

Appendix 1

General update on the performance of the Library and Information Service

1. Background

1.1. In December 2016, DCMS updated “Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021”, their future policy consultation document. The approach in Libraries Deliver will shape the way in which libraries work in years to come, as they aim to provide services that are:

- available to everyone, free at the point-of-use
- appropriately resourced and sustainable
- consistent and responsive to local needs and priorities
- marketed effectively to promote use by the widest possible audience



1.2. During 2011-2012, the Service implemented the Lewisham Model. The level of change and the speed in which it was delivered was truly unique, and have made Lewisham into a benchmark for effective transformation in the library sector, particularly in relation to the transfer of assets and the interaction with local communities.

1.3. Lewisham has been on the path to change for a few years. In 2006, the opening of the Downham Health and Leisure Centre introduced new staffing models, co-location with health and leisure providers and the adoption of self-service technology. In 2007, the Quirk Review offered the blueprint for the transfer of public assets. In 2009, the Mayoral Commission on the Future of Libraries and Adult Learning set out the political and corporate vision for the transformation of the Service. In 2010, the Comprehensive Spending Review, acted as the catalyst and the accelerator for change, delivering (in 2011-12) the asset transfer and a full reorganisation. In 2014-15, the Service reorganised its senior roles. In 2016-17, the Service went through a full reorganisation again – one that affected every level of the structure and reaffirmed the council’s belief in the role that this Service plays.

The Library Service exemplifies the remarkable creativity that the council and its community can produce as financial constraints force the local authority to shrink.



2. The Lewisham Approach

2.1. The Library and Information Service in Lewisham has no equal nationally. These are the concepts and practices that make us unique.

2.2. More than a statutory role
Lewisham recognises that the public library service exists to fulfil the local authority’s statutory obligations set out by the Public Library and Museums Act 1964. In law, it aims to provide “comprehensive and efficient” library services to citizens. In practice, it is a service that universally strives to offer “unbiased access to information, learning, and works of creative imagination”. It is also a service that supports civic interaction through its openness, trustworthiness, and reliability.

Lewisham in figures (Estimates 2018-2019)

- Population 301,867
- 3 Hub libraries + Catford
- 9 Community Libraries
- over 2 million visits
- almost 580k issues
- 23,000ca residents borrowed a book
- 58k residents (19%) used library services
- Books gifted to 100% of under 5s
- Cost of the service per resident £9.68 /year

2.3. Service and Space
The public library is at the same time a “service” and a “space”. The “service” as defined above can exist in the physical and virtual worlds.

At the same time, though, the library offers a truly public space, where people visit to interact, use and take away tools for their personal, family and community’s development, and find ways of expressing themselves. This is an offer to all citizens without a requirement for affiliation, ownership, and/or payment.

2.4. The Lewisham Model

Lewisham recognises the positive contribution that – at a time of reducing resources – the local community can make. This contribution goes beyond maintaining access to the buildings and harnesses energies and expertise to integrate the interests of partner organisations and the needs of the community.

The Lewisham Model has provided an opportunity to re-design the library service which is delivered to residents “with” residents. One where service delivery is understood as a collaborative, peripatetic presence embodied by the Community Engagement Team, a group of front line staff who engage audiences where they are: in libraries, in community libraries, in schools, doctor surgeries, etc.

Through this approach community groups and organisations acquired and developed alternative services within the former library buildings with minimal or no rent, as long as they commit to maintaining the buildings and keeping them open to the community. Crucially, the Lewisham Model has also meant that the Council can still provide Council library services from those buildings, even after they have been transferred.

The Council remains responsible for the books, for the shelving, for the self-service terminals and for the library catalogue. It maintains the stock to the standard it applies to all its collections. It promotes reader development programmes and trains the staff and volunteers at the community libraries.

The Council never transferred its statutory responsibility to deliver library services to third parties. The community library provision is the responsibility of the Library and Information Service. However, the Service benefits from the commitment of the partner organisations to promote books and reading and offer access to library services in the buildings they are responsible for.

In all cases, the partner organisation, as well as signing a lease or premises management agreement with the council, committed to supporting the provision of library services in their buildings at no cost to the council.

Hub Libraries

Catford
Deptford Lounge
Downham
Lewisham

Community Libraries

Blackheath (Age Exchange)
Crofton Park (Eco Communities)
Forest Hill (V22)
Grove Park (Eco Communities)
Manor House (V22)
New Cross (NX Learning)
Pepys (Eco Communities)
Sydenham (Eco Communities)
Torridon Road (Corbett Group)

Home Library Service

Archives & Local History Centre

3. The extension of the Lewisham Model

3.1. In December 2015 Mayor and Cabinet agreed to:

- 3.1.1. “The creation of three Hub Libraries – Deptford Lounge, Lewisham and Downham Health & Leisure Centre – which will carry an enhanced role for face to face contact between the Local Authority and the public to support the digital by default agenda.
- 3.1.2. The extension of the Lewisham Community Library Model to Forest Hill, Torridon, and Manor House, in partnership with other council services and community organisations. The council will continue to be responsible for the library service, owning and managing the stock, providing self-issue terminals and overseeing the community library offer with a team of peripatetic community engagement staff. The council will work in partnership with a third party organisation who will take on responsibility for the management of the building and ensure that it remains open to the public.
- 3.1.3. The integration of the library provision into the repurposed ground floor space within the Catford complex (Laurence House).
- 3.1.4. The review of front line staff to include new functions through the re-training and enhancement of front line roles”.

3.2. Enhanced role for face to face contact to support the digital by default agenda

As more and more services move online, the public library service offers an opportunity for positive human interaction, whilst also embracing and promoting the virtual world. Indeed, in this context, public library services are ideally positioned to become community hubs, as local authorities increasingly deliver services from fewer premises.

The Service has sought increased integration with other Council departments to better respond to current and future corporate priorities. Libraries are supporting the eAdmission process (for primary schools entrants), the Registrar, the parking permit distribution, the Concessionary Awards Team (for Freedom Pass renewals), and ongoing changes in the implementation of the new Universal Benefit system. Libraries work closely with MARAC team (all libraries are Hate Crime Reporting centres) and are members of the FGM subgroup. Libraries are represented on the Jobs Fair working group. Libraries work with Public Health sharing the C Card Scheme, hosting Health Promotion Team and Shape Up Programmes, Nutrition workshops, and every library is a Breastfeeding Friendly Centre. The Service also have worked for many years in close partnership with Adult Learning Lewisham to deliver the Reading Agency’s ‘6 Book Challenge’ and ‘Adult Learners Week’.

3.3. Three more community libraries

The Service extended the Community Library Model to Forest Hill, Manor House, and Torridon Road, with the support of outstanding community groups that, not only embraced the need for maintaining access to library services in the building, but brought truly enriching services to the locality. Appendix 3 provides details of the work of individual Community Libraries in 2018 / 2019.

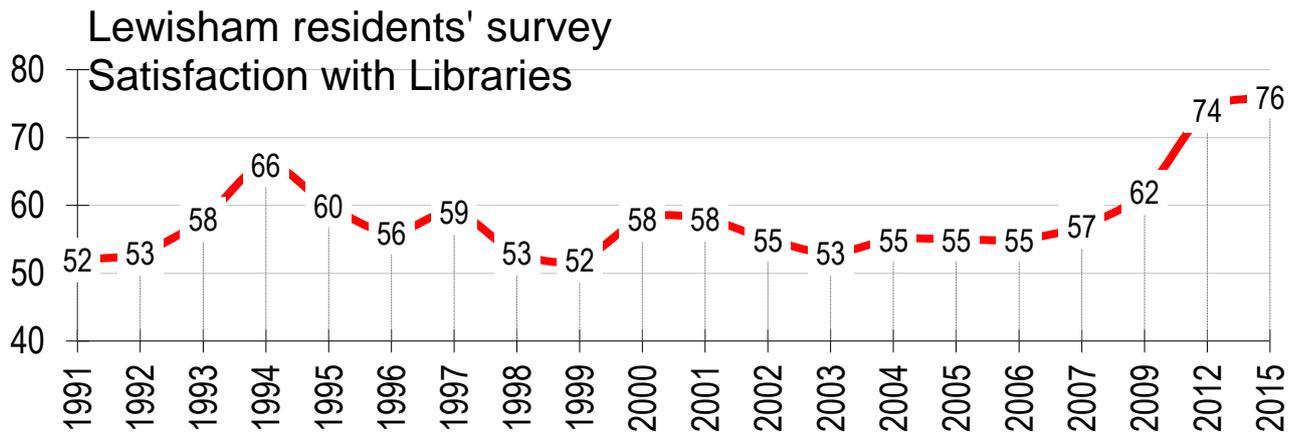
3.4. Catford Library – Ground Floor of Laurence House

Work at the new entrance to the Laurence House building was completed in

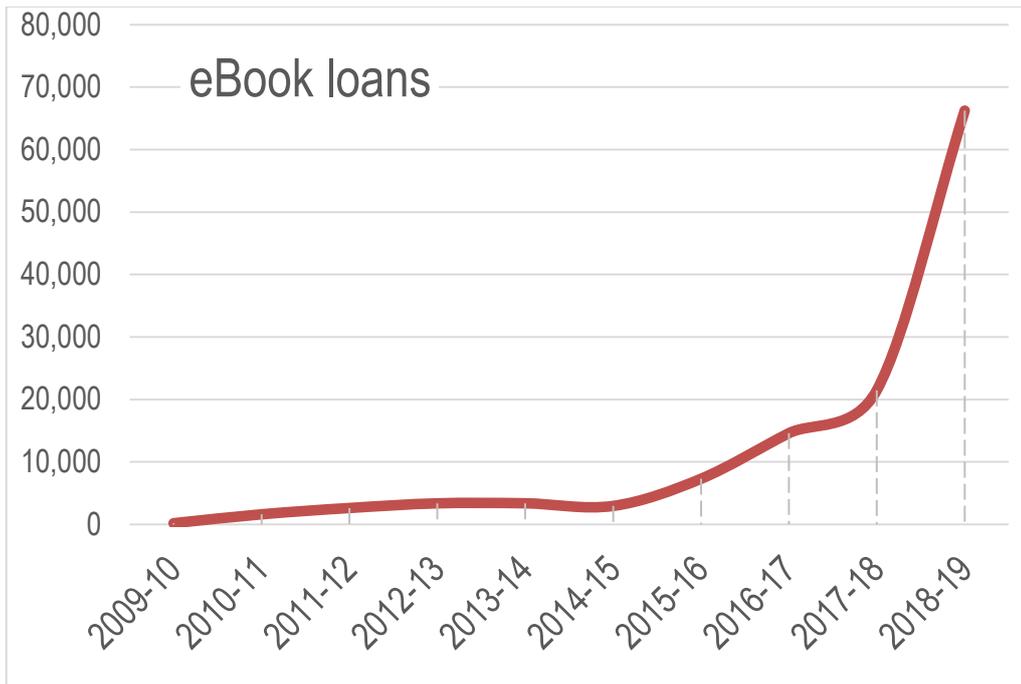
the autumn and brought a new, open-plan, welcoming, and integrated environment across the whole ground floor. This offered the opportunity to redesign and modernise the service provision within the library area in the autumn / winter of 2019.

4. Performance

- 4.1. While going through the most challenging change process in its history, the Service demonstrated that it continues to perform and it positively engages its audiences: Lewisham libraries are some of the best in London and residents love them.



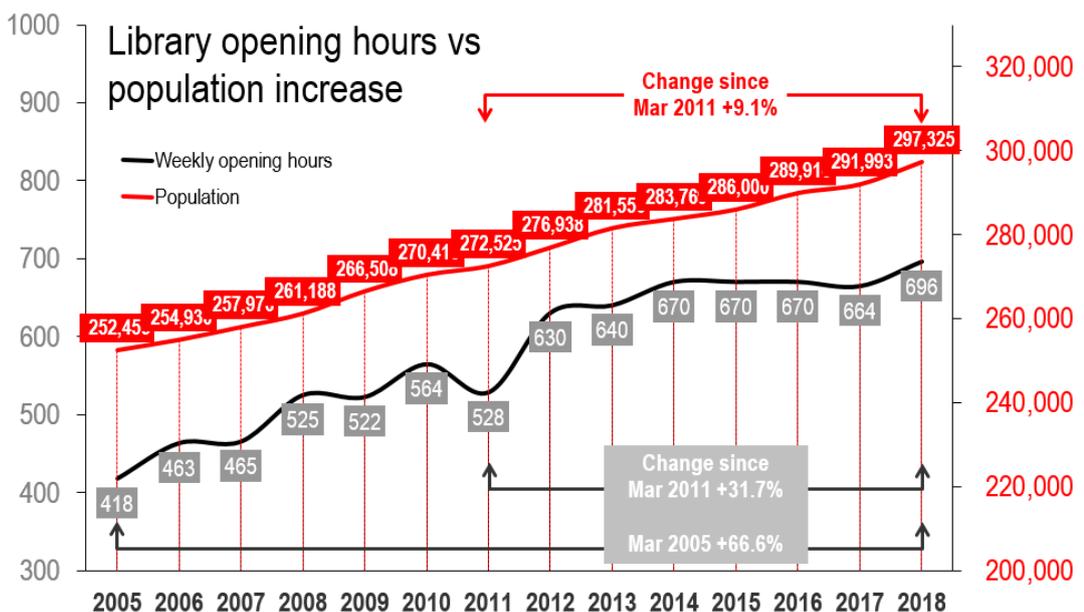
- 4.2. In 2018-2019, the Service suffered from the poor state of repair of some of its buildings particularly Catford and Lewisham. The former was negatively affected by delay in completion of the works at the front door and lobby of Laurence House. The latter has been managing issues with the toilets, lift, water penetration from the roof, and more.
- 4.3. In spite of this, visits to libraries grew back past the 2 million mark (2,012,709 +1.65%) and issues increased by 6.5% (579,812) (see Appendix 1).
- 4.4. These achievements are more remarkable if we consider that the Service, as a member of the Board of the London Libraries Consortium, implemented the largest migration of a Library Management System in the world! Across the year, Lewisham worked with colleagues to procure and implement the migration from the old library catalogue to a new one. This meant that in March, all 16 members of the Consortium switched from the old to the new library catalogue. The achievement is significant also because it brings the opportunity borrow books from across London and to develop a shared London Library Platform. In time, the latter will introduce new functionalities and technological innovations that will make libraries more and more accessible to Londoners.
- 4.5. The Service is therefore energized and proud of its standing. It is working at its physical collections in the Hub and Community libraries and it is developing its online offer – which is continuing to be an area of growth. In the last 12 months, eLibrary issues increased from 21,492 to 66,237 (+208). Online newspapers, comics, and magazines have been promoted, through taster sessions, social media and staff promotion to users, and show 45.9% increase over the previous year.



The Lewisham eLibrary (www.lewisham.overdrive.com) has also been promoted and developed over the year with the stock growing to almost 8,500 titles and the number of users increasing by 28%.

The Kids & Teens (e)room, now has over 1,600 titles for children and young adults. This is a separate, safe environment for children and teens to browse the library, and one that has been specifically developed between Lewisham and OverDrive – the eBook provider (<http://lewisham.overdrive.com/library/youth>).

| | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | Change |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| PressReader (Newspapers) | 3,794 | 5,185 | 12,778 | 146.4% |
| rbDigital (Magazines) | 14,210 | 16,330 | 24,032 | 47.2% |



- 4.6. Every year, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) compares Lewisham to 14 similar authorities. The last comparison shows that Lewisham has the third highest number of libraries for a population that matches the average in the group and the second highest number of libraries per 100,000 pop.
- 4.7. "Lewisham had 16.6% of "worked hours" provided by volunteers in 2017-18 compared to an average of 5.2%. Lewisham libraries attract over three times (864) as many volunteers as the average of comparator authorities (257). And Lewisham volunteers contribute almost four times as many hours (24,233) as the average in the group (6,494).
- 4.8. The number of visits per 1,000 population is a strong indicator of workload faced by the authority. In this area, Lewisham recorded the third highest number of visits in the comparator group. And Lewisham has above average number of household readers. Still, while Lewisham has the second highest book stock, the number of books issued is the third lowest – which indicates that libraries in Lewisham are used for something other than book borrowing.



- 4.9. Visitors access libraries for its technology and for the services available in them. While Lewisham has the second lowest number of computers per head of population in the comparator group, Wi-Fi, PCs, Apple Macs, and loanable, Wi-Fi enabled iPads are in very high demand. This is due to the support that library staff provide in answering queries, supporting learning and digital access, and supporting online transacting, including online council services. As more council, central government and private sector services have moved online, some residents look for the human interaction to support them to access digital processes. They visit a library and ask questions, seek support and ancillary information, use Wi-Fi and computers to transact.
- 4.10. Lewisham continues to be consistently cheaper to run than the average, showing a Net Expenditure per 1,000 pop. (£12,959) which is 13.2% lower than

the comparators' average (£14,922). Lewisham is below average on Employee costs. Premises, Total materials, supplies & services, etc., exceeding the average only on computing costs and transport. However these two indicators are temporarily higher only because Lewisham purchased a number of iPads that were externally funded. Lewisham has the lowest cost per acquisition of the group and the fifth lowest cost per visitor. The trend is for all of these costs to reduce further in the 2018-2019 Actuals.

5. Other comments on the year 2018 – 2019

5.1. eLibrary

The Service is increasingly embracing online service provision and has worked to equip staff with the skills necessary to promote residents' free access to online collections, including over 6,000 daily and weekly newspapers in 64 languages, over 900 magazines and Comics and an ever growing collection of eBooks and eAudio. This year has also seen the launch of a pilot service offering online courses and film and music streaming. This offer will be developed and promoted over the next year.

5.2. Collections and issues

A review of the collections of books is in progress (in all the libraries including the community libraries). This is informing the acquisition of better stock and the maintenance of the existing collections.

The Service works with CollectionHQ a software manufacturer that provides insight into collection management. In 2018 Lewisham participated in and won the world-wide CollectionHQ Biggest Improver Challenge. This was a result of hard work by the staff on improving the range and usage of stock in our libraries.

5.3. Technology IT

All the libraries PCs and iMacs have been replaced some time ago and have now reached their end of life. Although LBL Wi-Fi has been rolled out across the hub libraries, this service is unreliable and low quality. The combination of poor infrastructure (wired and Wi-Fi) and obsolete technology frustrates residents willing to access online services.

Self-service terminals require reconfiguration with new, improved software and electronic payment.

5.4. Staff training and support

A staff training programme has been delivered through the year following the reorganisation of the Service. In March 2019 the Service completed its migration to a new Library management System.

A small team of staff received detailed training and devised and delivered a programme to all staff and our community partners in the run up to the migration.

Training in using and promoting our eLibrary service is delivered on an ongoing basis as services develop.

5.5. Externally funded projects

Start-up in London Libraries

Start-ups in London Libraries (SiLL) is a business support programme led by the British Library's Business & IP Centre to support 12,000 Start-up

businesses and entrepreneurs across London to develop the insight, skills and confidence they need to start and grow successful businesses.

Lewisham is one of 10 boroughs participating in this initiative. A SiLL Project Champion has been recruited for the borough. The person is responsible for coordinating the activities of the libraries within the borough, creating awareness of the services and developing relationships with local stakeholders, business networks and Small and Medium Sized enterprises. SiLL is funded by the European Regional Development, The British Library, J.P. Morgan and Arts Council England.

6. Main areas of work for 2019 – 2020

6.1. Collections

In 2019 – 2020, the Service will concentrate on increasing the residents' awareness of its digital collections (books, audio, newspapers, and magazines). And it will work to improve its collections, including those in digital format.

6.2. LMS

It will complete the implementation of the library management system (library catalogue) to introduce innovative services, such as integration of online services on a single platform. Among other things, the new system will allow users to search the catalogue and check out a book on their mobile or through new technologies.

6.3. SiLL

The Service will continue its collaboration with the British Library and partners within and outside the council to support local new entrepreneurs.

6.4. Transport Framework re-procurement

Lewisham will suggest the re-procurement of the current framework contract on behalf of the London Libraries Consortium.

6.5. Catford

It will implement a light refurbishment of the Catford Library within the Laurence House building. This might include new flooring, lighting, and furniture, as well as a complete review of the books collection and IT infrastructure. There is also an opportunity to improve the children's area through external funding that might involve a collaboration with local artists.

6.6. Lewisham

It will explore opportunities for the refurbishment and/or redevelopment of the library, possibly in combination with the Library Resources Centre.

6.7. Archives & Local History

It will look at the resolving the short and medium term issues that relate to the collections held by the Archives and Local History Centre. These are tied to the future of the library building, but may need to be tackled sooner, if the timescales of the building and the archives do not align.

6.8. Pepys

It will support partners locally to re-establish a library provision in the Evelyn

Ward.

- 6.9. The Service will continue to train and support the community libraries, particularly during the roll-out of the new library management system.
- 6.10. And it will look at opportunities to develop its collaboration with schools across the borough.