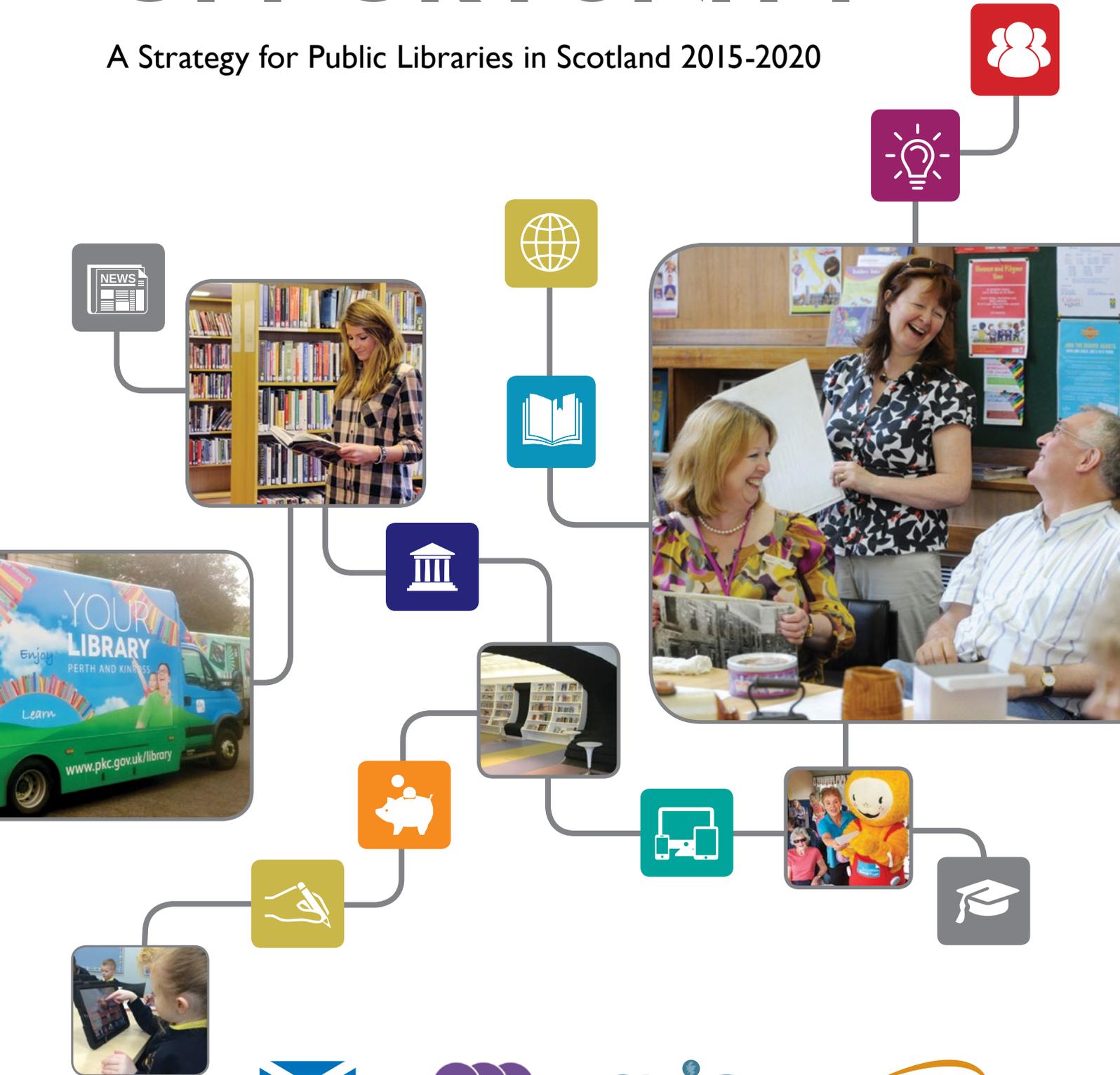


# AMBITION & OPPORTUNITY

A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020





## **ABOUT THE SCOTTISH LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION COUNCIL**

The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) is the independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services. SLIC offers leadership focus and support to the Scottish library and information sector, coordinating and promoting national service developments to benefit Scotland's people and enrich our cultural, educational and economic landscape. [www.scottishlibraries.org](http://www.scottishlibraries.org)



## **ABOUT THE CARNEGIE UK TRUST**

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913. [www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk](http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk)

June 2015

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# CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

## Map and compass

A strategic approach to the future of public libraries in Scotland needs to provide both a map and a compass: a map to show the terrain ahead; and a compass to set a clear direction of travel. We aim to be realistic about the challenges which may be before us, and to provide suggestions about how the public library service can be equipped to tackle this terrain, showing how they can plot a way through the ever-changing territory which is the future. To this end, we hope to strengthen the role of libraries in their local communities, while at the same time encouraging stronger partnerships, stimulating innovative practice and promoting shared learning. We have worked hard to sift through the evidence and views of library funders and providers, users and non-users of public libraries. We have learned from library services in other jurisdictions of the UK and further afield.

The strategy builds on the high regard which people in Scotland have for public libraries, and sets out recommendations for all those involved: Scottish Government, local authorities, library services, library staff, publishers and more.

Scotland is rightly proud of its strong tradition of public library provision, supported in the early years by the Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie's vision for public libraries was that they opened opportunities for education and advancement by providing access to books containing a huge wealth of information and knowledge not otherwise available.

Libraries and local government have built on this tradition over many decades, providing access to ideas, knowledge and information for everyone in the community, no matter what their circumstances. Public libraries in Scotland constitute a valued and trusted resource at the heart of local communities. These communities in their turn can and should play a central role in the design and delivery of library programmes and services, exploring the new ways in which public libraries can interact with their local communities in the digital age.

## Beyond 'warehouses for books'

The 21st century public library has to position itself in a world where immense amounts of knowledge, information and culture can be accessed almost instantaneously, '24 hours a day' through smartphones, tablets and computers. The old business model for public libraries was based on the aim of providing collections of material – 'warehouses for books'. Books were expensive and in short supply. The job of the public library was to provide a civic solution to this social problem. Public libraries have been extraordinarily successful over the last 150 years. They have collected information and knowledge in written form and made it available, free of charge, to anyone who needed it.

The library promise, their social contract with the public, now needs to be refreshed and updated. The best libraries are changing their model from safeguarding and lending information to actively helping citizens improve their wellbeing by pursuing their interests, aspirations and potential.

We need to accelerate this progress, to promote effectively and then replicate the pioneering developments already taking place. This way, libraries will continue to be relevant and useful, even sought after, as we move further into the 21st century.

Some people have told us that the future of libraries lies in physical books. They are only partly right. Books will remain an important part of the future of libraries. However, in our view it is essential that libraries contribute directly and creatively to supporting the aim of local government, which is to enable local people and communities to flourish. This should be their clear, shared mission, in partnership with local government.

## Most popular civic resource

Public libraries constitute an extensive network of known public spaces, free at the point of access, with dedicated staff, where all members of the community can go. The fact this network exists

is of great credit both to the stewardship of local government and to the culture generated by library staff. Local government has by a combination of deliberate design and happy accident created and maintained these spaces and library staff have in turn innovated and developed services. With 28 million visits each year public libraries remain extraordinarily popular. They are the most popular civic resource that local government offers.

### Outcome focus

My hope is that an agreed and widely supported national strategy for public libraries will:

- Reinvigorate advocates for public libraries and encourage them to forge links with 'unusual friends'.
- Align and make explicit the wide range of activities provided by library services with the priorities of funders and decision-makers.
- Support library service to become even more active and confident partners with other services.
- Encourage librarians to be vocal leaders in the digital age on access to information, intellectual freedom and freedom of expression.
- Embrace an evidence-based and measurement-rich culture.

Martyn Evans  
Chair

# A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND



## VISION STATEMENT

Scotland's public libraries are trusted guides connecting all of our people to the world's possibilities and opportunities.



## MISSION STATEMENT

Scotland's public libraries are part of a shared civic ambition to fulfil the potential of individuals and communities.



## OUTCOME STATEMENT

Every step individuals and communities take towards fulfilling their potential adds to Scotland's social, economic and cultural wellbeing.

# ABOUT THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND STRATEGIC GROUP

The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) was asked by the CoSLA Arts and Culture Working Group to take forward the development of a national strategy for public libraries in Scotland. SLIC convened a strategic group – the National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland Strategic Group – which has been tasked with the development of a National Strategy for Scotland's public libraries. The group is chaired by Martyn Evans, Chief Executive of the Carnegie UK Trust, and comprises members with expertise from within the library profession and from other sectors and backgrounds relevant to the issue such as digital and the third sector.

## The members of the Strategic Group are:

- **Martyn Evans**, Chief Executive, Carnegie UK Trust (Chair)
- **Amina Shah**, CEO, SLIC
- **Gillian Daly**, Policy & Projects Officer, SLIC until December 2014
- **Trish Caimbeul Botten**, Manaidsear, Leabharlainn agus Oighreachd (Manager Libraries & Heritage), Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- **Duncan Campbell**, Deputy Chief Executive, National Library of Scotland
- **Jeanette Castle**, President, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS)
- **Cleo Jones**, Manager, Information and Learning Resources, City of Edinburgh Council
- **Martina McChrystal**, Acting Library and Information Services Manager, City of Edinburgh Council
- **Louise Macdonald**, CEO, Young Scot
- **Ian McKay**, Regional Chairman, Institute of Directors (Scotland)
- **Helen Milner**, Chief Executive, Tinder Foundation
- **Sophie Moxon**, Deputy Director, Scottish Book Trust
- **Jenny Niven**, Portfolio Manager – Literature, Publishing and Languages, Creative Scotland
- **Jenny Peachey**, Policy Officer, Carnegie UK Trust
- **Peter Peacock**, Policy Director, Community Land Scotland
- **Robert Ruthven**, Director, Library Services, Glasgow Caledonian University
- **Marion Sinclair**, CEO, Publishing Scotland
- **Claire Stevens**, Chief Officer, Voluntary Health Scotland
- **Rosemary Ward**, Director, Gaelic Books Council

## Observers:

- **Anne Dagg**, Policy Officer, Scottish Government
- **Caroline Johnston**, Policy Manager, COSLA



# DEVELOPING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY

The national strategy has been informed by a process of engagement including independent deliberative research, a questionnaire to gather views, presentations by a range of stakeholders, and a series of visits to public libraries.

## Independent Research

Blake Stevenson was commissioned to conduct deliberative research with users and non-users of libraries. Focus groups were conducted with people across Glasgow, Dundee, Duns, Bathgate, Elgin, Greenock, Dingwall and Edinburgh. The final research report can be accessed on the Scottish Library and Information website:

[www.scottishlibraries.org](http://www.scottishlibraries.org)

## 'Your Views on Scottish Public Libraries'

A questionnaire was distributed to key stakeholders and promoted via social media to gather views on what public library services in Scotland should look like; what its visions, values and aims should be; the services it should deliver and the skills staff will require; the practicalities of how and with whom services could best be delivered; and measuring and evidencing the impact of public libraries. The questionnaire and overview of responses can be accessed on the Scottish Library and Information website:

[www.scottishlibraries.org](http://www.scottishlibraries.org)

## Presentations

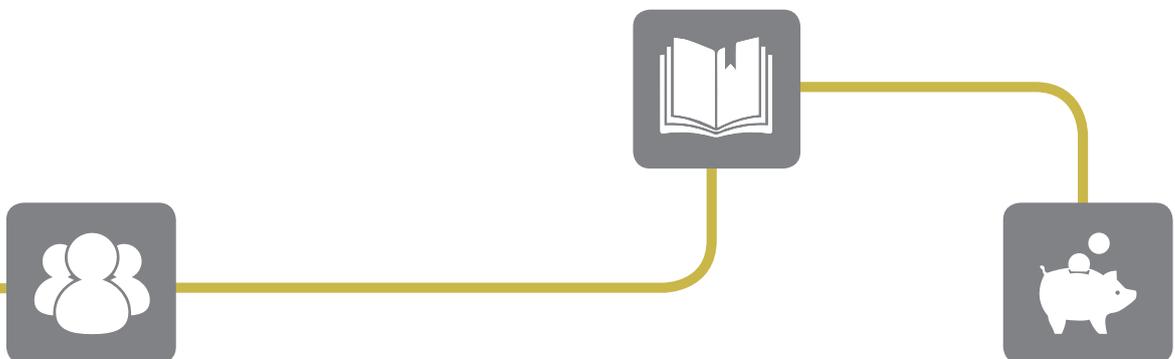
A range of library and non-library stakeholders were solicited for their expertise. Presentations included an overview of current approaches in Nordic countries, the Society of Chief Librarians' universal offers in England, digital participation in Scotland, reading, e-reading and publishing, and the National Entitlement Card.

## Library Visits

The Chair and group members conducted a series of visits to public libraries across Scotland, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, the Highlands, Perth and Kinross, Dundee, the Western Isles, and Dumfries and Galloway. The visits enabled group members to hear the views of library staff and stakeholders, build on the understanding gained from responses to the questionnaire, and experience current good practice in libraries.

The group is grateful to everyone who gave their time and energy to discuss the future of public libraries with us during this process.

A special acknowledgement goes to Liz Macdonald, Carnegie Associate, for her insight and expert support.



# VISUAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## VISION

Scotland's public libraries are trusted guides connecting all of our people to the world's possibilities and opportunities



## MISSION

Scotland's public libraries are part of a shared civic ambition to fulfil the potential of individuals and communities



## STRATEGIC AIM 1

Reading, literacy and learning



## STRATEGIC AIM 2

Digital inclusion



## STRATEGIC AIM 3

Economic wellbeing



## STRATEGIC AIM 4

Social wellbeing



## STRATEGIC AIM 5

Culture and creativity



## STRATEGIC AIM 6

Excellent public services

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure access to library services for all citizens using new technology

Develop and promote the core offer from public libraries in Scotland

Develop Scotland-wide digital access resources

Ensure WiFi is available and accessible in all public libraries

Develop partnerships with advice services, job centres and enterprise organisations

Mainstream activities to improve STEM skills

Test and replicate provision of co-working spaces for small businesses

Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with all public services and community planning partners

Share best practice on how to create effective and accessible public service or community hubs

Build on current practice to become champions of community engagement and empowerment

Develop guidelines on the appropriate use of volunteers

Develop and strengthen national, regional and local partnerships with arts and culture organisations

Pilot a collaborative venture to provide access to eBooks from Scottish publishers

Support librarians to become effective voices for freedom of information and expression

Continue to develop methods for reporting on the impact and outcomes of library activities through 'How Good is Our Public Library Service?'

Develop and implement a learning and development programme for all library staff

Explore alternative approaches to generating financial investment

Engage proactively with models for efficient procurement of goods and services at national level

## NATIONAL OUTCOMES

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation

We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people

We live longer, healthier lives

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

# 1. 2015–2020: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

## 1.1 Libraries now and in the future

Scotland's public libraries have adapted and evolved for over 150 years to connect individuals and communities to information, knowledge and culture. The service is universally recognised and highly regarded across Scotland.

Public libraries provide a highly valued universal service to the people of Scotland: a service which at its heart is about opening up a world of opportunity for everyone. It is intimately linked with the promotion of literacy through the encouragement of reading. It is a central point of access to an incredibly wide range of information and knowledge, open to all, with the benefit of qualified staff to support those who need help in identifying what they need or what it means.

Public libraries operate both as social change agents and as a key strand in the social safety net, providing essential lifelines to jobs, educational opportunity, literacy, health resources and access to government and community services for all, especially the least advantaged.

Public libraries provide the space in which a very wide range of activities can take place: spaces for learning; spaces for meeting; spaces for local services; spaces for innovation and creativity.



“Libraries provide a neutral, safe and welcoming space for all members of the community to come and sit, read, learn, discuss, debate, meet, be entertained, be informed, research, discover.”

RESPONDENT TO CONSULTATION

Reading is the most popular form of cultural participation in Scotland, with 68% of adults having read for pleasure in 2013, roughly three times more than the next most popular activity, creative work on a computer or on social media. Libraries were the cultural venue which was most often visited on a weekly basis. Deliberative research carried out to inform this strategy confirmed the key statistics by identifying the library services that the public felt are most important to them (Figure 2). The role of libraries in providing book lending and computer and IT services is clear. Many recognised the role of the library in community life and referred to using the library to find out about local events and groups.

We are committed to the aspiration that over the next five years the public library service in Scotland will continue to be open to everyone in Scotland, accessible to all, and one which:

- Encourages reading for pleasure and recreation, enables discovery, and promotes literacy and lifelong learning.
- Supports individuals in relation to their economic wellbeing, their health, their cultural opportunities and their social wellbeing.
- Promotes the use and understanding of digital for all.
- Strengthens the identity of the community in which it is based, and is valued by its community for the range of services it provides access to.
- Collects, curates and makes available information, knowledge, ideas and works of imagination.

These five roles are already played by most public libraries, and they will continue. The challenges for public libraries will be to fulfil and measure the impact of these roles given the increasingly fast rate of digital change and the need to be responsive to local community needs.

FIGURE I: KEY FACTS ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND<sup>2</sup>



**OVER 600**

libraries and other service points  
(such as mobile libraries)



**423 + 1,839**

Staff with library qualifications  
+ other staff



**61%**

of the public use libraries,  
higher than in England and Wales



**£166**

annual return on investment per user,  
at a cost of £21 per head of population



**20,000,000**

books loaned every year,  
more than the number sold  
every year in Scotland



**IMPORTANCE**

Those living in disadvantaged  
areas are more likely to say libraries  
are important to them



**28 MILLION**

physical visitors in 2013/14



**9 MILLION HOURS**

of internet access provided in 2013/14



**13.6 MILLION**

virtual visits in 2013/14, with virtual visits increasing



**1,848**

volunteers working in public libraries across Scotland



**200+ COURSES**

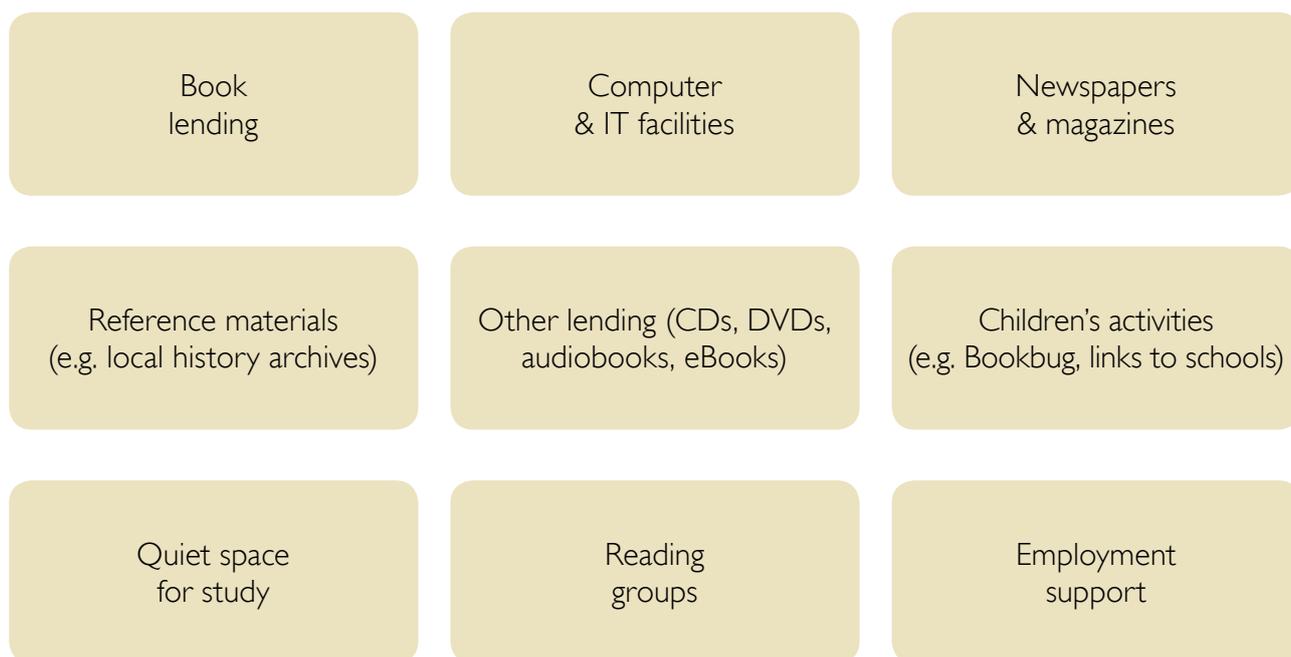
Provided to support  
digital skills development



**NETWORK**

Public libraries constitute a powerful network  
supporting sharing of learning and best practice

FIGURE 2: KEY SERVICES USED IN LIBRARIES



## 1.2 Why we need a national strategy

The time is right to articulate a shared national vision for public libraries and a strategy for how that vision will be achieved. As with other public services in Scotland, this is a time of significant transition and change. As financial and demographic pressures bite harder, governments in the UK and in other OECD countries are realising that traditional models of public service delivery require rethinking if we are to 'weather the storm'<sup>3</sup>.

In response to these challenges, and in the wake of the Christie Commission, the Scottish Government set out its approach to public service reform as follows:

- A decisive shift towards prevention.
- Greater integration of public services at a local level driven by better partnership, collaboration and effective local delivery.
- Greater investment in the people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership.
- A sharp focus on improving performance, through greater transparency, innovation and use of digital technology<sup>4</sup>.

This is the context within which a new strategy for public libraries in Scotland must be placed. In parallel with this changing policy environment, there has been growing interest in 'bottom up' ways of working that give citizens and communities more control. For example, The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill provides a strategic framework for empowering Scotland's people, improving outcomes and further enabling local level decision-making, and the purpose of COSLA's Commission for Strengthening Local Democracy is to identify a route map to deliver a shift in power towards local people in Scotland<sup>5</sup>.

Public services continue to face financial pressures and it is a welcome fact that local government spend on libraries has dropped by only 2% between 2007/8-2013/14<sup>6</sup>. It is likely that Scottish local authorities will face increasing financial pressure over the next few years, and there is no room for complacency that there will not be further, potentially more severe reductions in spending capacity. This strategy is based on the expectation that there will be increasing pressure on local authorities to reduce their spending levels, and to prioritise the services they fund. This is a challenge

which library authorities have already been facing over the last few years, with many creative responses and new partnerships as a result.

However, it is a strength of the public library sector that their level of funding is very small relative to other sectors, as the following diagram shows (Figure 3). Libraries represent incredibly good value for money in terms of the scale of their impact on local communities. They punch way above their weight and they have the invaluable advantage of public trust and support.

While much of the UK debate focuses on the reduction in the number of libraries it is important to note that since 2009/10 there has been only a small decrease in the number of libraries in Scotland. 13 library service points (open 10 hours or more, including mobiles) have closed since 2011/2012; over the same time period 120 service points have closed across the UK<sup>7</sup>. Reductions in budgets have been more likely to lead to reduced opening hours, stock purchases and staff numbers than to closures. A decrease in opening hours makes the service less accessible to its users, and creates a cycle of decline which contributes to falling book lending figures. A positive case for the future of Scotland's public libraries is required to avoid the risk of 'death by a thousand cuts'.

In this climate, public libraries have an opportunity to re-present themselves to the public and to policy makers as centres of learning, innovation and creativity, places which can provide answers to problems, proactively support policy goals and create inspiring settings where people can acquire new skills, and where stronger, more vibrant communities can be supported.

We must articulate a clear, relevant and positive role for public libraries in Scotland in the 21st century. Libraries themselves are in a period of transition, continuing to support book-based services while at the same time moving their library services online. Library spaces will still house and provide physical and unique materials, as a key part of their role as custodians and curators of

information and local resources, but increasingly in the next five years people will visit libraries not to borrow material but to participate in learning programmes, take part in creative activity, join groups, and seek guidance and expertise from library staff and from other partners providing services in the library space.

Libraries' ability and potential to support free of charge, lifelong learning and to promote economic wellbeing and social outcomes puts them in a strong position to play a key role in improving access to opportunities for all of us, including the most vulnerable, and in alleviating the increasing pressure the expanding and ageing population will have on public services.

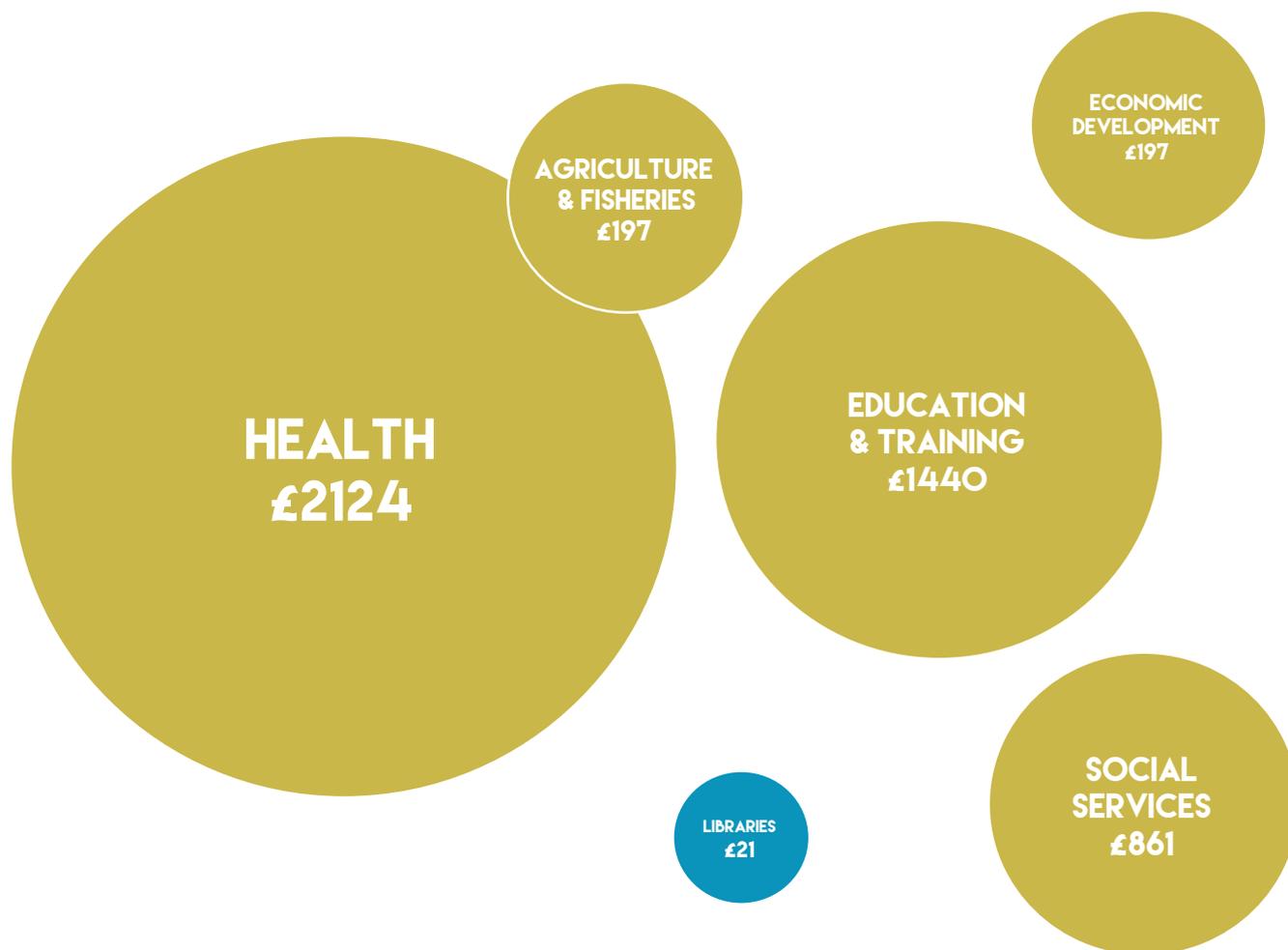
The impact of digital technology creates both challenges and opportunities for public libraries. The digitisation of information, literature and learning resources means a radical change in the way people search, access and explore information and gain knowledge. Access to the internet and digital technology is now an essential facet of 21st century life, and something which now underpins everything a public library does. This technology provides new opportunities for democratic and civic participation, more choice, enhanced access to knowledge, information and entertainment and quicker and easier forms of communication. At the same time it is clear that many people need considerable support to guide and navigate the digital world effectively



“There is a historic perception that libraries are about borrowing books... and they've moved on dramatically...the library service has been unable to get that reality over to the wider population.”

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 3: SPENDING PER HEAD OF POPULATION 2012-13<sup>8</sup>



and maximise the benefits that it offers. Libraries have a critical role in supporting people to do this. Librarians must have an increasingly important role as visible and vocal champions of freedom of information and free expression at both local and national levels. This can be a difficult and challenging responsibility to fulfil and librarians need peer and professional association support to be effective.

This time of transition and change will involve developing exciting opportunities for libraries to contribute to the economic and social health of their communities, and to make and demonstrate this contribution in new and powerful ways. The

future success of public libraries will be determined by how successfully they respond to the changing needs and aspirations of its community, and to the constantly evolving digital world.

Our strategy shows how the service can move to this endpoint: outlining the kind of measures which will need to be taken to create an efficient, effective, people-centred public library service in the digital age. The vision, strategic aims and recommendations are set out in section 2. Section 3 outlines some of the mechanisms and processes which will be needed to achieve these ambitions.

## 2. VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This strategy begins with a shared, consistent and convincing vision about what libraries can achieve and their unique and vital contribution in a modern, progressive, democratic society. The National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland Strategic Group took evidence from the public, libraries, experts and professional bodies. In taking this evidence we were interested in discerning the different perspectives on what libraries could and should be in the future. From this evidence we set out a vision for public libraries in Scotland.

This vision is aligned to the National Performance Framework supported by six strategic aims which outline the key areas for development over the next five years. In taking forward the strategy, the National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland Strategic Group also makes a number of recommendations to deliver the strategic aims (see Figure 4).

This strategy is a catalyst for the changes which are necessary to ensure that the service remains meaningful and useful to citizens, is cost-effective and reflects the policy aims of local and Scottish Government. By addressing the particular needs of their communities, public libraries contribute to the effectiveness of local government in meeting their Single Outcome Agreements and helping to meet the national policy goals set out in the National Performance Framework.

As well as alignment between local and national policy goals, Scotland also benefits from alignment between different public services and the third sector through Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). Evidence received by the Group and our study trips to libraries around Scotland consolidated for us the important role of CPPs in leading public service change in local areas. Our ambition is that this strategy helps local library services advocate for the important role that they can and do play in meeting local and national outcomes.

The Scottish Library and Information Council's *How Good is our Public Library Service?*<sup>9</sup> refers to the role of whole library services within a local government area in relation to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. The overarching purpose of the Scottish Government is linked with 16 national outcomes, many of which are directly relevant to the work of the library strategy. In our deliberations, we found it useful to locate the aims of a national strategy for libraries in relation to the relevant national outcomes. We were also influenced by the Scottish Digital Strategy<sup>10</sup>. In the next sections, we outline six strategic aims and our recommendations for action to meet the ambition of our vision statement.

FIGURE 4: A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND





# STRATEGIC AIM 1: LIBRARIES PROMOTING READING, LITERACY AND LEARNING

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## STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries in Scotland promote education and learning for all, develop a culture of reading for pleasure, offer support for everyone from early years to older people, and enable people to make informed choices.

---

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Ensure access to library services for all citizens using new technology.
- ✓ Develop and promote the core offer from public libraries in Scotland.

---

## RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.

---

## RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATORS

- Improve the skills profile of the population
- Improve levels of educational attainment
- Widen the use of the internet

---

### Universal access in the 21st Century

It is one of the fundamental defining characteristics of the public library service that they are open to all. No-one is turned away from a public library, no joining fee is required, and anyone can make use of the library space. It is essential that this is preserved.

There are a number of ways in which libraries can develop to ensure that they are providing universal access in a digital world including implementing one library card for the whole of Scotland, possibly linked with the National Entitlement Card or an app or similar and creating a mechanism for automatic library enrolment from birth.

### Promoting the 'core offer' of library services

Like any service in the 21st century, whether in the public or private sector, public libraries need to let people know what they are offering and how their service can be accessed. Research with the public underlined the fact that many people are unaware of services currently available in local libraries, with

both users and non-users surprised at the range of services on offer at their local library. The lack of awareness about libraries' services means that the service is being misunderstood and under-used by individuals, groups and communities who could benefit from it.

Promotion of public library services will be done both nationally, locally and in respect of individual libraries. At national level, there will be potential to further promote national services such as the Scottish Reading Strategy as well as national campaigns or initiatives, focusing on particular aspects of libraries' work – such as libraries and health – in particular years.

Consistent and effective promotion of public library services is easier when there is some range of consistent service available in all parts of Scotland. This underlines the importance of there being a core offer from all public libraries in Scotland, for example with universal WiFi and eBook provision. Where libraries across the country can agree to provide a standard level of service, this will allow



“It is important culturally and socially that people should have access to information and books and learning, that it makes a better society than without.”

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

the service to promote their offer to the public, as well as to partners and stakeholders who might benefit from partnerships with libraries.

We are recommending that the Scottish Government, local government and stakeholders continue to develop national programmes or initiatives with a view to providing resources to all public libraries creating a clear 'core offer' to promote consistency in the key areas of activity, including learning, reading and literacy, economic wellbeing and digital inclusion.



## CASE STUDY: ORKNEY

Orkney Libraries have been nominated for the prestigious Bookseller Industry Award, Library of the Year 2015. Their creative and engaging Twitter feed with over 16,000 followers has gained the small island international recognition:

“We started using Twitter as we felt it would be a good way of communicating with our members and the wider community. Twitter gives us the opportunity to raise the awareness of the library and its services among the community. We thought it might in some way help to change the stereotypes people might have about libraries, and allow us to show a more fun side of the service.”

“What we hadn't thought about was how beneficial it would be for the service in terms of direct contact with authors, publishers, journalists etc. We have had author events that have pretty much been organised through Twitter. Serving a community scattered across various islands means we can use Twitter to promote our online services that people can access from home. They can share photos and content from events we have in the library, or advise people of changes to the mobile library timetable. It has become an essential part of what we do as a library.”

[www.buzzfeed.com/alanwhite/real-talk-who-doesnt-dress-as-whitesnake-once-a-week#.t1ByOPkGkK](http://www.buzzfeed.com/alanwhite/real-talk-who-doesnt-dress-as-whitesnake-once-a-week#.t1ByOPkGkK)

## CASE STUDY: APPINESS

North Ayrshire's Appiness project, funded by the Public Library Improvement Fund, supports early years learning through encouraging parents to try educational apps with their pre-school children. Library staff use a range of devices (laptops, iPods, e-book readers and iPads) to teach very young users how to interact with apps that support literacy, numeracy, science, technology, music and art. Over 100 apps were identified, ranked by popularity and tested by the staff for user-friendliness and functionality. The apps used were refined throughout the project based on popularity and participants' feedback.

Since instigating the Appiness project library staff has seen real enthusiasm and a growth in confidence in parents who often buy the apps and devices once they see the education benefits for their children. In this way, the project provides a shared learning experience which brings parents/carers and children closer together.

Appiness was shortlisted for the 2015 EDGE award in the digital library category.



Public libraries in the USA have found increasing levels of attendance and involvement in their programmes of activity, sometimes alongside falling levels of book borrowing. Public library services will continue to develop programmes of activity which meet the needs of their community. They are likely to include things like:

- Reading activities and literacy programmes
- Digital skills – activities and programme which respond to the needs of their community
- Support for new business and enterprise – providing information resources, spaces for co-working, advice for new start-ups, meeting spaces, WiFi
- Support for jobseekers – job clubs, IT training
- Support for those seeking welfare benefits
- Services for older people and people with dementia
- Health and wellbeing – information on health issues, bibliotherapy, providing space for health advice
- Access to local services – services available in the library at specified times
- Local and family history – resources, courses, advice
- Cultural activities – music, drama, art, literature
- Access to local and national government services

### Literacy and reading

Scotland needs an even better educated, more literate and more skilled population. This is important for many reasons: it provides access to job opportunities; it leads to better health; contributes to higher levels of wellbeing; and provides the building blocks for creating a more equal society for all. Literacy is one of the key





contributors to wellbeing: financial literacy and health literacy are two examples of areas in which the ability to understand information and to respond to that information can bring clear benefits to the individual.

Given the abundance of studies and statistics linking improved literacy to health and wellbeing, lower levels of crime, social mobility and attainment, there are clearly enormous benefits to having a highly literate population. One aspect of the response of Scottish public libraries has been the development of a Scottish Reading Strategy, which is similar to the national reading offer developed in England by The Reading Agency and the Society of Chief Librarians. It constitutes a national programme which local library services can

commit to providing, thereby gaining the benefit of resources to support this. The role libraries play in literacy is reflected in the Scottish Government's Read, Write, Count programme, which aims to create a fairer future for Scotland's children through nurturing reading, writing and counting in early years.

It has always been a central part of the role of a public library to inspire people through books and literature. Libraries are the only place in contemporary society where everyone, regardless of age, social demographic, or level of education has free access to books.

Libraries are not alone in seeking to promote learning and literacy, but have a unique and distinct role as a place where people of all ages, including those who have missed out on formal education can come seeking to learn. Libraries can play a complementary role to the education service, working with local schools and organisations such as the Scottish Book Trust, Creative Scotland and The Reading Agency to support reading initiatives in a variety of settings. Entering into closer collaboration and partnership with the education service could also enable public libraries to make better use of resources, share best practice and increase awareness of the facilities available for literacy, learning and skills for life.





## STRATEGIC AIM 2: LIBRARIES

### PROMOTING DIGITAL INCLUSION

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#### STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries in Scotland make best use of digital technologies to deliver high quality, efficient and responsive services, enabling access to information and services wherever and whenever citizens want them.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Develop Scotland-wide digital access resources.
- ✓ Ensure WiFi is available and accessible in all public libraries.

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#### RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.

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#### RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATOR

- Widen the use of the internet

There are a number of ways that libraries can develop to ensure that they are providing digital access resources:

- Implement one library card for the whole of Scotland, possibly linked with the National Entitlement Card or an app or similar
- Promote the concept of the virtual library and digital library services, with 24/7 access to digital resources
- Spread innovation and international experience in providing access to books and other materials outside normal opening hours
- Maximise the opportunities offered by digital systems and media in extending the reach, relevance and accessibility of library services for users and local authorities
- Achieve the most effective and cost-efficient technological solutions for library systems and services
- Work in partnership with local authorities and the national collections to increase access to national and local digital collections and optimise their accessibility and preservation

There are many well documented social, health and educational benefits from access to books and literature from an early age and throughout life.

Public library services ensure that through equality of access to books, events and programmes, these benefits are available for everyone. But the way we access information is changing:

- Book lending in public libraries has dropped over 20% in 4 years<sup>11</sup>.
- 16% of us now have an e-reader<sup>12</sup> and sales of ebooks are rising<sup>13</sup>, as are e-book loans from libraries<sup>14</sup>.
- four in ten households have a tablet and a majority have smart phones<sup>15</sup>.
- There has been an explosion of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) making access to knowledge within easy reach of everyone with a computer and broadband connection<sup>16</sup>.

Currently, eBooks can be borrowed through the vast majority of library services across Scotland but the choice and range of eBooks lags significantly behind that of print titles.

The current lending model available through public libraries is not well developed. The number and range of books available is limited and licensing restrictions inhibit ease of use on some devices as well as the number of users who can read a title at any one time. From the perspective of library users, there are several problems with the current provision:

- It is not possible to download eBooks from public libraries onto the most popular e-reader, the Kindle.
- eBook catalogues are not easy to search.
- There is a limited range of eBooks available through libraries in Scotland, some services offering access to less than 200 eBooks.
- For a population which can download eBooks on demand at home 24 hours a day, there is an expectation that they can borrow eBooks on a similar 24/7 basis, without waiting for another reader to 'return' the book.

A sustainable model of lending eBooks in libraries is needed, as recommended in the Sieghart Review into public library e-lending which reported in 2013<sup>17</sup>. A year-long pilot for e-lending in public libraries was launched in England in March 2014 offering new releases and titles not available for e-lending elsewhere.



## CASE STUDY: CHANNEL SHIFT

The development of online services in North Ayrshire makes it possible to reserve and renew items through mobile phone apps and web services. Enabling library users to carry out simple services like this ensures that staff are available to engage with users in more sustained and valuable ways; through programmes such as reader development, homework clubs and the development of IT skills.

Many libraries have also used digital technology to enhance their service for the public by integrating texting into the Library Management System, offering digital music streaming and downloading services, and using social media to co-produce community heritage as shared assets rather than digitising its own collection.



## CASE STUDY: WI-FIFE

Fife Cultural Trust had seen an increase in the demand for computer and internet access in libraries since the start of welfare reform. As space is restricted in most of Fife's libraries, it was not possible to accommodate additional desktop computers in library buildings. In order to meet user demand for computer and internet facilities, WiFi access was extended from 20% of libraries to 100% of libraries in November 2014.

The installation of WiFi has allowed those who have their own mobile device to access the internet without waiting for a computer to become available. It has also enabled library-users to access the internet outwith library opening hours, where the fabric of buildings allows the WiFi signal to carry outside of the building. This can be essential if customers have deadlines to meet for benefit claim purposes.



The Strategic Group believes that the provision of eBooks and other digitised material is something which can most effectively be addressed by developing national solutions, and by learning from the outcomes of the Sieghart pilots. In the digital landscape, boundaries are less clearly defined and Scotland can benefit from learning from models elsewhere and cooperating with partners from other parts of the UK and beyond. Indeed some of the E-book challenges are European Union wide and it would be sensible to have a UK approach and seek partners from other EU library services to negotiate change for service providers and users.

### Promoting digital and information literacy

Digital and information literacy is of central importance to enabling people to learn, participate, improve their economic position and communicate with others. Libraries are critical to supporting a digitally and information literate population but at the present time they are not fully equipped to respond to the enormity of this challenge. Libraries have several significant strengths in relation to promoting digital participation:

- An enviable track record in helping people learn how to use the internet, having been early pioneers of computer courses and having led the provision of free access to technology in communities for many years.
- A safe space at the heart of local communities.
- Technical and professional networks, offering scope for sharing best practice and learning. Learning about what works with the most vulnerable groups and sharing innovative practice will be essential.



- Experience in finding the particular motivations, interests and drivers that might encourage an individual to go online, as library staff already do in relation to reading.
- Access to a wide range of digital technology and equipment which is not generally available in other public places in local communities.

While libraries can offer good access to digital equipment, WiFi is not universally available across the library network in Scotland. This has been recognised by the appointment of a Scottish Government-funded WiFi Officer currently working within SLIC to make recommendations on how to extend WiFi provision. Prior to Scottish Government investment just 39%<sup>18</sup> of libraries provided WiFi access and there were three local authorities in which only one library in the local authority had WiFi. More recent figures from SLIC show that 72% of libraries now offer WiFi access<sup>19</sup>.

Ensuring access in the remaining 146 libraries and exploring options for access in mobile libraries is increasingly important in relation to digital participation, as learners often wish to learn and receive support on their own equipment, such as a tablet or a smartphone.

Libraries are well placed to play a leading role in the work to further digital participation in Scotland. Digital participation activities are now focused on the 'final fifth' of the population who remain offline. This means that models that have worked well in the past to help people learn how to use the internet may not be successful in the future. New approaches are required and a willingness to experiment and try different techniques is essential.

There is a challenge for public libraries in determining whether a universal approach is required to determine how they should foster digital participation, or whether variation at local level, to take account of the specific context in a given area, is more appropriate. This question applies both between national and local authority level and within local authority areas.



As the number of digitally excluded citizens reduces, the level of personal intervention and support required to engage with each individual who remains offline increases. Those who are digitally excluded today are increasingly unlikely to seek out courses or classes that might help them go online, whether in a library or elsewhere. Libraries will have to consider what outreach activities they can provide to improve digital skills of the least likely to engage with traditional digital inclusion activities.

Digital technology has the potential to be a vital tool in reducing inequality and tackling social exclusion, aiding self-improvement and advancement. However, at present those who are least likely to use the internet, for reasons of cost, skills, motivation and access, are the same groups who are most likely to be disadvantaged according to a number of other social and economic measures. In Scotland nearly a fifth of people lack basic digital skills<sup>20</sup> and the same proportion of households do not have access to the internet at home through either a fixed broadband service or a mobile device<sup>21</sup>. The digital age is widening, rather than bridging, existing socio-economic divides. Research shows that over half of those in our most deprived communities felt that IT improvements would encourage their library use<sup>22</sup>.



## STRATEGIC AIM 3: LIBRARIES

### PROMOTING ECONOMIC WELLBEING

#### STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries in Scotland contribute to Scotland's economic wellbeing, supporting jobseekers, offering courses in digital skills, language courses, and support for small businesses.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Develop national, regional and local partnerships with advice services, job centres and enterprise organisations.
- ✓ Mainstream activities to improve STEM skills in young children.
- ✓ Test and replicate a model of public libraries providing co-working spaces for small businesses.

#### RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

#### RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATORS

- Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training or work
- Increase the number of businesses
- Improve the skill profile of the population
- Reduce the proportion of people living in poverty

Libraries help jobseekers to find opportunities and apply for jobs online, they run job clubs, offer courses in digital skills training, and offer advice and support for the development of small businesses. At the same time they can help people make the most of the income they have. In the build-up to the introduction of Universal Credit, public library staff have played a key role in supporting applications for welfare benefits online. This role will increase over the coming years.

**Universal Support – Delivered Locally (USDL)** is a funded framework which recognises that the introduction of Universal Credit will put new pressures on local services. As Universal Credit is digital by default, there will be an increase in the number of people requiring access to IT facilities and digital skills. It is recognised that local facilities such as libraries will have an important role to play.

Over the next year, the expansion of Universal Credit will gradually take place but only a small proportion of potential claimants will move onto Universal Credit. Each local authority will be offered a resource from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide basic digital support to those claimants who are most in need.

Over the longer term USDL should evolve – as more claimants go onto Universal Credit, and those claimants will have increasingly demanding needs. As a result more resources should become available – however this will be subject to negotiation and local authorities will need to decide whether the level is acceptable. DWP has consistently disallowed capital funding from such arrangements and we cannot envisage that changing. Welfare Reform leads within local authorities are currently negotiating on resources for this year, and COSLA continues to negotiate for the longer term arrangements.



“ I would never have thought to use the library until it was forced upon me by the job centre. Now I use it, now I bring my own kids. I just never thought – I’m not a book reader. ”

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Libraries can contribute to the development of new enterprise and small business start-ups by providing information and advice, providing space for co-working, meeting spaces and free WiFi. In these ways, libraries can bring entrepreneurs, charities and small businesses together to support each other in the library space. In today’s world of digital start-up companies operating in coffee shops, there is considerable potential for public libraries to create accessible co-working spaces, with provision of services such as fast WiFi, printing, faxing and other services, as well as café facilities.



## CASE STUDY: EDINBURGH CITY LIBRARIES

Edinburgh City Libraries set up Business Hubs in libraries by accessing Town Centre Regeneration funding and creating a partnership with Business Gateway. Research in local town centres such as Leith Walk and Stockbridge had shown that a high percentage of local independent businesses were not using the wealth of online resources to promote their business. Business Gateway deliver tailored courses free of charge in libraries at times to suit local businesses. Five years into the project, the hubs are actively contributing to the Council’s strategic commitment to strengthen town centres and to promote economic resilience.

Since the Business Hub opened at Leith Library in 2010 it has held 174 workshops which have been attended by 2,150 people looking to start or develop their business.

Scottish Prince’s Trust for Young people also run courses from the Business Hub once a week, aimed at young people looking to start a business, such as Youth Business Scotland application sessions, and bookkeeping courses.

In addition, the library provides employability services for some of their most vulnerable customers in partnership with Crisis UK. For some of the local rough sleepers these include budgeting classes, English language classes and even some tests held at end of courses. Edinburgh City Libraries had a small – but important – number of positive outcomes with this group, assisting them with volunteering, employment and housing and will be progressing these offerings in a more coordinated way across Leith, through the new Economy Action Group.



## CASE STUDY: DUNDEE OPPORTUNITIES HUB

The Opportunities Hub in Dundee Central Library was created as part of a Scottish Government Public Library Improvement Fund project to support those seeking access, skills and support to cope with the changes to Welfare Reform. The project created a dedicated space by refocusing and rebranding the Reference and Information Centre. Library staff who were already working closely with local agencies and groups in raising digital awareness are now part of a team who will shape the experience of people using the service.

A volunteer coordinator works with library staff and partner organisations to ensure that libraries are recognised as being at the heart of digital inclusion in Dundee and a main point of contact for other agencies to direct clients to for advice and support. The turnover of volunteers is high due to the fact many of them are job seekers who finding their new skills are helping them in their own job seeking.

One volunteer with the project has recently secured employment with a company carrying out energy price comparisons for customers. The volunteer has said the experience he gained in developing and delivering a price comparison website workshop directly led to him securing this job. The volunteer had not been in employment for 2 years prior to volunteering with the Opportunities Project.

## CASE STUDY: THE MITCHELL LIBRARY DIGITAL MAKING SPACE

Glasgow Life has partnered with CoderDojo Scotland and Virgin Media to create a Digital Making Space in the Mitchell Library. CoderDojo Scotland is part of a global collaboration which provides free coding clubs for young people.

At the Mitchell Library, free coding clubs are offered to enable young people to learn what they need to become a programmer in a safe, fun and sociable environment. At code clubs, young people have the opportunity to learn new programming languages, create apps for a computer, tablet or phone, build websites and make games. In these ways, code clubs facilitate the development of STEM skills, enable young people and open up future employment opportunities for them.





## STRATEGIC AIM 4: LIBRARIES PROMOTING SOCIAL WELLBEING

### STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries in Scotland contribute to social wellbeing, tackling social isolation, inequality, disadvantage, fractured communities and ill health

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with all public services and community planning partners.
- ✓ Share best practice on how to create effective and accessible public service or community hubs.
- ✓ Build on current practice to become champions of community engagement and empowerment.
- ✓ Develop guidelines on the appropriate use of volunteers to bring added value to services.

### RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

We live longer, healthier lives.

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

### RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATORS

- Improve mental wellbeing
- Improve self-assessed general health
- Improve people's perceptions of their neighbourhood

There are five main ways in which libraries can contribute to social wellbeing. These are by:

- Responding to the social needs of individuals and groups in their communities and developing activities and programmes to respond to particular needs.
- Making library space and support available for community interest groups and members of the community looking to support one another.
- Contributing to the ability of individuals to become involved in their local communities and take part in local and national life.
- Strengthening the identity and sense of community.
- Creating a public service hub for the delivery of a range of public services.

### Libraries promoting social wellbeing in partnerships

Libraries can be key partners in tackling the problems of social isolation, inequality, disadvantage, fractured communities and ill health. Libraries provide an important space and resource for many disadvantaged people in a non-judgmental, public space, open to all.

In contributing to social outcomes, libraries are often working in partnership with other public services and other sectors. Partnerships are particularly important in the context of an ageing population. The number of people aged 65 and over will rise by 59% by 2037<sup>23</sup>. As a result, long-term conditions will affect more people. Scotland's model of public services is based on

# CASE STUDY: FAMILY FUTURES

The Family Futures project is a partnership between Glasgow Libraries and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The Partnership delivers an early intervention programme to increase interaction between parents and children, and develop and improve parenting and communication skills. The project involves workshops and activities across three strands: Bounce and Rhyme (aimed at 0-3 years), Toddlers' Tales (aimed at 3-5 years) and Triple P (a positive parenting programme).

An enhanced programme offer with a greater number of sessions has been made available in the Clyde Gateway catchment areas of Dennistoun, Parkhead and Bridgeton. There are 3,283 family households in the catchment area of which 41% are single parent households. In a two year period the area has seen increased Family Futures activity, with 350 Bounce and Rhyme sessions, 58 Toddlers' Tales sessions, and 10 Triple P sessions involving 284 people.

In addition, nine Early Years establishments received Books to Go services, with 13,439 books made available. More than 1,000 parents and almost 1,500 children have also been involved in PlayTalkRead, which toured Glasgow, and supported the sign up of 135 new library members.

The programme is highly valued by those who have taken part, with participants saying that they have continued to share books and reading at home as a result. Almost all the participants felt that the sessions had helped their child's speech and language development, and 90% continued to use the library, with a similar number saying that they had helped them make new friends, and find out what was going on in the community.

participation and co-production, and libraries are in a strong position to extend their support of people with long-term conditions by providing access to information on self-management of these conditions and local support services.

The need to collaborate, to create partnerships, to work across sectors and across departments is a feature of life in the 21st century. Public libraries need to build on and develop their partnerships with agencies working in related areas. These include local authorities, schools, NHS and voluntary sector organisations. There may be situations in which partnership working can be supported by national initiatives.

## Creating a public service hub for the delivery of a range of public services

Paradoxically, at a time when there is increasing emphasis on digital services, and creating new digital resources which are accessible online, there is also recognition of the importance of the physical space which the public library provides. In different countries this is played out in different ways. One response, which has been welcomed in Scotland, is to promote public libraries as public service hubs, with the aspiration that the public library should be the first port of call for any contact with public services. Sometimes new libraries have been created as part of new community hubs, while other library authorities have sought to bring other services into an existing library building.



“ It's one of very few places physically where people of different ages come for different purposes. What other public space is there where everyone from 0 to 90 can partake of something together or separately within the same space? Which is why it's such a valuable community resource. ”

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Some local authorities have chosen to create community campus hubs with libraries, schools and sports centres located in the same building. High Life Highland has taken this approach in Aviemore with significant increases in library usage. Other authorities such as Perth and Kinross, Fife and Aberdeenshire also have a number of integrated hubs providing a range of services for the school and the local community.

In many cases, school library services are distinct from public library services and often resourced and staffed differently. Closer collaboration and partnership between school libraries and public libraries is essential to consider best use of resources, share best practice and increase awareness of the facilities available for literacy, learning and skills for life.

### Libraries supporting civic engagement and involvement in community activities

Libraries support civic engagement by providing access to information supporting participation in a democratic society, and information about consumer rights and citizens' entitlements and responsibilities. Libraries strengthen public life by encouraging and supporting awareness and participation in local decision-making and wider civic and political engagement. They contribute to social justice in ensuring equal access to information about service delivery by local and national government. Libraries provide access to the information, ideas and knowledge needed to inform civic participation. They can provide space for public meetings and events.



A factor which emerged strongly in our research was the value of the library as a resource, or an anchor point, for local or community information which was considered to be a 'unique selling point' in an online world. Libraries provide information about:

- The local area: its people, history, demographics, culture and environment.
- Civic activity, including local community and voluntary sector events and opportunities.
- Practical information about the locality such as bus timetables, local maps, opening hours for GP surgeries/chemists.
- Local businesses provided e.g. tradespeople, therapists etc.





## CASE STUDY: THE VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE

When I became unemployed, finding another job was very difficult and sometimes disheartening. Through Volunteering with Macmillan @ Glasgow Libraries I have met a lot of amazing people and I've completely changed my focus in my job search!

I applied to Macmillan @ Glasgow Libraries as an information and support volunteer and started in August 2012. The training I received helped me understand the issues faced by people affected by cancer. This has given me the confidence to speak to people about their needs and fears and direct them to the best services that are available to them. I also learned that I can be a good listener!

I would like to work in the voluntary sector and hope that this experience will help me fulfil this goal. In the coming months I am about to begin fundraising with Macmillan and I have a few ideas for events that I hope to organise. (Still unemployed but not out of work!)



“When the library opened I asked, is there going to be a poetry exhibition? They said no. And I said, how are people going to come across what they don't know they want, or don't know they need, unless you put it there? So they put it there, there is now a poetry section. So they responded, which is good.”

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Libraries are essential agents of their local communities and community engagement is part of their core business. Effective engagement with the local community will ensure that the services provided are meeting the needs of local people. This was recognised by participants in our research with service users, who expressed a view that libraries were a community asset and as part of that community they should reflect its specific needs, whether that be in providing mobile and outreach services to communities unable to access the physical library or in the type of book collections, resources and services it offers.

Many library services are engaged with community planning partnerships in their areas, as well as involving users and the local community in any proposed changes or developments of the service.

Support in the area of community engagement has been provided through the Scottish Government Public Library Improvement Fund to 5 library authorities in 2013/ 2014 for training on community engagement, and a further 10 in 2014/15. Libraries need to build on these skills and put them into practice by demonstrating new techniques and methodologies to keep citizens involved.

### The role of volunteers

Libraries embody the spirit of community empowerment and coproduction. There are over 1,800 volunteers in Scottish public libraries<sup>24</sup>. A strategic approach should ensure that volunteers are welcomed in Scotland's libraries as complementary to paid staff.

Volunteers have a valuable contribution to make to library services and can amplify what services can deliver with real benefits to the community and to the volunteers themselves as well as to the library services.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill is currently nearing the final Stage 3 of the Parliamentary Process. The Bill provides a strategic framework for empowering Scotland's people, improving outcomes and further enabling local level decision-making. The Bill seeks to achieve these outcomes in a number of ways that are relevant to how public library services are designed and delivered including:

- ensuring public service providers work with communities to ensure that communities' needs are met;
- strengthening the voices of communities in decisions that affect them;
- enabling communities' right to buy land and buildings; and
- enabling communities to take over publicly owned land and buildings.

As a key local asset, library services in Scotland should be supported by local and Scottish Government to understand the implications of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill and, if passed, build on their consultation work with communities to implement the changes in a spirit of positive partnership.



“Offering specialised volunteering opportunities for the community, in which individuals of all ages can offer their skills and experience to help make people's lives better, such as teaching basic IT skills, running book groups, helping young people to develop their reading skills, and supporting local studies and family history services.”

LIBRARY STAFF IN A RURAL, LOCAL  
AUTHORITY-RUN PUBLIC LIBRARY

## CASE STUDY: AVIEMORE LIBRARY

Aviemore Library is part of Aviemore Primary School and Community Centre which was established in 2012. Both the library and leisure facilities are operated by High Life Highland, a charitable trust whose scope is to promote culture, learning, sport, leisure, health and wellbeing. Since becoming part of the school and community centre, Aviemore library has increased its opening hours from 18 hours a week to 82.5 hours a week and has boosted library visits, book issues and the number of active library members.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Visits	9,698	21,203	29,705
Total Issues	11,957	18,048	26,580
Active Members	549	792	851
Computer sessions	1,485	2,760	7,381

Aviemore library has achieved this through: service design, with a shared reception desk with the leisure facility and a single use library / leisure card; a two tier library service offer, with a fully staffed service operating within core hours and an open, unstaffed service operating from 8am to 10pm daily; library and leisure staff sharing duties; professional network librarians overseeing services across both school and public libraries.



## STRATEGIC AIM 5: LIBRARIES

### PROMOTING CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

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#### STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries in Scotland promote their role as cultural centres, inspiring people through books and literature, music, film and theatre, and encourage creativity.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Develop and strengthen national, regional and local partnerships with arts and culture organisations.
- ✓ Pilot a collaborative venture to provide access to eBooks from Scottish publishers.
- ✓ Support librarians to become effective voices for freedom of information and expression.

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#### RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOME

We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.

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#### RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATOR

- Increase cultural engagement

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#### Arts and cultural activities

Increasingly public libraries are used as spaces within which a wide range of cultural activities can take place, from concerts and films, writing groups and author visits, to theatre and creative makerspaces. They can be venues for performances and exhibitions, and spaces in which people can be supported to express themselves and join others in shared cultural experiences. Libraries can attract new service users by hosting events like science and technology workshops for children, graphic novel workshops for teenagers, and by using their space for art exhibitions, plays or film screening.

In other jurisdictions, for example in Scandinavia and the Netherlands, there has been an interest in redefining public libraries as places for innovation and creativity, as places for business start-ups and technology labs. This shift from consumption of information and knowledge, to a more creative model can also be seen in the growing interest in makerspaces in public libraries, where people share

ideas, experiment and use technology or data in new and creative ways. Here the emphasis is on the library as an exciting creative space.

Libraries are important custodians of local archives, heritage and special collections, all of which are key resources in creating the cultural identity of communities. This role will become increasingly important with the digitising of this material creating new ways in which this public data can be shared and used to create value in local communities.

#### Supporting Scotland's writers and publishers

Libraries in Scotland offer a unique opportunity to showcase the work of Scottish writers and publishers which in turn allows readers to see themselves reflected in the cultural materials around them and to explore their own creative, cultural, Gaelic, Scots or community language, or place-based heritage.



For writers the Public Lending Right scheme (PLR) provides much-needed income from borrowed titles, worth a total of £6.1m in 2014 in the UK, and shared between 22,000 authors, illustrators, photographers and translators UK-wide<sup>25</sup>. The Sieghart Report recommended that PLR be extended to remote eBook loans, a move which would require a change in UK and EU copyright laws. Writers have concerns that if e-lending becomes a big part of how people read in the future (and the signs are that it is a growing trend) then they would lose out if PLR were not extended.

The Strategic Group proposes that there should be a pilot to explore the creation of a platform for eBooks from Scottish publishers.

### Supporting librarians to become effective voices for freedom of information and expression

Public libraries are a gateway to ideas and information in a variety of formats. As access points to these resources, libraries enable Scotland's people to make informed decisions and hold informed opinions, and support individuals and communities to develop and prosper.

Acting as an access point for information involves significant challenges. Freedom of information must be balanced with the right to privacy, whilst opposing censorship must be balanced with providing access to information in an appropriate environment for all. These challenges are exacerbated in the digital age.



## CASE STUDY: DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY, LOCAL HERITAGE PROJECTS

Library staff in Dumfries and Galloway have been working on a project funded by the Scottish Government Public Library Improvement Fund to capture local oral histories from the Lockerbie Disaster. This project uses volunteers, working with staff from the Library and archives to interview and record memories of the disaster in the words and dialect of local people, and builds on an extensive existing database of history of the local area and some of the language and dialects used. In this way libraries connect with communities to share and preserve hyper local heritage through memories of local people, capturing not just the events but the heritage of the language and dialect itself for future generations.



As qualified arbiters of information, librarians navigate these challenges and there is scope for them to play an expanded and more prominent role in securing freedom of information and expression. Librarians have the understanding and expertise to champion and promote openness and the public's right to information; oppose censorship and efforts to inhibit access to information; select and make available information; guide and support the public to seek, obtain and navigate available information; support the public to utilise and share this information; facilitate intellectual and cultural creativity; and safeguard the privacy of the public through ensuring data collation and surveillance are necessary, proportionate and lawful.



“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 19



## STRATEGIC AIM 6: LIBRARIES AS EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICES

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### STRATEGIC AIM

Public libraries must be supported to continuously improve their services.

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Continue to develop methods for reporting on the impact and outcomes of library activities through How Good is our Public Library Service? (HGIOPLS).
  - ✓ Develop and implement a learning and development programme for all library staff.
  - ✓ Explore alternative approaches to generating financial investment.
  - ✓ Engage proactively with models for efficient procurement of goods and services at national level.
- 

### RELEVANT NATIONAL OUTCOME

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

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### RELEVANT NATIONAL INDICATORS

- Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services
  - Improve the responsiveness of public services
- 

### Outcomes monitoring and impact measurement

As in so many areas of public service, what is measured is what matters. Scotland is a world-leader in using wellbeing outcome indicators to drive public service reform<sup>26</sup>. Scottish public libraries need to move from measuring inputs towards methods of measuring participation and impact. Measuring unnecessary input data can be costly in terms of staff time and delivers limited improvements in services. A shift away from counting book borrowing and footfall, to counting attendance at programmes of activity and learning courses, as well as in creative activities such as makerspaces, will also provide a strong incentive to libraries to develop their services in new ways. This will need to be supplemented by assessment of the impact of the programmes on participants. It is important that public libraries are able to measure the extent to which they are contributing to single outcome agreement targets, and National Performance Framework goals.

The Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix (PLQIM) developed by the Scottish Library and Information Council took the place of standards drawn up by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) in 1986 and 1995, which focused more on inputs than outcomes. The intention was that this matrix would form part of the Strategic Quality Assurance Framework being developed for local authorities in monitoring and assessing the





performance of their cultural services. The PLQIM was revised in 2014 and the current version is How Good is our Public Library Service? A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland. Wellbeing outcome measurements are built into 'How Good is our Public Library Service?' encouraging libraries to report on what they do, on the levels of participation and interaction with their community.

Audit Scotland collects data about library usage as part of its review of local authority services, but this is limited to the number of visits to the library. Audit Scotland recognises that the How Good is our Public Library Service? model provides a framework to support local councils in assisting with performance management and securing Best Value.

### Learning and development

Our research with the public shows that they value contact with library staff, and their role in creating and delivering an effective service. Library staff have a wide range of skills, including:

- Sourcing information and signposting
- Promoting reading
- Expertise on community information and local

history

- Supporting access to council services
- Digital skills
- Inter-personal skills
- Leadership

As an integral part of the strategy, public libraries need to ensure that they have staff able to develop the skills needed to provide a responsive, effective, user-focused public service that is part of community life in the 21st century. Excellent customer service skills will be key to this. They will also need to have the opportunity to take part in professional learning and development courses linked to the needs of their role, for example in relation to partnership working, and service evaluation. Library services should 'recruit for attitude, and train for skills'.

As digital technologies develop rapidly it is essential that library staff and volunteers have access to the right training to ensure that they have sufficient digital skills to be able to inspire learners with the power and possibilities the technology offers. This will mean building on existing training modules – such as the Training in New Technologies project, which is part of a SLIC eLearning programme for staff.

There are examples of leadership development programmes, including the Clore Fellowship, which are open to library leaders, but relatively small numbers of staff have been able to take part in these programmes. Carnegie Library Lab is a recent example of an initiative to develop the leadership skills of the future leaders of public library services.

SLIC and CILIPS should work together to create national development programmes and further develop existing training opportunities for all library staff.

### Financial investment

Public libraries are a public asset, and they need investment. Buildings need maintenance, refurbishment and extension or remodelling; new libraries may be needed in rapidly growing areas or in areas of social deprivation. Financial investment is needed to keep libraries functional and current. Appropriate buildings and facilities are essential if public libraries are to achieve their potential. Some library services in Scotland have been very successful at refurbishing older buildings and ensuring that new library services are integrated into new community hubs. There are opportunities for other services to learn from one another. Other authorities have ensured that when old buildings are closed, the service is transferred to new community hubs.

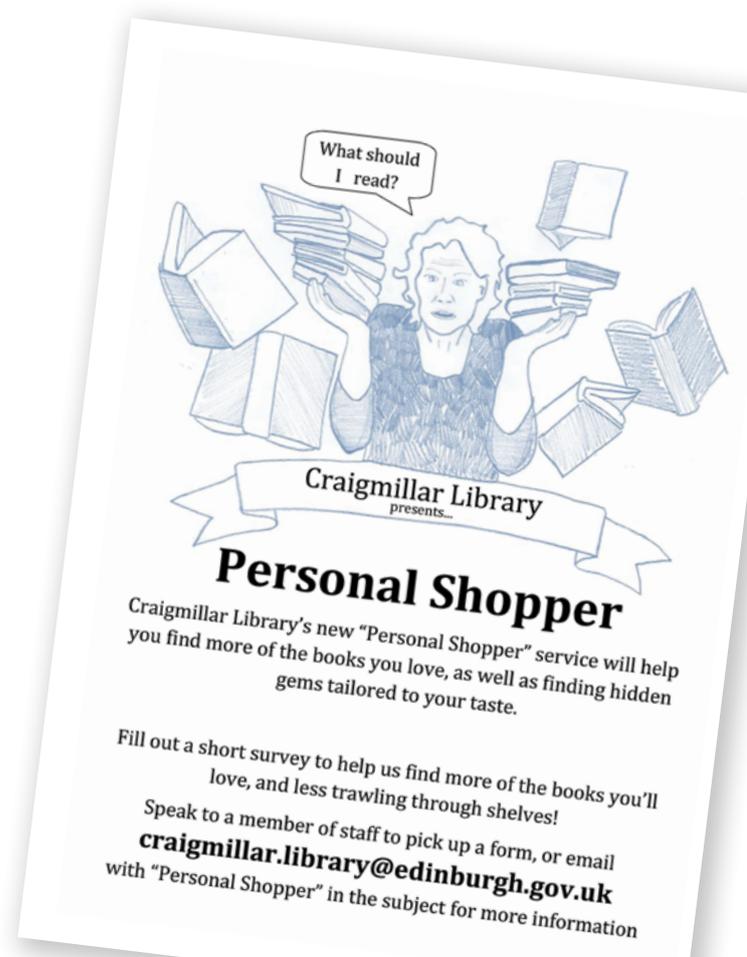
Within libraries the technological infrastructure and tools need constant updating. The public library in the digital age is a key networked knowledge institution. But networks do not stop at local authority boundaries, and one way of removing barriers to more extensive networks is to create a national digital platform. Local platforms would be connected to a shared platform in which libraries can share resources.

A common digital platform would give libraries increased negotiating power with digital suppliers, for example, of eBooks. It would also support the sharing of innovative practice, enable more efficient sharing of content between local services, and create simpler access to all digital resources such as eBooks.

There is a strong tradition in Scotland of funding the majority of public library services free at the point of use. While authorities charge for some services, such as reservations from other libraries or inter-library loans, or DVD hire, these charged-for services form a very small percentage of services.

There has been little appetite to explore the area of income generation in Scotland, whereas in England with the growth of community-managed libraries there has been a greater interest in the extent to which libraries can become income-generating. A report by Locality for the Arts Council of England set out the five main areas in which libraries could potentially generate income<sup>27</sup>. These areas are:

- Contracts for providing public services (such as public health or employment support) in libraries.
- Private sector service contracts (such as parcel drop off and collection points).
- Direct trading (commission from sales at art exhibitions etc).
- Charged for services, such as room hire, co-working spaces or research services.
- New IT services such as 3D printers.





With the increase in the number of library services being provided by arms-length charitable trusts (eight in Scotland), there may also be some unexplored potential in reviewing the extent to which these new bodies are pursuing income generation from sources such as the National Lottery, businesses, other public sector organisations and philanthropic organisations.

Innovation is crucial to a forward-thinking and flexible library service that can respond to new and anticipated needs. Innovation in Scottish public libraries is currently supported by the Scottish Government through the Public Library Improvement Fund of £500,000 per year which it provides via SLIC.

## Procurement

Underpinning this strategy is a belief that there are cost benefits to be achieved by procurement on a

national or regional basis. At Scottish level, there are opportunities for libraries to work together in new ways. For example:

- A national digital platform
- A Scotland-wide eBook solution, procuring and making available eBooks.
- WiFi in all Scottish libraries on a consistent basis

The Scottish Library and Information Council has distributed funds provided by the Scottish Government to increase WiFi coverage in public libraries. Approximately 70% of libraries now have WiFi. The priority must be to extend this across the libraries network, including mobile libraries. Estimates based on the current costs suggest that a Scottish WiFi Fund of £1million would secure WiFi across public libraries and provide staff with tablet devices to assist in helping users access WiFi. The UK government recently made funding of £7.4m available to extend WiFi to all libraries in England.

### 3. LEADING THE DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy is designed to help library services, and the local authorities which fund them, to meet the ambitions for public libraries outlined in this document. This will involve developing and refocusing their services, and improving the efficiency of the service in a variety of ways through more cooperative work with other local authorities, and with other agencies.

Public library services have had a pride in their local focus, and this will continue. But increasingly, in the knowledge age, there are efficiencies which can only be achieved by working at the local authority-wide, regional or national level to underpin local provision. The vision will not be achieved unless there are changes to the ways in which public library services are provided: changes in the way services are delivered; changes in the way staff are trained; changes in the relationship between local authorities, and between local library services and national agencies like the Scottish Library and Information Council.

Implementing this strategy will require a mechanism that provides leadership for the public library sector; supports the development of the sector and furthers existing cross-sectoral collaboration. For the strategy to be successful, it will be necessary for it to have:

- The enthusiastic support of COSLA and local government.
- Clear support from the Scottish Government to implement the recommendations contained within the strategy.
- The support of the public library sector.
- Adequate funding to allow for staffing and for investment in the kinds of developments which may be required.

Taking forward the national strategy is a significant challenge for the sector and its partners.

A leadership body is required to oversee activity relating to each of the 6 strategic aims, monitor implementation of the recommendations and promote the vision for 21st century public library services.

There are a number of bodies in Scotland that currently have a role in promoting the development of local public library services, and encouraging innovation, co-operation and partnership working.

- Heads of Public Libraries: The group of leaders of library services across Scotland.
- SLIC: library and information service membership body and independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services.
- CILIPS: membership organisation for those in the library, information and knowledge professions. Supports the development of members with networking and learning opportunities.
- National Library of Scotland: charitable organisation that advances universal access to knowledge about Scotland and in Scotland, one of Scotland's national collections, Scotland's legal deposit library and the world's leading centre for the study of Scotland and the Scots.
- VOCAL: national representative body for strategic managers working in Scotland's culture and leisure services.

The group puts forward two options for the leadership body:

- 1) A partnership approach involving all the bodies mentioned in the previous paragraph and others with relevant interests, where tasks are allocated according to expertise.
- 2) A consideration of a change in role of SLIC to become a National Development Body for Libraries.

In developing this strategy, the group heard directly from a large number of library staff, national bodies and members of the public. Our conclusions and recommendations are based on the evidence that they provided us with. We found no shortage of support for libraries but we also found a clear appetite for change and development: no one we spoke to wanted library services to stand still.

FIGURE 5: THE FIVE ELEMENTS REQUIRED TO DELIVER ON OUR VISION FOR SCOTLAND'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES



There was a clear and consistent set of messages to the group: libraries must continue to be focused on reading and literacy but embrace the opportunities of new technology; they must work with partners but be clear about their USP; they must better understand and promote both their direct impact and their contribution to our collective wellbeing; and they must remain a local service but find a stronger centre to lead future development and promotion of their work.

It is this pre-existing shared narrative that we have sought to articulate through the strategy and amplify. Our ambition is that the strategy will assist libraries in confidently asserting their vital role in the digital age and taking the next steps in transforming their service. The strategic aims and recommendations do not therefore belong to the strategy group but to everyone involved in libraries in Scotland.

# THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PARTNERSHIP OR LEADERSHIP BODY

## 1. Lead the implementation of the National Strategy for Public Libraries

- Promote, oversee and review the National Strategy for Public Libraries.
- Advise the Scottish Government and ministers on all matters concerning library and information services.

## 2. Promote continuous improvement in public library services:

- Support access to resources in all types of libraries in order to nurture an informed and educated citizenry.
- Foster literacy, lifelong learning and education, and develop services and resources including those relating to 21st century skills.
- Aid the preservation of knowledge, information and collections in all formats.
- Promote the role of libraries within the knowledge and information infrastructure of Scotland in order to support for the purpose of supporting innovation, research, education, and advancement.
- Advance library services that provide the public with access to information through local, regional, Scotland-wide, UK and international collaborations and networks.
- Award grant-in-aid to promote innovative developments in Scottish library and information services.

## 3. Support partnership between library services:

- Enable and enhance coordination between local authority services that relate to library and information services.
- Facilitate and foster relationships and forge new networks and collaborations.
- Encourage resource sharing among all types of libraries for the purpose of achieving economical and efficient delivery of library services to the public.

## 4. Develop people

- Enhance the skills of the current library workforce.
- Attract future professionals to the library and information sector.

## 5. Support the sector to develop an outcomes based approach to performance measurement:

- Monitor, evaluate and evidence the impact of library and information services.
- Ensure activities across the information and library sector are aligned with the National Performance Framework.

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS



- ✓ Ensure access to library services for all citizens using new technology.
- ✓ Develop and promote the core offer from public libraries in Scotland.



- ✓ Develop Scotland-wide digital access resources.
- ✓ Ensure WiFi is available and accessible in all public libraries.



- ✓ Develop national, regional and local partnerships with advice services, job centres and enterprise organisations.
- ✓ Mainstream activities to improve STEM skills in young children.
- ✓ Test and replicate a model of public libraries providing co-working spaces for small businesses.



- ✓ Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with all public services and community planning partners.
- ✓ Share best practice on how to create effective and accessible public service or community hubs.
- ✓ Build on current practice to become champions of community engagement and empowerment.
- ✓ Develop guidelines on the appropriate use of volunteers.



- ✓ Develop and strengthen national, regional and local partnerships with arts and culture organisations.
- ✓ Pilot a collaborative venture to provide access to eBooks from Scottish publishers.
- ✓ Support librarians to become effective voices for freedom of information and expression.



- ✓ Continue to develop methods for reporting on the impact and outcomes of library activities through How Good is our Public Library Service? (HGIOPLS).
- ✓ Develop and implement a learning and development programme for all library staff.
- ✓ Explore alternative approaches to generating financial investment.
- ✓ Engage proactively with models for efficient procurement of goods and services at national level.

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