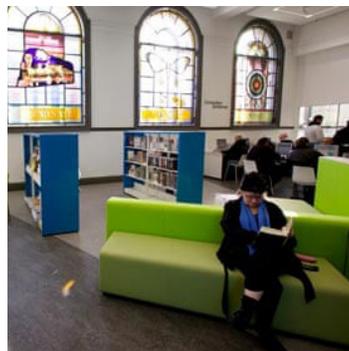
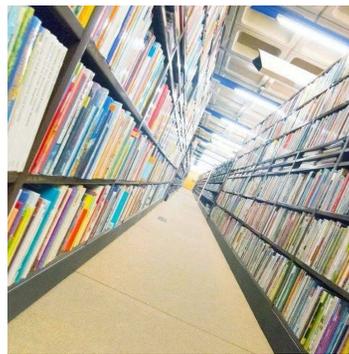


Appendix 5d

Books and Beyond

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Blackpool Council



CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY



Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Foreword

Libraries are at the heart of communities across Blackpool, having a vital role in promoting literacy and a love of reading, in delivering digital access and support, and in providing a safe and welcoming place where people can find information, participate in learning and cultural activity, or simply meet with others and feel part of the community.

We are ambitious for the future of this much-loved service; for the positive impact that it can have in helping transform the lives of individuals and helping every resident to achieve their full potential; and for the part that our libraries play in shaping the neighbourhoods in which they are located. As we work through one of the greatest challenges that this town has ever faced, a 'renewed' and refocused library service will be key in helping us move forward.

We endorse this plan, as a means of ensuring that Blackpool Libraries remain relevant and accessible to readers and residents of all ages. It is important that the service actively responds to the present and changing needs of local people, and this plan provides the strong foundation for that to happen.



Cllr Gillian Campbell
Blackpool Council
Libraries Portfolio Holder



Neil Jack
Blackpool Council
Chief Executive

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

The Planning Process

The Libraries Ambition Plan has been developed through an evidence-based approach, where the input, opinions and ideas of residents and local organisations have been fundamental in shaping all the core themes and activities.

It was important that we listened to feedback from people who currently use the service and those who don't (yet!) It was also vital that we spoke to key groups and organisations working in the town to get their views on what the libraries do well, what they could do better, and how they should develop in the future.

The main elements of the research phase were:

- **Survey of residents**- more than 575 people spoken with about Blackpool libraries and what they thought about them
- **Interactive community engagement sessions**- investigating barriers to accessing the service and what people want from their libraries
- **Analysis of Library performance data**- looking at who currently uses the service and how
- **MOSAIC/mapping analysis of library users/non-users**- seeing how the library user population reflects that of the wider town, and identifying if there are any part of the town that libraries are not reaching
- **Partner and Stakeholder workshops** - discussions with local organisations regarding emerging priorities and potential activity
- **Theory of Change session and survey with Library staff**- getting staff feedback on possible future priorities
- **Literature review**- a scan of relevant documents at national, regional and local level



Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Key Findings

In summary, the service is reaching the vast majority of communities across the town at a reasonable level, and has been particularly successful in attracting families on low incomes and transient renters.



The **ground-breaking** decision to remove library fines in April 2019, has served to make the service **more accessible** to all.

40,000



In the last three years, the service has been **used by approximately 40,000 people** (circa.28% of the population).



GROWTH

In 2019, Blackpool libraries received over **0.5 million visits**; more than **2K events** were delivered across the service; active usage increased by c.25%, as did e-lending; and, around **120k sessions** were clocked up on library computers.

90%



Libraries are highly trusted and well thought of by residents. **90% of people think libraries are important** to the town; and in the Blackpool Residents Survey 2018, they scored top in terms of **satisfaction** (with 92%, up 15% since 2014).

80%



Over **80% of customers** still use libraries to **borrow books**, but the service has **much broader appeal** and people are accessing libraries for many other purposes (primarily ICT, printing, events and information); and residents want to see more engagement activities (particularly for children), learning provision and cafés!

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Themes and Activity

Three themes emerged from the findings, and all activity planned over the term of this plan will be aligned to those themes; focused on making a positive difference in areas such as literacy, Early Years, digital access and well-being; and ultimately on achieving the vision of the service supporting every resident to achieve their full potential.

‘Future Readers, Future Choices’

Understanding that reading and free access is fundamental to people’s life opportunities, Blackpool libraries will have a continued and core role in providing books, information, ICT, and activities. They will encourage aspiration too; championing a ‘literacy of opportunity’.

What you can expect:

- Literacy, learning and business support through libraries
- Town-wide literacy campaign
- Bookstart packs for every Early Years’ child in the town
- Bounce and Rhyme and story-time sessions in every library and online
- Vibrant engagement programme and visits to local schools and nurseries
- More support for children in care and care leavers



‘Get Connected’

Understanding that libraries operate as ‘the living room of the community’, both physically and virtually, and that people need safe and trusted spaces, Blackpool libraries will act as a glue to bring people together. On top of delivering services via technology, digital enablement and support to get online, they will also develop further as a space for people to meet, access services and support, and to participate, feel better, included, less lonely.

What you can expect:

- An enhanced, targeted digital engagement programme
- Better/expanded e-collections- bringing the library to users 24/7, in your home and on the move (and all for free)
- A broad range of activities to help combat loneliness and increase social and mental well-being
- Upgraded ICT and WiFi offer in libraries

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

'Your Library'

Blackpool libraries will stay at the centre of their communities and aim to keep reflecting those communities. They will do more to get out into, and work with, those communities. Plus, they will further develop targeted services to appeal to existing and new users.

What you can expect:

- Greater opportunity to get involved in the service and help shape it
- Expansion of the At Home Library Service
- More space in libraries (and via their online outlets), for study or reflection; for community or business working and meetings
- Continued development of Central Library
- Improved marketing and promotion of libraries



For more information

If you are interested in finding out more about the Libraries Ambition Plan, the service, or what's going on in your local library...

Call us on **01253 478080**

Visit our website/social media:

www.blackpool.gov.uk/libraries

Facebook - [blackpoollibraryservice](#)

Twitter - [@bpoollibraries](#)