

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.

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.