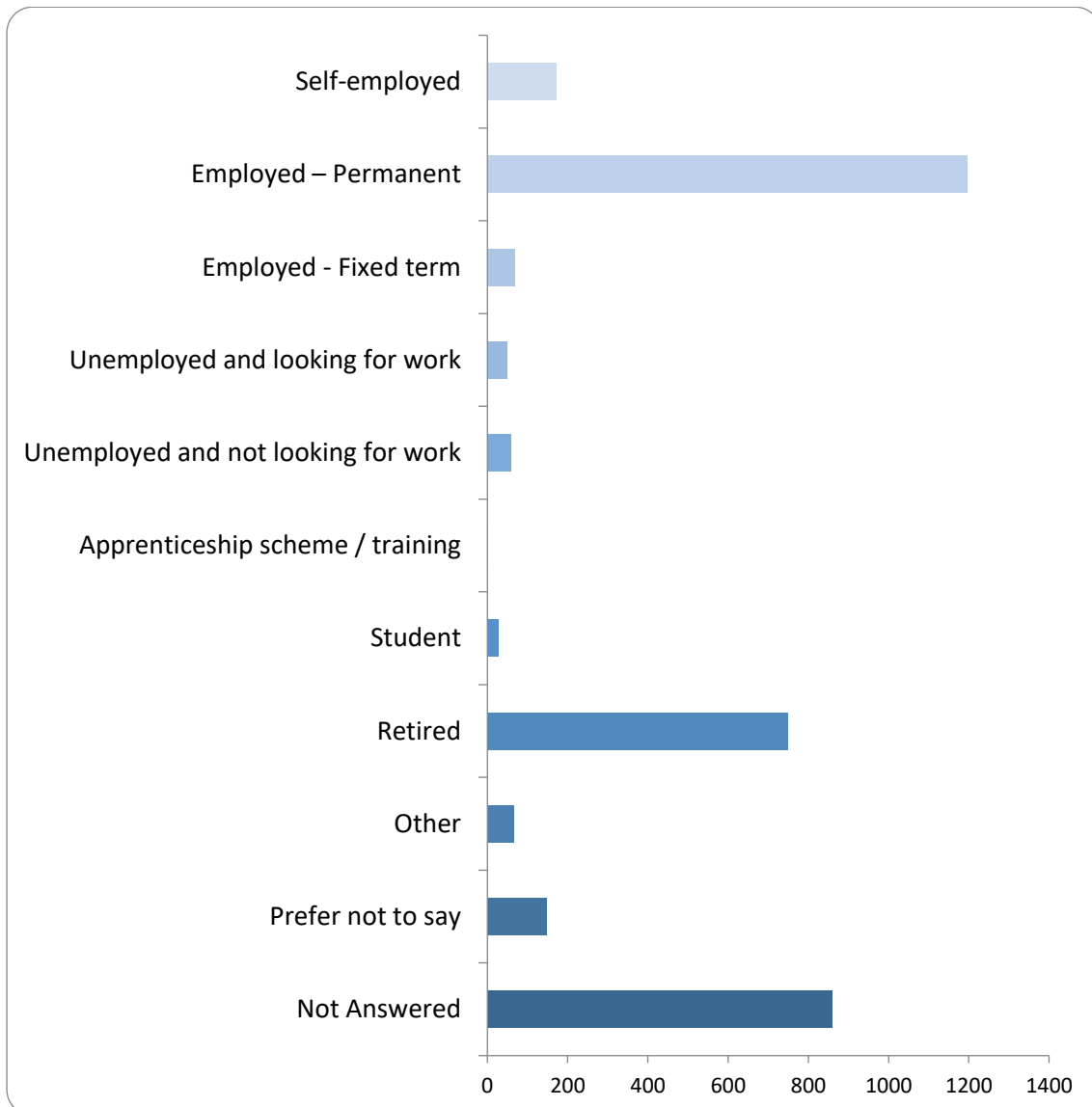


Option	Total	Percent
Sensory - e.g. mild deafness; partially sighted; blindness	160	4.71%
Physical - e.g. wheelchair user	133	3.91%
Mental Illness - e.g. bi-polar disorder; schizophrenia; depression	150	4.41%
Development or Educational - e.g. autistic spectrum disorders (ASD); dyslexia and dyspraxia, neurodiversity	94	2.77%
Learning Disability / Condition - e.g. Down's syndrome; Cerebral palsy	10	0.29%
Long-term Illness / Health Condition - e.g. cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, stroke	243	7.15%
Other	61	1.79%
Not Answered	2776	81.67%

## What is your employment status?

### Employment status

There were 2540 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Self-employed	173	5.09%
Employed – Permanent	1196	35.19%
Employed - Fixed term	69	2.03%
Unemployed and looking for work	50	1.47%
Unemployed and not looking for work	59	1.74%
Apprenticeship scheme / training	1	0.03%
Student	28	0.82%

Retired	750	22.07%
Other	67	1.97%
Prefer not to say	147	4.32%
Not Answered	859	25.27%

## SHOUT about libraries analysis

- 4.1 The SHOUT about libraries survey was commissioned in May 2024 and taken forward via an existing contractual relationship the Council had with Mind of My Own. The survey was publicised directly with schools and on the council's social media. The consultation was aimed at primary and secondary school children.
- 4.2 The consultation was responded to by 1,214 residents.

What do you think would be important for a library made just for children?

What do you think would be important for a library made just for children?		
Answer	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>Help with reading</b>	77.3%	861
<b>Borrowing books</b>	76.8%	856
<b>Help with school projects</b>	58.2%	648
Arts and Crafts activities	53.8%	599
Playing games	32.6%	363
Soft play area	27.6%	308
Borrowing games/sports equipment	24.4%	272
Can travel to different schools	22.8%	254
Something we missed (see below)	21.7%	242

Would you prefer a new library for young people or to improve your current library?

Would you prefer a new library for young people or to improve your current library?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>I would improve my current library</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>711</b>
I would prefer a children's library	24.7%	289
I don't use libraries	14.5%	170

How often do you go to the library?

How often do you go to the library?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>Less often</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>449</b>
Once a month	28.7%	335
Once a week	21.7%	253
More than once a week	11.2%	131

How would you be impacted if your local library closed?

How would you be impacted if your local library closed?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>It would make things difficult for me</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>363</b>
It would make life worse	30.2%	354
It would be ok	22.3%	261
It wouldn't affect me at all	16.6%	195

What do you do when you visit the library?

<b>What do you do when you visit the library? Please select multiple</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>Borrow books</b>	<b>76.5%</b>	<b>890</b>
<b>Read books</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>808</b>
<b>Summer reading challenge</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>535</b>
Study/do homework	33.7%	392
Go to events or activities	26.5%	308
Use computers	24.0%	279
Use free wifi	19.9%	232
Something we missed:	12.1%	141

What do you like about spending time in a library?

<b>What do you like about spending time in the library?</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>I have a quiet place to read, study or relax</b>	<b>66.8%</b>	<b>761</b>
<b>I learn about new things</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>646</b>
<b>My reading has improved</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>637</b>
I like being creative	31.2%	355
I learn about people from different backgrounds	26.4%	301
Meeting friends at events	25.5%	291
Computers / Internet access is better than at home	18.1%	206
Something we missed:	10.3%	117

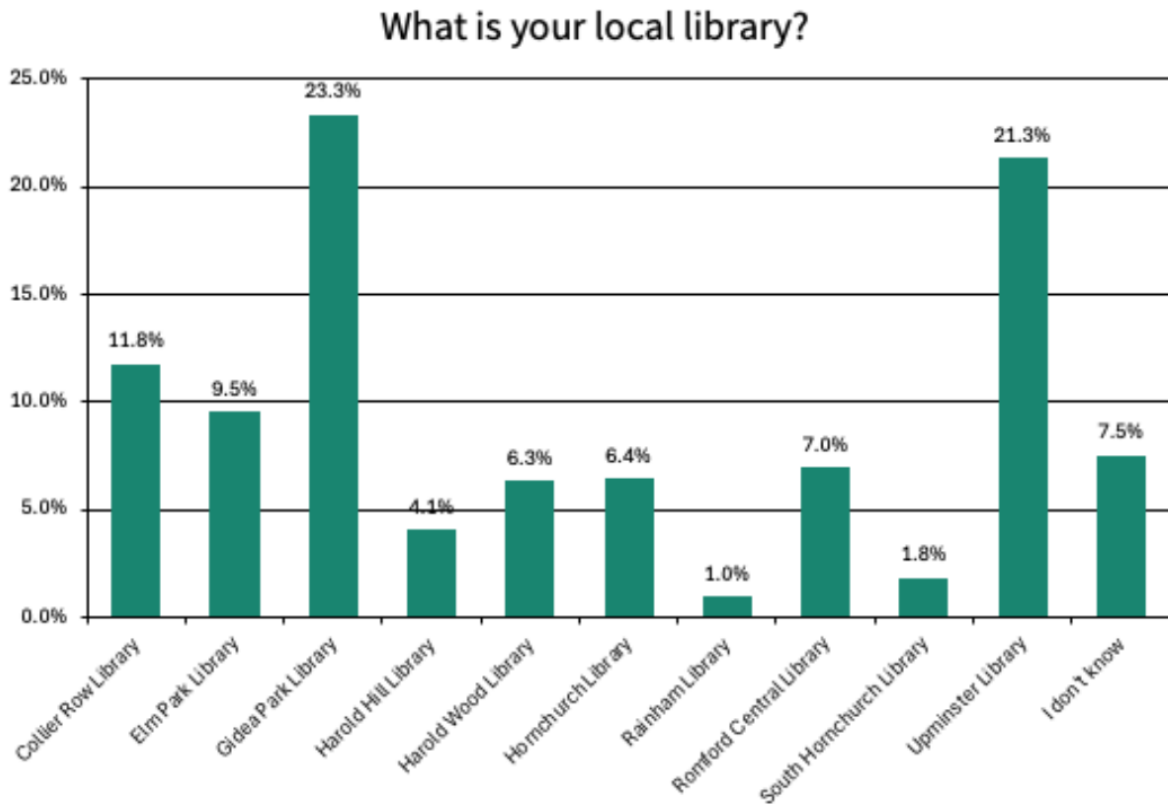
What are some of the things you'd feel or experience if your nearest library closed?

<b>What are some of the things you'd feel or experience if your nearest library closed?</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>I wouldn't be able to borrow books anymore</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>799</b>
<b>I wouldn't have anywhere quiet to go</b>	<b>47.7%</b>	<b>542</b>
<b>I would miss going to library events or activities</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>446</b>
Use school library	31.8%	361
I wouldn't have somewhere to go after school	26.7%	303
I wouldn't have access to computers or technology	14.7%	167
Something we missed:	8.3%	94

If your nearest library closed, would you be able to visit another library?

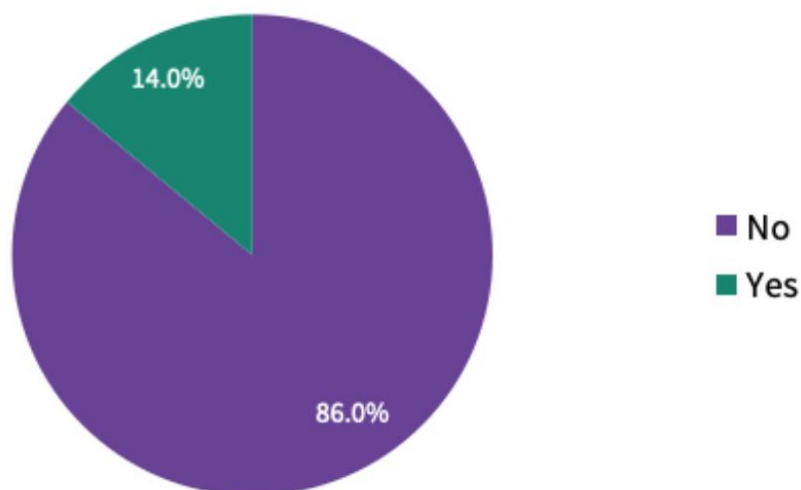
<b>If your nearest library closed, would you be able to visit another library?</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>I couldn't go by myself</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>482</b>
The other library is too far away	40.8%	470
Travelling to another library would be difficult	38.6%	445
I could visit another library	30.7%	354
Something we missed:	7.2%	83

What is your local library?



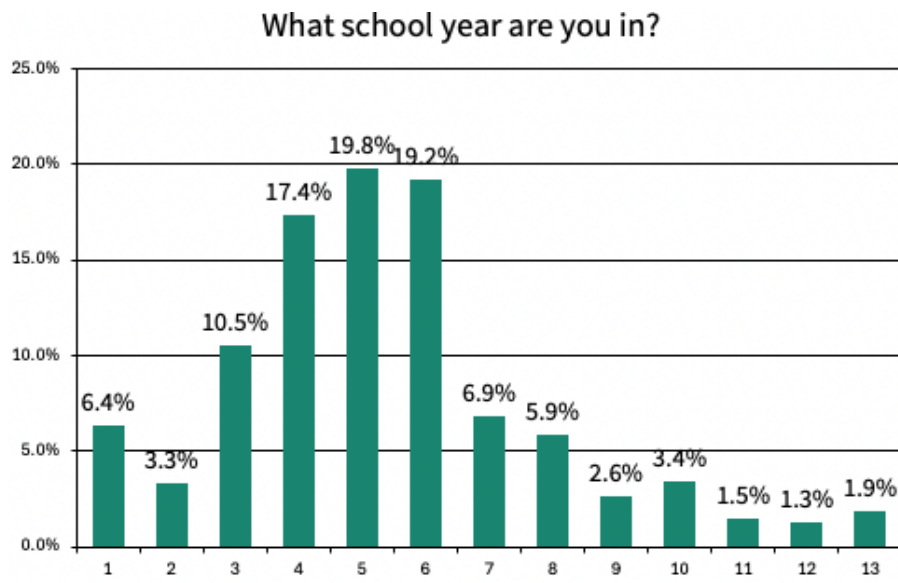
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?





What school year are you in?



## Petitions

5.1 A number of petitions were received during the course of the consultation. While the council constitution makes a formal recognition of a petition that meets criteria and is subsequently presented at a meeting of full council, this report simply sets out all the petitions of which its authors are aware.

### Petitions in respect of Collier Row library

5.2 A petition against the closure of Collier Row library signed by 162 residents was presented to council officers at the conclusion of the consultation.

5.3 Further petitions against the closure of the library comprising 538 signatures from students of Parklands school and 197 signatures from Crownfield school were presented at full council in August 2024.

### Petitions in respect of Elm Park library

5.4 A petition containing 883 signatures advocating against the closure of Elm Park library was presented to full council in July 2024.

### Petitions in respect of Gidea Park library

5.5 A petition containing 570 signatures advocating against the closure of Gidea Park library was presented to full council in September 2024. A further petition against the closure of the library was presented to council officers by the Green Party and was signed by 100 people.

### Petitions in respect of Harold Wood library

5.6 The council was provided with a petition comprised of hard copy and digital signatures comprising 2036 residents advocating against the closure of Harold Wood library.

### Petitions in respect of South Hornchurch library

5.7 A petition comprised of 79 residents advocating against the closure of South Hornchurch library was received by council officers at the close of the consultation.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

- 6.1 The consultation has revealed strong community engagement with and reliance on Havering's libraries. The data underscores the critical role these libraries play in providing educational resources, fostering community ties, and supporting vulnerable populations. The widespread opposition to library closures and budget cuts reflects deep concern about the potential negative impacts on community well-being and access to essential services.
- 6.2 We found a picture of consultation responses that share significant similarities with our data on library usage (demographics, frequency of use), but some significant differences. Resident use of libraries other than a main or "home" library does not come across as extensively in the consultation responses as it does in our data on how library cards are used.
- 6.3 The health, wellbeing and community benefits of library visitorship come across passionately in the consultation, as does a perception that those benefits would be difficult or impossible to find in other settings. This may be a perception and there may be other settings that could deliver benefits, but the pattern we have discerned is one of residents using a library for a small range of direct reasons (books, events and activities, PC use) but also inheriting a number of indirect benefits (reducing loneliness and isolation, intergenerational contact) as a result of library usage.
- 6.4 The evidence developed during the consultation was never intended to answer the question "if libraries should close, which ones should close". Rather the evidence has identified a range of risks and potential disbenefits that will need to be fully understood – and ultimately accepted or mitigated – if libraries are too close to deliver revenue budget savings.
- 6.5 Even though it is a statutory service with obligations set out in legislation, the library service must operate within the broader financial framework of the local authority. As was set out in legal precedent:
- "... the availability of resources is highly material to the question of what constitutes a comprehensive and efficient library service. The section 7 duty cannot be exempt or divorced from resource issues and cannot in law escape the reductions which have been rendered inevitable in the light of the financial crisis engulfing the country."*
- R (Green) v Gloucestershire City Council (2011)*
- 6.6 If the Council seeks to proceed with reducing the revenue budget of the service by £300,000 and that there are no plausible alternatives to fund that reduction other than closing libraries as proposed in the consultation, the evidence on need assessment and library usage should be used to contribute to a decision.
- 6.7 Based on that assessment, and on the outcome of this consultation not contradicting the evidence of needs and usage as published in the draft strategy, were four of the five branch libraries in the borough to close, Collier Row would be the library in most "need" of the five, although this is a very fine decision to make.
- 6.8 This conclusion does not take into account alternate options or models and does not take into account other cross-council initiatives or strategies that might contribute to savings in other ways.

- 6.9 Whatever the future makeup of the service looks like – whether in terms of numbers of libraries or opening hours, the consultation response endorses the new vision and strategic objectives of the service, which provides a stable base to move forward.

### Key Recommendations:

- 7.1 Explore Alternatives to Closures: Given the strong opposition and evidence of significantly positive impact of libraries – particularly in vulnerable groups, the Council could explore alternative cost-saving measures that do not involve closing libraries. This could include partnerships, fundraising, operating or re-evaluating other budget areas. The work the Council began on taking an area-based approach to assets may be a significant factor in this work.
- 7.2 Reviewing Operating Hours: Whatever decisions are taken about the future resourcing of the service and the number of libraries provided within that resource envelope, the service should review its opening hours to ensure that they maximise opportunity for residents to visit the library. While a 24-hour per week library is never going to be able to adequately meet the demands of every prospective library user, feedback from this survey combined with hourly visitor count numbers can be used to build a model of opening hours more in tune with local need. This may mean 24 hour per week libraries having different opening hour patterns, which will be difficult to build a staff timetable for.
- 7.3 Implement the new strategic vision and objectives as published in the strategy and identify any resourcing implications.
- 7.4 If members decide to go ahead in closing libraries, comprehensive equality impact assessments will need to be compiled for each library proposed for closure. This may warrant further public consultation.

This comprehensive analysis should inform future decisions regarding the provision and funding of library services in Havering, ensuring that these valued community resources continue to serve residents effectively.

## Appendix A – Q&A compilation from consultation public meetings

### Libraries Consultation FAQ's

#### The Consultation Process:

**Q: How will you assess each library?**

A: We will look at each library holistically. Many factors will be considered, including: footfall, population size, deprivation, the quality of the building, local transportation options and personal impacts.

**Q: How were digitally-excluded residents contacted?**

A: We provided 100 hard copies to each library and library staff were encouraged to talk to visitors about the consultation. Posters have been put up across the borough and in each library. We have also written to every head teachers in the borough to encourage young people to complete the consultation.

**Q: Has the decision already been made?**

A: No. We take consultation seriously and have not made any decisions. Following the budget consultation, the administration did wind back on the original proposals in light of what residents suggested.

**Q: How are visits counted?**

A: There are counters within each library that use a beam to count people as they enter. We have been recording these numbers since the libraries opened. Our library management system also records whether a book has been issues or IT has been accessed by users, so we know that most library-users visit more than one library. We have calculated the average number of visitors per hour to allow fair comparison for this consultation.

**Q: I have a petition, how can I submit it?**

A: There is a formal process to submit petitions to the council. Please contact committee services.

#### Library Buildings:

**Q: Why have some of the libraries been allowed to deteriorate?**

A: For many years, the budget has been reduced and stretched. We have been able to keep the libraries in the current condition, but not to make improvements.

**Q: Could you put a coffee shop in our libraries or rent out rooms to businesses?**

A: These options are being looked at. The buildings are not in good condition and we do not have access to funding to put new facilities in place, but we maximise income wherever we can. Opportunities for investment will continue to be assessed, especially if we are able to redevelop any libraries in the future.

**Q: Could the libraries be moved into community centres of children's centres?**

A: Yes, we have considered sharing assets so that we can retain the service. However, there would still be a closure at some point. The best performing libraries are on high streets so we need to consider whether the library will still reach the same amount of people. We have also looked into combining the libraries with children's centres, however, a good library looks very different to a good children's centre. Perfect will not be the enemy of good so we will consider all options.

**Q: Do all libraries have public toilets and parking?**

A: No, the toilets are not safe enough to be used by the public in many of our libraries. We also do not have parking at all libraries.

**Q: If you close the libraries, what will happen to the buildings?**

A: We did not include the value of the land our libraries sit on as part of this consultation as it did not feel fair to bias decisions in this way. If a library closes, it will be transferred to our asset management team. They may decide to use it for a different service or sell it on. However, unfortunately, we are not be able to sell the land to run the library service because of local government accounting rules.

**Local Government Funding:**

**Q: Why does Havering receive less funding than other councils?**

A: The funding formula is based on the 2011 census and Havering's demographic has changed massively over the past decade. We have a fast growing population of young people and older people but our funding does not reflect this. This means our social care costs are now taking up 79% of our overall budget. We have been lobbying for fair funding and will continue to put pressure on central government to address the issues but a review of the funding formula has not been scheduled at this stage.

**Q: What if the new government injects more money into library services, or local government as a whole?**

A: Unfortunately, local government funding has not featured in any of the new government's commitments, so we are unsure if more money will be reaching us soon. We are aware that it seems like very little money for such an impactful loss, however, we have to demonstrate to the government that we are making cuts and considering all options. We are talking to the civil service and MPs about the real effect our budget is having on our community, but we are not finding much support back.

**Q: What are you doing to address the funding challenge?**

A: We are lobbying for fairer funding. We have reached out to the other 18 boroughs in the same position and are hoping to join together as a united voice. We have spoken to CIPFA, the Public Finance Accountancy body, who may be able to speak out nationally and also the LGA, another national voice. We have also written to Angela Rayner and all of our MP's in Havering to arrange meetings to discuss our position.

**Q: Do libraries have to pay business rates? Does this money go back to the council?**

A: We have to pay business rates on our libraries but the money does not go directly back to the council. It is a national system where money is distributed across the borough and the country, towards TFL and the LGA, for example.

**Q: Why are you making long term decisions on short term funding issues?**

A: We are no longer able to base our decisions on whether they are short-sighted or not, these closures would mean that we no longer incur **350k a year**. Unfortunately, central government need proof that we are cutting costs. The alternative would be issuing a section 114 notice, which would lead to commissioners taking over the council. Commissioners must find savings regardless of the cost to the community, so we could have lost many more libraries if this happened.

**Q: Can we use the Community Infrastructure Levy to save the library?**

A: There are rules around what CIL can be used for and the amount changes year on year so we would not be able to rely on it as a stable income. However, it could be used towards some aspects of the library.

**Q: Will you be saving unspent budget or actual expenditure?**

A: Actual expenditure. We were able to spend less last year by adding a vacancy factor to staffing and cutting our stock budget. We also got some money from public health. However, we are still not meeting our income target.

**The Library Service:**

**Q: If you had more time, could you make libraries self-sustaining?**

A: We did do a feasibility study in 2019 to assess the viability of putting housing above some libraries. This was taken to our asset management board and it was deemed minimally viable, and in 2019 finances were slightly better. Any self-sustaining option would need to be more than marginally viable as we do not have the risk appetite or financial ability to take those chances right now.

**Q: We know that young people and older people rely more on local libraries, will they lose out?**

A: We are uncomfortable with the impact closures will have, especially our most vulnerable residents. Closing the library will have a significant impact on loneliness and sense of community. This is why we would not have made these proposals if they were not absolutely essential.

**Q: Could we start charging a membership fee for people to use the library?**

A: As libraries are a statutory service, we cannot offer a paid membership. We also would not want to exclude residents.

**Q: Have you looked into volunteer or community managed libraries?**

A: Yes. There was no appetite for a community run service when we consulted in 2019, and we would lose the statutory-nature of the service if it is just a room with books. A statutory-service community library would see us providing the space, internet, and librarian support for the volunteers. This would equate to £70-80k a year - which is not worth the trade-off. However, we would welcome proposals from the community to set up volunteer-run 'friends of libraries' groups that could access more funding.

**Q: Could we ask people to donate or sponsor libraries?**

A: There are risks and legal barriers to sponsoring libraries. We have approached other local services to use our building in times that we are closed e.g. doctors, dentists, NHS etc. but there was no appetite. We will continue to look into whether private companies can donate to our libraries.

**Q: If Library Services and Social Care are both statutory services, why can't we use the money set aside for Social Care?**

A: At the moment, about £40 million is spent on Adult Social Care, and £53 million on Children's. This is because the statutes for children and adult services are extremely detailed. We cannot change this and have to provide the service. In comparison, the libraries statutes are very broad and there is no clear definition of what constitutes a viable service.

**Q: Will you lose money in the long-term by reducing early-help measures?**

A: A recent study by the University of East Anglia found that a library service similar to ours delivers 6x its running cost in social value. We know that. However, we need money now.

**Q: If a children's library is created, would this be in one location?**

A: We are still in the process of discussing ideas for a potential children's library. The vision could be for a library that is mobile. Or, with funding, in five to ten years there could be a facility that provides a state of the art SEN-friendly children's library. We know that the population of children and young people is growing and that other authorities have begun providing such services.





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# Havering

LONDON BOROUGH



**SHOUT about Libraries**  
September 2024  
Total responses 1,214

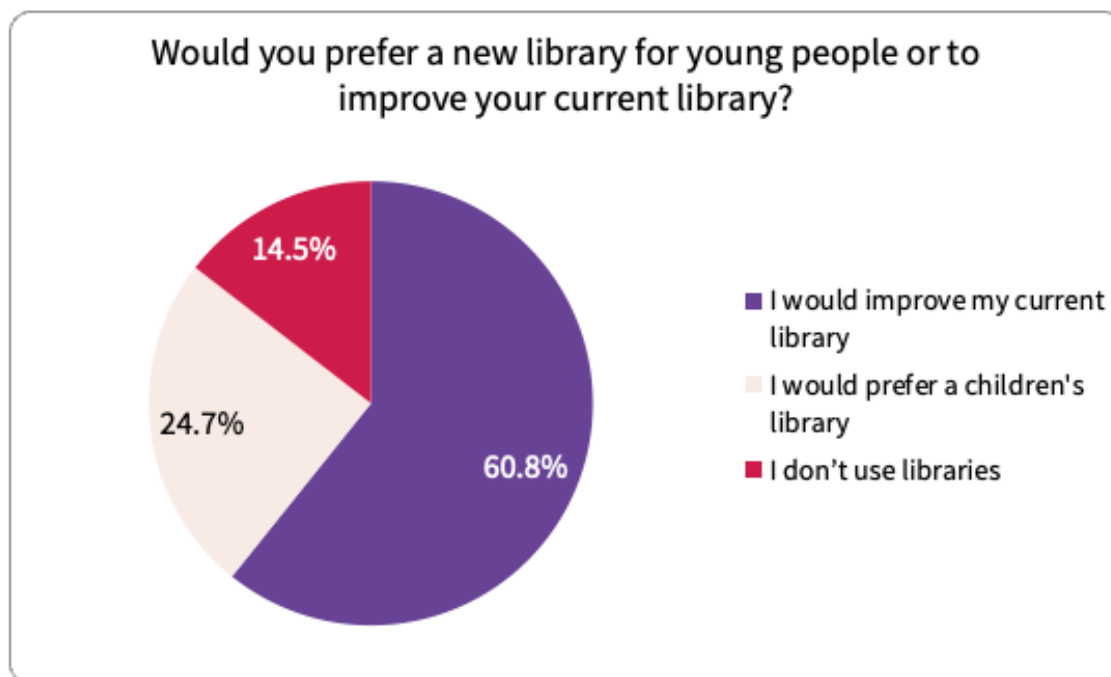


**1.**

<b>What do you think would be important for a library made just for children?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>Help with reading</b>	77.3%	861
<b>Borrowing books</b>	76.8%	856
<b>Help with school projects</b>	58.2%	648
Arts and Crafts activities	53.8%	599
Playing games	32.6%	363
Soft play area	27.6%	308
Borrowing games/sports equipment	24.4%	272
Can travel to different schools	22.8%	254
Something we missed (see below)	21.7%	242

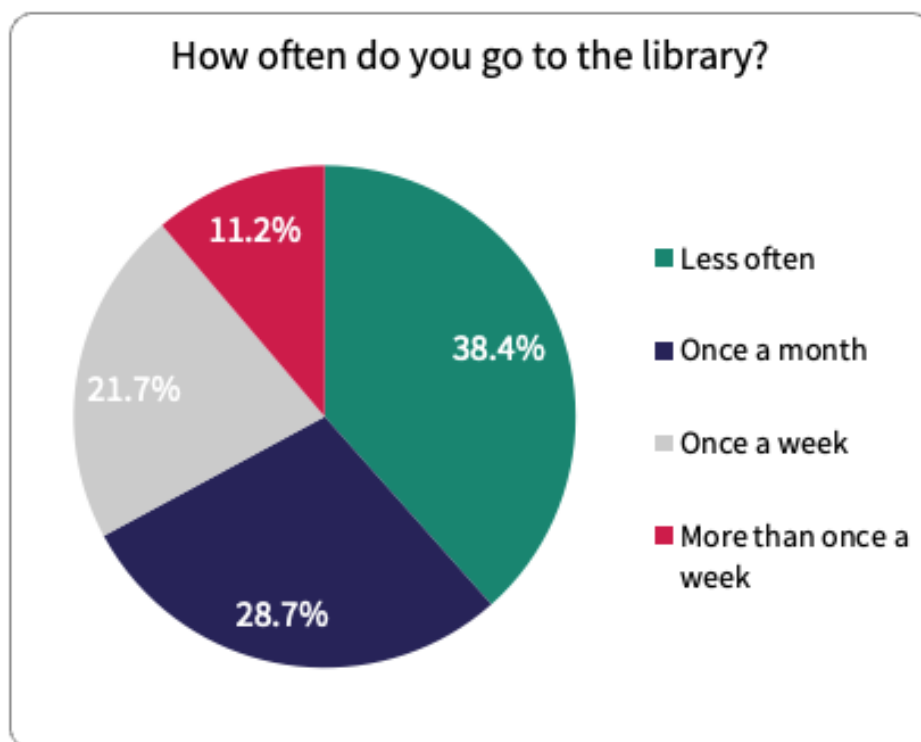
2.

Would you prefer a new library for young people or to improve your current library?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>I would improve my current library</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>711</b>
I would prefer a children's library	24.7%	289
I don't use libraries	14.5%	170
	<i>answered</i>	<i>1170</i>
	<i>skipped</i>	<i>44</i>



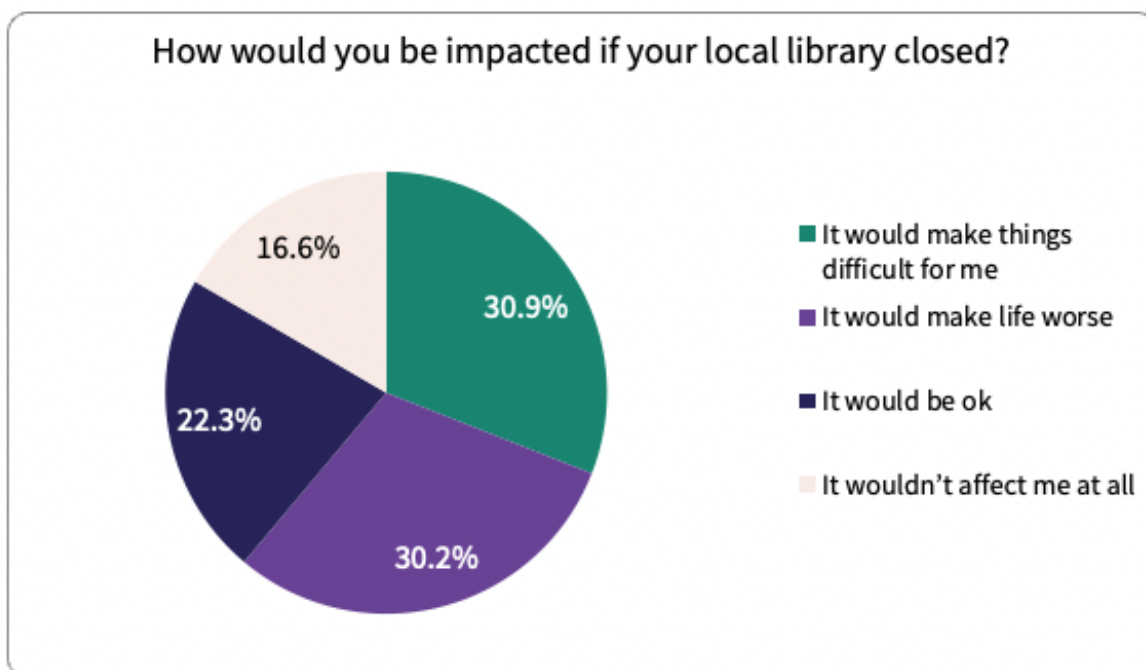
3.

How often do you go to the library?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>Less often</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>449</b>
Once a month	28.7%	335
Once a week	21.7%	253
More than once a week	11.2%	131
	<b><i>answered</i></b>	<b>1168</b>
	<b><i>skipped</i></b>	<b>46</b>



4.

How would you be impacted if your local library closed?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>It would make things difficult for me</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>363</b>
It would make life worse	30.2%	354
It would be ok	22.3%	261
It wouldn't affect me at all	16.6%	195
	<b><i>answered</i></b>	<b>1173</b>
	<b><i>skipped</i></b>	<b>41</b>



5.

<b>What do you do when you visit the library?</b> <b>Please select multiple</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>Borrow books</b>	<b>76.5%</b>	<b>890</b>
<b>Read books</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>808</b>
<b>Summer reading challenge</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>535</b>
Study/do homework	33.7%	392
Go to events or activities	26.5%	308
Use computers	24.0%	279
Use free wifi	19.9%	232
Something we missed:	12.1%	141
	<b><i>answered</i></b>	<b>1163</b>
	<b><i>skipped</i></b>	<b>51</b>



6.

<b>What do you like about spending time in the library?</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>I have a quiet place to read, study or relax</b>	<b>66.8%</b>	<b>761</b>
<b>I learn about new things</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>646</b>
<b>My reading has improved</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>637</b>
I like being creative	31.2%	355
I learn about people from different backgrounds	26.4%	301
Meeting friends at events	25.5%	291
Computers / Internet access is better than at home	18.1%	206
Something we missed:	10.3%	117
	<b><i>answered</i></b>	<b>1139</b>
	<b><i>skipped</i></b>	<b>75</b>

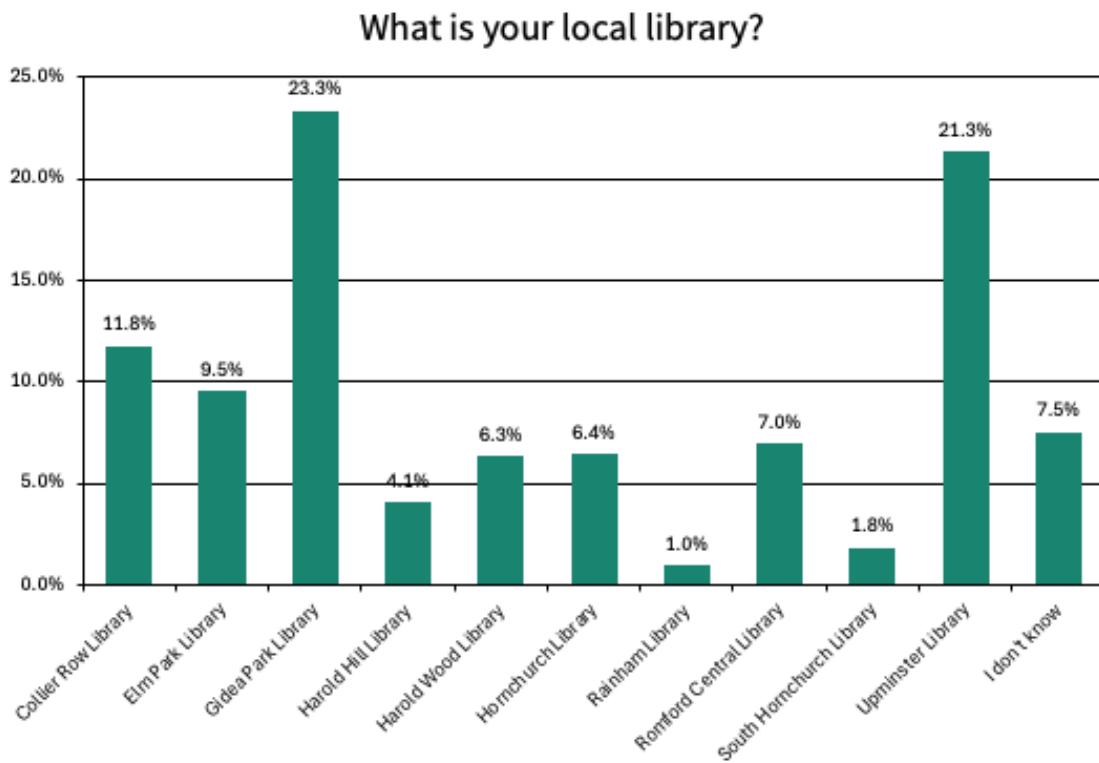
7.

<b>What are some of the things you'd feel or experience if your nearest library closed?</b>		
<b>Answer Choice</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
<b>I wouldn't be able to borrow books anymore</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>799</b>
<b>I wouldn't have anywhere quiet to go</b>	<b>47.7%</b>	<b>542</b>
<b>I would miss going to library events or activities</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>446</b>
Use school library	31.8%	361
I wouldn't have somewhere to go after school	26.7%	303
I wouldn't have access to computers or technology	14.7%	167
Something we missed:	8.3%	94
	<b>answered</b>	<b>1136</b>
	<b>skipped</b>	<b>78</b>

8.

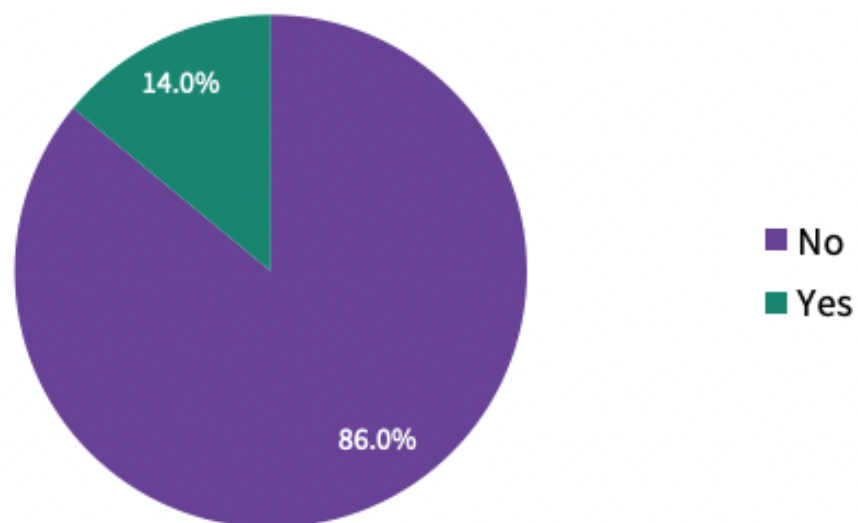
If your nearest library closed, would you be able to visit another library?		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
<b>I couldn't go by myself</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>482</b>
The other library is too far away	40.8%	470
Travelling to another library would be difficult	38.6%	445
I could visit another library	30.7%	354
Something we missed:	7.2%	83
	<b>answered</b>	<b>1152</b>
	<b>skipped</b>	<b>62</b>

9.



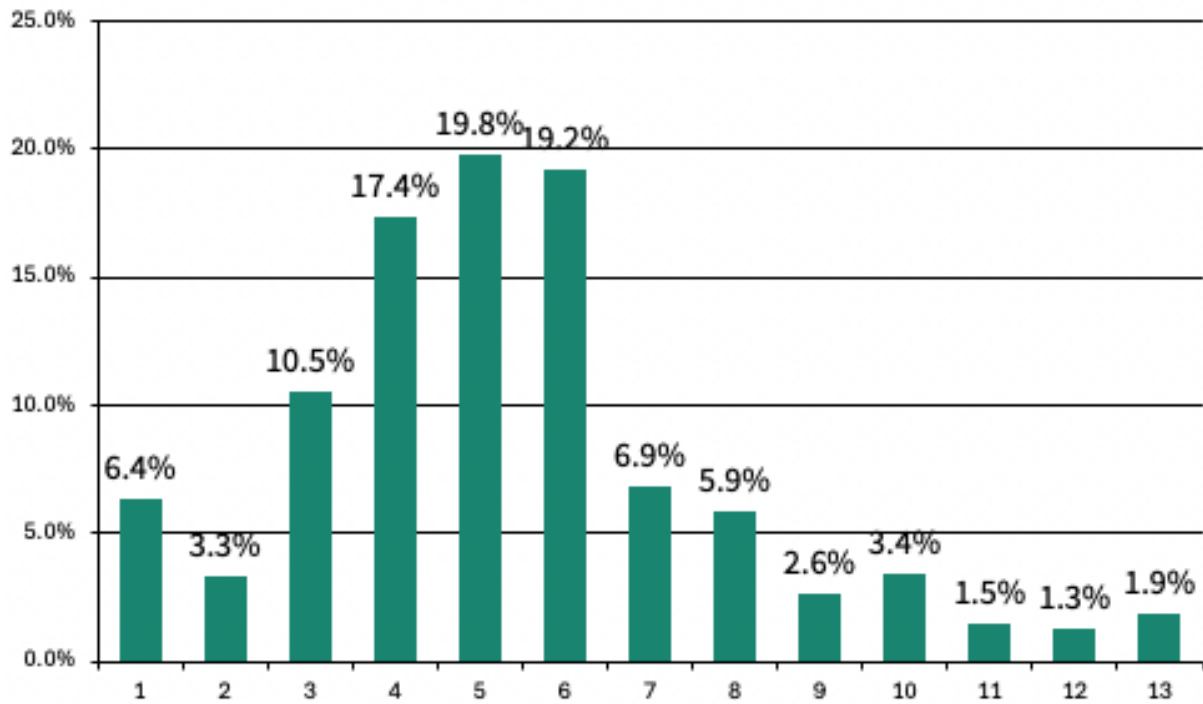
10.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



**11.**

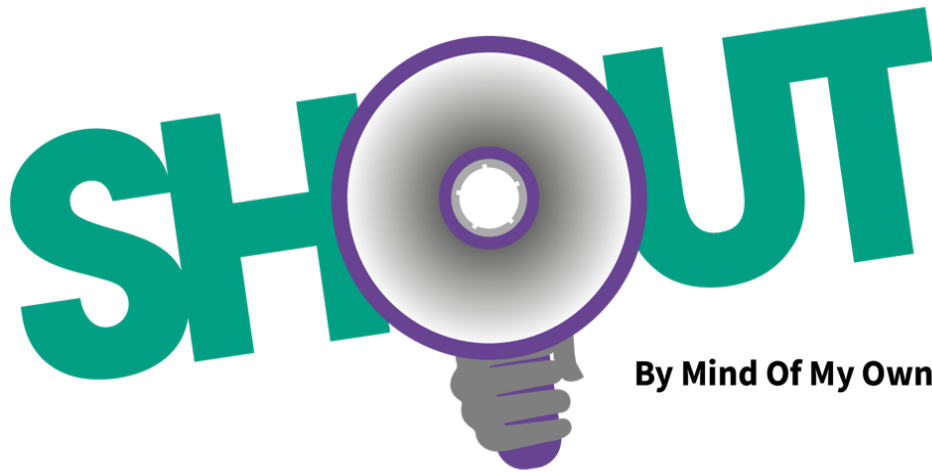
What school year are you in?



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**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH



**SHOUT about Libraries**

September 2024

Total responses 1,214



## Appendix.

The following details the free text responses obtained for each question.

### What do you think would be important for a library made just for children?

Trampoline

Food banks and soup kitchens

Accelerated reader (renaissance) book levels

Having a fun time reading

Nothing

Helping children's education

Let's people read together

story time

GIVING AWAY BOOKS

colouring pages

Colouring pages and pens

kids book library

maybe they can make a soft play area and also a boom area so if the children want to play they can and if they wa area

toy librairy,sport

If they don't know how to read it could have a speaker

Kids play area for 7 year olds and older

Books in age like from age 9- 18

A science lab

A quiet corner for the people who are really good.

Audiobooks

Seats that are comfy

A LOT OF BOOKS

Borrowing books

Play area

INTERESTING THICK books

Borrowing books and spending time with friends and read in peace

Lots of games like sports.

Borrowing books and reading them.

Mo boox

learning

Maybe helping with fantasy

tutors

Making friends

Soccer mini field

Computers



help navigating legitimate news/information sites on the internet.

To help learning

Trips so children can learn the actual history around books

Running away from the fart boys

Beanbag area

Play

Group social activities such as book clubs, reading challenges etc.

Sensory room

Speak new language like french,spanish....

Interact with other people

Learning an instrument/language

Overall social communication with other children and adults

introducing musical instruments to kids from a young age

Research for events, projects or other things

Free Tutor area

Computers

video games

None

an own area for babies

To help them have a place for them to be calm.

Bring more interesting books to school

Maybe selling books for kids?

Encouraging children to read

revision

Encouraging children to read

make sure they are comfortable

reading buddy

for redl

help interact with people

Relaxing

It's needed for there education.

Help with reading in class.

feelings

Nothing good ideas but more activtes etc

nothing

summer reading challege.

kids book area

let kids bring there own books from home

help learn about stuff

Origami, witting books and drwings.

learn new things

Different aged books from 0-17.

Have different kinds of books and all kinds of books

safe environment  
the different seats

Quiet area

A booth just for quiet reading and no disturbance and sealed off from the rest of the library . Some gaming computers

Do an award system to get children to read more.

Allowing schools to visit near them.

sensory room and equipment because my sister is autistic and loves a quiet space.

A book review or quiz about the book we have read

nothing

helping with tests

maybe books that people like

it helps children improve their reading and spelling it also helps children's parents that don't have enough money

going through challenging vocabulary.

Help to learn the language

Don't need a children's library keep the one we've got

To help socialize with people who have similar hobbies

play house

ONLINE GAMES

tennis

more books

make books for different ages and picture books for kids

help picking a book.

learn to read

getting books for free

good books

authors coming in

more soft things

there is not a lot our library is missing i like it a lot

the school library missed nothing

helping children find their preferred books to borrow

nothing

reading with friends

bean bags , pillows, teddys.

nothing

help with spelling

bean bags , pillows, teddys.

bean bags , pillows, teddys.

The summer reading challenges are amazing

helps children to read

rr

a area for students to study.

nothing

## Havering, SHOUT about Libraries – September 2024

buying things  
teach grammar  
Somewhere to read with my mumma.  
Kids book clubs type clubs  
School holiday programmes, after school clubs  
Maybe some clubs for children; theatrics, projects around books, games  
short courses to help their future  
Explore different books  
football bookes  
reading areas  
help reading  
nothing  
NO  
soft play area  
vending machine  
todler area  
todler area  
having fun.  
food  
a climbing frame outside to bring some life to the libre  
food and drinks  
a quiet place to sit  
more sigma alfa males (aka ur mum)  
Food are if they get hungry but they want to stay  
reading buddies people with higher reading levels can help people with lower reading levels  
Sections for different book series  
Outdoor area where kids can read  
Arts and crafts  
learning braille or sign language classes. A place to educate after school, interactive, community.  
Football match 11 aside  
Maybe you could have storytelling! 📖📖  
To Learn new words.  
Helping with education  
A little game area  
Ok  
Challenges  
Summer Reading Challenge  
Challenges

reading on their own  
more play time  
Maybe we can get some books and read them and search for ideas  
Lots of people to help children do stuff

quiet time  
Quiet studying/revising

easier to find the books you want

tv

chatting with friends in a quiet place                      A belief room

no

fun activities

NOTHING

playing games related to reading, such as: reading bingo etc.

learn

a quiet and relaxing space

reading

Sofas

it can help with school work

Affecting minds

no

Close proximity to my home

A library for all not a bus

Study areas with laptop charging facilities

Nothing

Quiet space

Football

Probably a lack of proper books

Story time sessions with acting

Petting area if you fell stressed 😞

Relaxing areas to sit and read, access to author talks, creative writing workshops.

Every go to a different and get the person who read the most books and give them a prize

The ability to ask for community borrowing (so you can ask across a community group chat to see if a book is available)

person

Online reading games

Using computers

Linking with early years settings to build up a early love of reading

Books for my A levels

Baby/toddler rhyme time

seating area for parents or a cafe/refreshments corner

Singing sessions for pre schoolers eg wiggle and giggle

Creche facilities

A place to relax and read in peace and quiet

Place to hold clubs like Lego and chess

Clubs/ social groups to help children communicate/social skills

Summer reading challenge

Storytime and rhyme time sessions. Meeting other children

Children's Group activities eg story time and singing songs

Keeping quiet area

Quiet area, computers, consistency

Meeting groups within the community

Visits from petting zoos, dressing up section.

Story telling

## Havering, SHOUT about Libraries – September 2024

Quiet study area  
Encouraging Reading  
Children group meetings/events  
Parent toddler bounce and rhyme and story times  
Must be in our local town  
Learning new things from each book.  
I like meeting other children and I like it's nice and calm and quiet  
Be close enough to our home that we can walk to the library  
Walking distance from my house  
Research area  
Board Games and chess tournaments  
Close to home  
Coffee morning .bags and school uniforms  
Reading club  
Story tellers  
Activities/sessions especially for sen  
Volunteering programme  
Study areas  
Help with homework or personal tasks when using printers/ computers etc  
I would like to learn chess  
A section for tutoring  
A place to study

## What do you do when you visit the library?

Sit and have some chill time  
Meet new people  
Explore different kinds of books  
Nothing  
Buy books  
Talk to the people  
Book buddies  
TOYS  
Read with children  
Look at books  
Books  
Having a quiet place  
Comfy chairs  
I don't go to a library  
Good books which are interesting like the worlds worst children 2  
Spending some alone time  
Go to events or activities or use free Wi-Fi.  
Reading  
Pley  
reading and relaxing  
Learn new things  
Run from the fart boys  
Give back books  
Make new friends  
Meet others  
Have a quiet place to go to so you can relax and read  
Get local information  
Research  
None  
nothing.  
meet friends  
and sometimes i go with my friends and read together.  
read with my dad  
have play dates  
read with my parents  
Meet with friends  
having peace and quiet  
charneg  
meet up with friends  
i dont go to the libraries  
how many books have you read  
nothing  
sitng on beanbags

help children improve reading like how my brother teach people

To help not to close down the library.

stay calm and be relaxed

Learn things.

Have a look at different books

I dont use librarys

To calm down and read a book.

Nothing

nothing

quietly talking with my friends

Nursery visits

Happy books

Draw

I don't have a computer at home and it's no good for studying

Doing nothing

nothing

playing corner for children.

doing homework

a time or paying if not returned books

read books

for an interview

nothing

the school library missed nothing

nothing

go to sleep in the quiet

Read the new books

nothing

practising how to read

meet friends

nothing

teach young people (age 3-5) to read

Collect recycling bags

Collect recycling bags

Noo

ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

get books

football books

i dont go...

going to the toilet

WiFi

listen to stories, reading clubs

Nothing

Nothing

See if there are any clubs for children

Chill on the bean bags

Ok



Don't close the library  
Calming down  
Chill  
read on beenbags  
Use your library card  
school trips  
free wifi  
NOTHING  
no  
nothing  
buy a book  
hang out with friends  
Nothing has been missed  
Nothing  
fun with friends  
Having fun  
pick up books i have reserved  
Just to enjoy a library/time together  
Sad if closed  
Colour in  
Parents join on trips and helps them get involved with teaching how to read  
Study with friendsc  
Show my children the library  
Used to go to singing group with my toddlers  
Meet friends  
Meet friends  
Play board games  
Children's activities  
Order books to be brought in from other library  
Photocopy  
I have 4 children aged 7-20years we have used the gidea park library for over 20 years it has been so helpful for their development  
Get orange bags for mum  
Nothing  
Meet new friends and talk to people, I love feeling independent  
Play with other children and spend time with my mum  
Meet new like minded friends  
Collect orange bags  
Pick up recycling bags, and vote with mum & dad



## Havering, SHOUT about Libraries – September 2024

A lot more

Socialising with with other children and making friends

Share quality time with children and grandchildren

Take the nursery children

My brother does baby bounce then wiggle and giggle. I like the craft activities and storytime. We like when authors visit

Use Printers

My tutor sometimes meets me there to do some studying together

## What do you like about spending time in the library?

Play area

I like to zone out on the real world, and for it to be just me and my book

Having a lot of different books

Learn stuff from ages ago

Book buddies

Use school library

need computers

LERNIG

Sweets

I don't go to a library

Comfy chairs to relax and a play area with some board games or soft play

Reading challenges and not just the summer reading challenge

Sports

Relaxing

Crust ut

I like hiding from the fart boys

Have fun

nothing

Meeting others

I can try lots of different types of books and authors

None

nothing.

explore

explore

raidl

nothing

nothing cause i dont go

reading

we can buy a book from the library and then we can read it there

meeting new people

Studying.

entertain myself

The different types of books there.

Looking at big picture books

I lay down and study while reading a book

Reading in a quiet place.

I do not use library 's

I spend less time on the internet.

Nothing

nothing

Allows me to use internet when my PC at home is not working.

drawing

It's free

nothing  
I like doing sports and learn togetherness  
nothing  
the computers  
finding books  
learning about the past  
more beanbags  
nothing  
get inspired by craft books  
beanbags  
nothing  
reading calmly with your friends

nothing  
Get books  
enjoying sequels in series of books  
It's a space to be with my mumma. She says it's a free activity for us.  
Access to printer/photocopier  
It's a nice relaxing space, can take time to choose books that interest me  
borrowing books  
look at books  
NOPE  
still dont go:/  
i like to read on my own. i do not study there  
I like reading with my friends  
fortnite  
I like the range of books that children can borrow  
reading books I don't have at home  
It helps with prizes for reading competitions  
Computer or technology  
Nothing  
I learned new stuff and I feel safe  
Wide range of books  
I like it because children can read book  
Nothing  
when you are angry you can calm down  
Reading your favourite books  
i just borrow books so i dont spent time there  
Speaking to friends privately  
NOTHING  
i dont go to the libray so i dont know  
i don't go to the library  
to make my mom happy  
i dont go to the library  
Nothing missed  
I'm disabled and love borrowing books it's somewhere I can go myself on my scooter

Nothing  
Nothing  
drawings  
Making new friends  
It encourages a love of books  
I suggest new books to others  
My daughter likes to colour in everytime we go  
It's a lovely bonding experience for myself and my 19 month year old.  
Have some quiet times  
Local toilet access for children  
Reading to my children  
There is always someone who can help you in the library  
Children borrow books for school projects  
Finding out things that I might have not been interested before  
GET TO EXPLORE GENRE'S, I HAVENT READ BEFORE  
I am safe and warm  
Toddler groups when young  
The nice atmosphere and people who work there  
I feel happy, I like that it is a small library  
Chatting to the staff  
It helps me feel independent  
Looking at books I don't have at home  
Safe, friendly place. Can pick any book I want. It's local.  
Meeting my friends and sharing books  
Great for nursery children  
I do homework with my freinds there and it has a calming atmosphere that helps us to concentrate.  
Browsing books  
Lots of books to choose from so I can read lots of different books that I don't have at home or try a new author

## What are some of the things you'd feel or experience if your nearest library closed?

A community hub

I would be reading a lot less, and i would have to spend a lot of money on books

Nothing

I Wouldn't have anywhere to make new friends

Being alone

There is no stuff to pick up

Bean bag chairs

Spending time together

Football

Meeting friendshj

Ciser

idk

Would be unhappy that some people dont have somewhere to go even if i do

So I can't read and have fun

It don't really matter to me

I would be safe from the fart boys

nothing

not be able to interact with others

My reading skills will get worse

i don't go to librarys

None

i wouldn't borrow books that often because other libraries are far away

I wouldn't be bothered

sad because i dont have any were to go to read

a tirln

nothing

the same as i always do

i will read less.

You couldn't get lots of books for free.

I would have to go to a even further library

Read different books that you can't afford or find.

I wouldn't care because, there is a library right near my house I just don't use it

I wouldn't be able to meet up with my friends and read a book together

the other library are to far away.

I dont go to librarys

nothing

I wouldn't be affected

I wouldn't be able to relax and be myself

I would not care

I would not care

the computers

nothing realy

nothing  
i would not learn :(  
nothing  
reading my most favorite books in the world :upside down magic series  
nothing  
wont be able to walk  
nothing  
I wouldn't read with my friends quietly  
you wouldn,t have a quite place to study  
nothing  
will not spend read books i can not find at home or school  
Miss the history of it  
Loss of community facility  
YESNT  
nothing  
i wouldnt go in the 1st place  
I wouldn't be able to get some of my favourite books.  
Do home work  
Nothing  
Nothing  
Zaza  
Nothing  
go home and read  
And I wont be able to do the summer reading challenge  
NOTHING  
no  
i dont go to library  
you wont be able to borrow books as it may be the most local library  
i wouldnt be able to spend more timwe with my family  
i wouldn't be able to learn knowledge from amazing books  
Nothing missed  
lw old be angry as the council have removed a statutory service which will hinder my growth  
and development  
Nothing  
Would find life hard trying to study somewhere else  
Having Depression  
Would not be able to get books I want  
Early years settings do not have the space for large opportunities to create reading. Parents  
can't afford new books constantly.  
It is very important to our community.  
Art is exhibited/ sold by local artists.  
I use school library as well. But it's different, this is the outside of school I don't go to any clubs  
or anything outside of school so there is less to do.  
Activity missed/ reading challenged missed  
I would not want to go far to another library  
The fun of choosing new books makes me love to read, its free fun educational

## Havering, SHOUT about Libraries – September 2024

I will read a lot less. It will stop me exploring new subjects and interests. Keep it open please.

I never get to use my school library

It would not be so easy to borrow books

Wouldn't have a place to study near me

I'm home educated and the library is an important place for me to go to , quite often during school hours

## If your nearest library closed, would you be able to visit another library?

Nothing

My parents won't be able to take me

I don't go to the library

Crafts

A happy day

If your library is closed and you couldn't go to another library and you had no books what would you read

Noruto books

Nir

funny books and sumer reading challenge.

I don't want to go.

Petrol money will rise so we have to walk

I dont use libraries

No because the fart boys would be on me

I can't go it is to depressing 😞

nothing

I am w/chair user so distance could be a problem.

i don't go at all

nothing.

a chlinge

i don't go to any library's

nothing

no

Your parents dont have enough time to bring you there after school.

if I could Id go online to visit a library

I could buy the books from the shops

The parking in the other library is very tight.

It wouldn't be the same

i dont use them

I don't know where other libraries are

I could but it probably would not be the same as the one that I am used to.

nothing

To wait to open

I could but i will not

near library

nothing

nothing

I would make a new library card

i could ride my bike to another library

nothing

there could be no library's around where i live

nothing



I wouldn't got to another library  
i wouldent want to go to another library  
NA UA  
i would go home and get on with my day  
its a bit far but i could still go  
My School Library  
Play area  
Libraries make the community smarter, brings us closer, they are a safe calm place for kids to go.  
I don't go anywhere else  
I don't want to  
No because I love the books at the library  
Zaza  
Nothing  
Yes But it wouldn't be as easy  
ask your mum or dad to take you to one  
NOTHING  
I could visit a school one  
no  
i don't go to libarys  
i dont go to library  
Nothing missed  
Harold Hill is dangerous, too much violence and crime in the immediately vicinity .  
Nothing  
I don't want to go to the library  
Physically Impossible  
School library  
I walk past this library.  
Less children books  
The Upminster library is perfectly place for schools, public, community and early years settings to access.  
It is important to staff too.  
The library is the hub of the high street  
Not aloud to take busses because parents don't think it's safe  
Too far by myself  
The other libraries do not necessarily do the same activities as the one I go to  
It is a longer distance where id have to use more public transport however it is possible.

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## **Appendix D**

### **Current Offer**

#### **Physical Library Services**

Our library service operates a network of ten library buildings, comprising:

- **Five libraries** open **50 hours per week**
- **Five libraries** open **24 hours per week**

Each library houses an extensive collection of physical books catering to diverse interests. Beyond books, our libraries serve as vibrant community hubs offering:

- Free PC access and Wi-Fi
- Community-focused events and activities tailored to local needs
- Free advice, guidance, and support services, including free phone access to various council services

#### **Virtual Library Services**

Our Virtual Library operates 24/7, providing residents with seamless access to an extensive range of online resources, including:

- Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, art, and music resources
- Driving and citizenship test preparation
- Study aids, family and local history resources
- Legal and business information
- E-books, audiobooks, newspapers, and magazines
- Online courses, including foreign language learning

These resources ensure that residents have access to knowledge and entertainment anytime, anywhere, from the comfort of their own homes.

#### **Reader Development and Literacy Initiatives**

Our library service actively supports reader development through:

- Engaging children, young people, and adults in tailored library services
- Collaborations with schools to promote literacy, including:
  - The Summer Reading Challenge
  - The Every Child a Member initiative
  - Class visits to libraries
  - Borough-wide poetry competitions and author events

- News and updates on nationwide events via bodies such as like Association of Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL)

### **Community and Council Engagement**

We partner with local and national projects to address key issues such as climate change and public health. Examples include:

- **Green Libraries**, supporting climate emergency awareness and action
- **Health Champions Initiative**, where library staff are trained to guide customers on local health initiatives

### **Specialised Services**

- **Housebound Service**: Delivering books to residents unable to visit libraries due to temporary or ongoing conditions. Opportunities exist for volunteers to assist with book selection and delivery.
- **Local Studies and Family History**: Offering access to historical collections, research support, exhibitions, and community talks related to the history of the London Borough of Havering.

### **Partnerships**

We collaborate with organisations such as Citizen Advice Havering, the DWP, Age UK, Tapestry and Havering Dementia Action Alliance to provide additional services, advice, and guidance to our residents.

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### **Proposed New Offer**

#### **Revised Library Network**

The network will consist of **seven libraries**:

- **Five libraries** open **50 hours per week**
- **Two libraries** open **24 hours per week**

While there will be fewer physical locations, the full range of services will still be accessible at the remaining libraries and online.

#### **Support for Schools in Affected Areas**

- Schools impacted by closures will be prioritised for outreach initiatives, such as the Summer Reading Challenge and school assemblies promoting literacy programs.
- Collaboration with schools to establish structured class visit plans to the nearest local libraries.

#### **Community Collections in Impacted Areas**

We will collaborate with local volunteers to establish and maintain small, self-managed book collections in community buildings within the affected areas. These collections will evolve into book swap programs, fostering continued access to physical reading materials and promoting community engagement among residents

### **Enhanced Digital Access**

- Increase awareness for residents on the Virtual Library.
- Expand the promotion of online services through local campaigns and partnerships to ensure equitable access for all.

### **Enhanced Engagement with Local Partners**

- Strengthen collaborations with local organisations to ensure the libraries continue to meet evolving community needs in both the physical and virtual realms.

This revised offer ensures that, despite a reduction in physical buildings, residents will still benefit from high-quality library services while promoting innovation and community involvement.

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## Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EHIA)

<b>Title of activity:</b>	Library Consultation
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Guy Selfe, Head of Culture, Leisure, Heritage and Libraries, living Well, People
<b>Approved by:</b>	Patrick Odling-Smee, Director of Living Well, People
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>V0.1</b>
<b>Date and Key Changes Made</b>	13 December 2024
<b>Scheduled date for next review:</b>	30 April 2025

<b>Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy &amp; Legal?</b>	Yes
<b>Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?</b>	Yes
<b>Does the EHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? See Publishing Checklist.</b>	No

Please submit the completed form via e-mail to [READI@havering.gov.uk](mailto:READI@havering.gov.uk)  
Thank you.

# 1. Equality Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact [READI@havering.gov.uk](mailto:READI@havering.gov.uk) for advice from either the Corporate Diversity or Public Health teams. Please refer to [this Guidance](#) on how to complete this form.

## About your activity

1	Title of activity	Library Consultation – Proposed closure of three branch libraries		
2	Type of activity	Change in service provision		
3	Scope of activity	The recent Library consultation held over a period of 12 weeks from 10 May 2024 to 2 August 2024 included proposals to close up to four branch libraries in order to make a financial saving of £300,000.		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>either</u> of these questions is 'YES' Continue to question 5.	
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people from different backgrounds?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes / No	Use the <a href="#">Screening tool</a> before you answer this question.	If you answer 'YES' Continue to question 5.
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	N/A		

Completed by:	Guy Selfe, Head of Culture. Leisure, Heritage and Libraries, Living Well, People
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Date:	13/12/2024
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## 2. The EHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

### Background/context:

1. The Council has a statutory responsibility (a duty set out by law) to provide a local library service in accordance with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Act requires each local authority to provide a library service that is “comprehensive and efficient for those that live, work or study in the area”. It is for local decision how the library service best meets this requirement practically, including how many libraries there are, where they are, when they are open and what each one offers.

2. The Libraries Taskforce definition is ‘A comprehensive service cannot mean that every resident lives close to a library. This has never been the case. Comprehensive has therefore been taken to mean delivering a service that is accessible to all residents using reasonable means, including digital technologies. An efficient service must make the best use of the assets available in order to meet its core objectives and vision, recognising the constraints on council resources. Decisions about the Service must be embedded within a clear strategic framework which draws upon evidence about needs and aspirations across the diverse communities of the borough.’

3. The Council’s current statutory library provision consists of ten library sites, together with the Home Library service, the local studies library and the online library.

4. Against a backdrop of continuing significant financial pressures for the Council, which included the need to request exceptional financial support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in order to set a balanced budget for the financial year 2024/25. The budget included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council’s library service by £300,000 over two years. The library service accordingly developed a draft library strategy which included a set of proposals to close a number of libraries in order to deliver that saving.

5. The draft strategy comprised:

- The proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the service by means to closing four of the five “branch” libraries (Collier Row, Elm Park, Gidea Park, Harold Wood, South Hornchurch);
- Proposals to reduce the service’s book stock budget by 61% (£161,000) in 2024/25 only and £30,000 (from the 2023/24 base) in both 2025/26 and 2026/27.
- A detailed needs and usage assessment which was used to develop the proposals;
- A refreshed vision and strategic priorities to underpin the statutory service in coming years;
- Proposals to develop an investment business case seeking capital funding to improve the quality of the library estate;
- Proposals seeking views on whether a purpose-designed children’s library – either at a fixed site or as a mobile provision – could better meet library need in the future.

6. An extensive consultation on the draft library strategy began on 10 May 2024 and ended on 2 August 2024. Details of which are set out in section 2 below.

7. As part of any consultation on library closures, the Council is obliged to consider any implications arising from the Equality Act 2010. The Council has an equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve objectives set in the Act to:

- a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029 Consultation**

8. The consultation included:

- Online consultation on the draft strategy via the Council's *CitizenSpace* portal;
- Hard copy paper version of the above, copies of which were made available at all libraries in the borough (hard copy consultations were subsequently manually entered on to the electronic portal);
- A series of 15 public meetings that were well attended were held across the entire library estate;
- "SHOUT about Libraries", a version of the consultation designed for children and young people. The SHOUT consultation commenced in mid-July 2024 and closed in September 2024.

9. A few petitions pertaining to individual libraries were received during and after the consultation. Petitions were received on behalf of each of the five branch libraries proposed for closure.

10. The Havering Council Libraries Consultation gathered insights from 3,399 respondents, and the SHOUT survey aimed at primary and secondary pupils gathered insights from 1,214 residents regarding the usage, importance, and impact of potential closure of libraries within the borough.

11. There were fifteen public consultation events with at least one being held at each library in Havering.

### **Recommendations**

12. Following careful consideration of the consultation it is recommended that instead of four branch libraries being closed, this is reduced to three. The three branches recommended to close are:

- Gidea Park

- Harold Wood
- South Hornchurch

13. Whilst this will not achieve the full saving required, it is recommended to not close a fourth branch that would over achieve the identified saving required.

14. Factors considered when recommending the branches to close has included:

- Visitor numbers
- Proximity to a remaining branch library
- Distance travelled to existing branches for some residents
- Building condition of branches

Who will be affected by the activity?
Residents, library users, library colleagues, schools, community groups
<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups		
If there is an impact on under 18s, how have you / will you ensure their views are gained to inform decision making?		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	<b>Overall impact:</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Older people and young people might be negatively impacted due to the proposed closure of three branch libraries. Older people might be less inclined to travel to an alternative branch library even though there are options available within a reasonable distance. Young people might be reliant on an adult to take them to an alternative branch library.
<b>Neutral</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Negative</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

**Evidence:****Gidea Park Library:**

- This branch has a higher than England average population catchment of residents aged over 65. The England average is 18.4% - Marshalls and Rise Park areas are 23%, whilst Emerson Park is 24.9%.
- There are over 500 library members aged over 60 at Gidea Park library
- Children (% of population made up of children aged 0-15) – England average 18.6% - St Edwards 19.4%, Squirrels Heath 19.1%, St Albans 21.3%,
- The second highest membership age group is 5-15 years with just on 1000 library members at Gidea Park library.

**Harold Wood Library:**

- This branch has a higher than England average population catchment of residents aged over 65. The England average is 18.4% - Cranham is 22.9%
- There are just under 500 library members aged over 60 at Harold Wood library
- The second highest membership age group is 5-15 years with approximately 800 library members.

**South Hornchurch Library**

- Children (% of population made up of children aged 0-15) – England average 18.6% - South Hornchurch 20.7%, Beam Park 24.1%, Rainham and Wennington 20.2%
- There are approximately 700 library members aged 5-15 at South Hornchurch Library.

*\*Expand box as required***Sources used:**

Library membership data

Consultation responses including the SHOUT survey of children and young people of primary or secondary school age.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Disability:** Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical, mental, sensory, progressive conditions and learning difficulties. Also consider neurodivergent conditions e.g. dyslexia and autism.

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative X

**Overall impact:**

People with a disability might be negatively impacted due to having to travel further to an alternative branch from the branches proposed to be closed. This might be more likely if a disabled person relies on public transport.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:****.Harold Wood Library:**

- Disability (disabled under Equality Act) – England Average 17.3% - Gooshays 17%, Heaton 17.8%

**South Hornchurch Library:**

- Disability (disabled under Equality Act) – England Average 17.3% - Beam Park 15.6%

*\*Expand box as required***Sources used:**

Consultation responses including the SHOUT survey of children and young people of primary or secondary school age

*\*Expand box as required***Protected Characteristic – Sex / gender: Consider both men and women**

Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:

**Positive****Overall impact:**

Women and girls are likely to be negatively impacted more than men and boys as the majority of library members at each of the branch libraries proposed for closure are female.

**Neutral****Negative****X***\*Expand box as required***Evidence:**

Women and girls account for just over 60% of library members at each of the branches – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch.

*\*Expand box as required***Sources used:**

Library membership data.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity / race / nationalities:** Consider the impact on different minority ethnic groups and nationalities

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  Households where no English as main language is above the England average. This could have a negative impact as libraries provide a point of contact for information and advice.
<b>Positive</b>		
<b>Neutral</b>		
<b>Negative</b>	<b>X</b>	

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**  
 Gidea Park Library
 

- Households where no member has English as main language – England average is 5% - St Edwards 8.3%, St Albans 11.1%

 Harold Wood Library
 

- Households where no member has English as main language – England average is 5% - Gooshays 5.1%, Heaton 6.3%

 South Hornchurch Library
 

- Households where no member has English as main language – England average is 5% - Beam Park 5.8%, Rainham and Wennington 5.5%

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**  
  
 Census data

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic – Religion / faith:** Consider people from different religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  If the decision is taken to close the three branch libraries – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, it would affect all users in the same way irrespective of religion/faith.
<b>Positive</b>		
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Negative</b>		

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation:** Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  If the decision is taken to close the three branch libraries – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, it would affect all users in the same way irrespective of sexual orientation.
<b>Positive</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Neutral</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Negative</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment:** Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  If the decision is taken to close the three branch libraries – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, it would affect all users in the same way irrespective of gender reassignment..
<b>Positive</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Neutral</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Negative</b>			<i>*Expand box as required</i>
<b>Evidence:</b>			
<i>*Expand box as required</i>			
<b>Sources used:</b>			
<i>*Expand box as required</i>			

<b>Protected Characteristic – Marriage / civil partnership:</b> Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership			
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>	
<b>Positive</b>		If the decision is taken to close the three branch libraries – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, it would affect all users in the same way irrespective of marriage/civil partnership status.	
<b>Neutral</b>	X		
<b>Negative</b>			
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
<b>Evidence:</b>			
<i>*Expand box as required</i>			
<b>Sources used:</b>			
<i>*Expand box as required</i>			

<b>Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity:</b> Consider those who are pregnant and those who are taking maternity or paternity leave
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<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  If the decision is taken to close the three branch libraries – Gidea Park, Harold Wood and South Hornchurch, it would affect all users in the same way irrespective of pregnancy, maternity or paternity leave.
<b>Positive</b>		
<b>Neutral</b>	X	
<b>Negative</b>		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
<b>Evidence:</b>		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
<b>Sources used:</b>		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

<b>Socio-economic status:</b> Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>  People from low income or financially excluded backgrounds could be negatively impacted due to the proposed closure of three branch libraries. Additional travel costs could prevent accessing an alternative branch library. Using one of the three branch libraries as a warm space during their opening hours could also be impacted.
<b>Positive</b>		
<b>Neutral</b>		
<b>Negative</b>	X	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
<b>Evidence:</b>		
<p>Gidea Park Library:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - St Edwards 4.8%,</li> <li>• Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - St Edwards 35.9%, St Albans 31.9%</li> <li>• Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – St Albans 15.2%</li> </ul>		

**Harold Wood Library:**

- Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - Gooshays 6.1%, Heaton 6.3%
- Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - Gooshays 26.9%, Heaton 29.6%
- Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – Gooshays 20.1%, Heaton 20.3%
- Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty – England average 19.5% - Gooshays 20.5%, Heaton 21.4%

**South Hornchurch Library:**

- Unemployment (% of residents claiming JSA/UC) – England average 3.8% - South Hornchurch 5.2%, Beam Park 7.5%, Rainham and Wennington 4.7%
- Access to car (% of residents who do not own a car or van) – England average 23.5% - Beam Park 27.3%
- Deprivation (% of households with 2 indices of deprivation) – England average 14.2% – South Hornchurch 15.4%, Beam Park 18.1%, Rainham and Wennington 16.4%
- Children – number of households with children living in relative poverty – England average 19.5% - Beam Park 22.5%

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

Census data

*\*Expand box as required*

**Health & Wellbeing Impact:** Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool on the next page to help you answer this question.

Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person’s physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity?

*Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:*

**Overall impact:**

<b>Positive</b>	
<b>Neutral</b>	X
<b>Negative</b>	

**Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?** Please tick (✓) the relevant box

*\*Expand box as required*

Yes  No

**Evidence:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

*\*Expand box as required*

### 3. Health & Wellbeing Screening Tool

Will the activity / service / policy / procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below  
The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.




Lifestyle YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Personal circumstances YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to services/facilities/amenities YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise and physical activity <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to passive smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol intake <input type="checkbox"/> Dependency on prescription drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Illicit drug and substance use <input type="checkbox"/> Risky Sexual behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure and cohesion of family unit <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting <input type="checkbox"/> Childhood development <input type="checkbox"/> Life skills <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety <input type="checkbox"/> Employment status <input type="checkbox"/> Working conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Level of income, including benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Level of disposable income <input type="checkbox"/> Housing tenure <input type="checkbox"/> Housing conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Educational attainment <input type="checkbox"/> Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	<input type="checkbox"/> to Employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> to Workplaces <input type="checkbox"/> to Housing <input type="checkbox"/> to Shops (to supply basic needs) <input type="checkbox"/> to Community facilities <input type="checkbox"/> to Public transport <input type="checkbox"/> to Education <input type="checkbox"/> to Training and skills development <input type="checkbox"/> to Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Social services <input type="checkbox"/> to Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Respite care <input type="checkbox"/> to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social contact <input type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the community <input type="checkbox"/> Membership of community groups <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation of community/area <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in public affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Level of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Level of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety measures <input type="checkbox"/> Road safety measures	<input type="checkbox"/> Creation of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of wealth in local area/economy <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of income <input type="checkbox"/> Business activity <input type="checkbox"/> Job creation <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Technological development <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of traffic congestion	<input type="checkbox"/> Air quality <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality <input type="checkbox"/> Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour <input type="checkbox"/> Noise levels <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Land use <input type="checkbox"/> Natural habitats <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape, including green and open spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Townscape, including civic areas and public realm <input type="checkbox"/> Use/consumption of natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste management <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport infrastructure

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## 4. Outcome of the Assessment

The EHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	<p>1. The initial screening exercise showed a strong indication that there will be no impacts on people and need to carry out an EHIA.</p> <p>2. The EHIA identified <b><u>no significant concerns</u></b> OR the identified <b><u>negative concerns</u></b> have already been <b><u>addressed</u></b></p>		<p><b>Proceed with implementation of your activity</b></p>
X	<p>3. The EHIA identified some <b><u>negative impact</u></b> which still needs <b><u>to be addressed</u></b></p>		<p><b>COMPLETE SECTION 5:</b>  <b>Complete action plan</b> with measures to mitigate the and finalise the EHIA</p>
	<p>4. The EHIA identified some <b><u>major concerns</u></b> and showed that it is <b><u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u></b> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level</p>		<p><b>Stop and remove</b> the activity or <b>revise</b> the activity <b>thoroughly</b>.  <b>Complete an EHIA on the revised proposal.</b></p>

## 5. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EHIA comes from identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise **negative** impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will mitigate or reduce any **negative** equality and/or health & wellbeing impacts, identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; if required, will amend the scope and direction of the change; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	The library website will be updated with bus and train information, as well as information for nearby car parks and disabled car parking spaces. Available car parking at libraries will be assessed to ensure that parking is available for those that need it most.	Library website updated.	By 28 February 2025	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic	Negative	We will work with partners to support provision of information on active and alternative travel.	Alternative and active travel information provided both on the library website and in the	By 28 February 2025	Alexis Wainwright

status			branches proposed to close.		
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Digital support: this will be targeted at those who most need it, including older people, users with a disability	Digital support offered both online and in branch libraries proposed for closure.	Ongoing	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Better marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is needed	Marketing and promotion of the e-library service offer is part of an initial campaign, and then promoted at regular intervals of at least every 6 months.	Ongoing	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Familiarisation visits to other libraries will be offered to older people and families with young children	Familiarisation visits to nearest branch/es arranged and offered to branch members visitors whose branch is proposed for closure	By 31 May 2025	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Further work will be carried out to expand the number of library volunteers able to meet increased housebound delivery demand	Proactive recruitment of volunteers	Ongoing	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Provide an outreach offer targeting schools and community settings which serve communities affected by library closures	Outreach offer made to schools and community settings	Ongoing	Alexis Wainwright

Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Seek locations for a book swap service for communities where branch libraries have closed	Potential partners and venues contacted to establish if there is an appetite for hosting a book swap service close to the branches proposed for closure.	By 31 May 2025	Alexis Wainwright
Age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status	Negative	Consider ways of providing more flexible space in libraries, such as using unbooked meeting room space as study space in busy periods such as examination season	Review of available space in conjunction with a timetabling review	Ongoing	Alexis Wainwright

**Add further rows as necessary**

\*You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts.

Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

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## 6. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

**Review:**

Initially, and up until 31 May 2025, review the EHIA monthly. After 31 May review the EHIA six monthly.

**Scheduled date of review:** 31 January 2025

**Lead Officer conducting the review:** Alexis Wainwright

*\*Expand box as required*

**Please submit the completed form via e-mail to [READI@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:READI@haverling.gov.uk)  
Thank you.**

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