



Leicester
City Council

**MEETING OF THE CULTURE AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY
COMMISSION**

DATE: THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2025

TIME: 5:30 pm

**PLACE: Meeting Room G.01, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles
Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Committee

Councillor Zaman (Chair)

Councillor Halford (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Dr Barton, Cassidy, Chauhan, Dave, Haq and Waddington

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

Julie Bryant and Ed Brown (Governance Services)

E-mail: Governance@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact: **Julie Bryant or Ed Brown, Governance Services** on Julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk or Edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk. Alternatively, email governance@leicester.gov.uk, or call in at City Hall.

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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

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1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To issue a welcome to those present, and to confirm if there are any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members will be asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

Bharti Mistry asks:

1. We propose that the Council establish User Community Groups at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, Rushey Mead Recreation Centre, and the two libraries. These partnerships would help identify income-generation opportunities for each centre and assess the evolving needs of the local communities and how best to meet them.
2. We ask that the Council does not revisit the CAT (Community Asset Transfer) issue regarding Rushey Mead and Belgrave community centres and libraries. Instead, we urge the Council to commit to working in partnership with users, residents, and the wider communities of Rushey Mead and Belgrave.
3. Does the Council have its own proposals to improve the financial sustainability of sites that remain Council-run, including any potential impact on staffing? For example, measures to reduce costs, improve efficiency, and increase usage of the centres and libraries?
4. Aside from the CAT policy, has the Council considered any other models for operating neighbourhood services (community centres and libraries) across the city?
5. Will the Council commit to reviewing the current arrangements and

future direction for Belgrave and Rushey Mead? We seek assurance of strong frontline service delivery, improved outreach, and increased activity—particularly for diverse communities where English is not the first language, as well as for elderly residents, young people, disabled users, and those experiencing loneliness and isolation.

6. Can we clarify what plans are in place for development at Rushey Mead library, including potential use of the capital budget?

Mala Shah asks:

1. How much capital does LCC have (please provide breakdown of how much allocated and how much is in reserve)?
2. Please would the council & the Assistant City Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres accept a thank you for the decision relating to neighbourhood services particularly for those in Rushey Mead & Belgrave;

With the new changes now being proposed, how much saving is the council looking to make at

- A. Rushey Mead library
 - B. Rushey Mead recreation centre
 - C. Belgrave library
 - D. Belgrave neighbourhood centre
3. If the council is looking to make savings at Rushey Mead recreation centre, Rushey Mead library, Belgrave library and Belgrave neighbourhood centre, please do provide a breakdown of where the current savings are coming from?

Nizamuddin Patel asks:

1. Following the consultation, it is noted that in Netherhall either the neighbourhood centre or the Armadale centre (pending survey) will be considered for CAT.

Is there a reason why both buildings can't be considered for CAT?

2. Can a timeframe be given as to how soon a condition survey can be completed and published of the Armadale Centre?

4. ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT FOR [Appendix A](#) LIBRARIES AND COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submits a report providing an update on the findings of the recent public consultation (April 2025 – June 2025) and provide commission members with an update on the future recommended delivery model for Libraries and Community Centres.



Assessment & Recommendations Report for Libraries and Community Centres

From: Lee Warner
Lead director: Sean Atterbury

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Lee Warner / Michael Clarke
- Author contact details: lee.warner@leicester.gov.uk

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report and its appendices is to provide an update on the findings of the recent public consultation (April 2025 – June 2025) and provide commission members with an update on the future recommended delivery model for Libraries and Community Centres.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Assessment & Recommendations Report (Appendix 1) provides a detailed look at the proposals which were consulted on and the changes to the proposals following consultation and revision of the EIA. It also provides a detailed breakdown of the recommendations for the future delivery model of our Libraries and Community Centres.
- 2.2 The Findings Report (Appendix 2) provides a detail of what we found out during the consultation from the survey responses and wide range of consultation meetings.
- 2.3 The Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) provides an updated Equality Impact Assessment for the future recommended delivery model for Libraries and Community Centres.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the reports and provide comment.

4. Report/Supporting information

- 4.1 Appendix 1 - Assessment & Recommendations Report
Appendix 2 - Findings Report
Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The Neighbourhood and Environmental Services division has a revenue savings target of £7.2m to achieve by 2027/28. The proposals which were consulted upon would have delivered up to £2.1m towards this target. The revised proposals would deliver a full year saving of £1.57m in 2027/28 (with part-year savings of £0.57m in 2026/27). The financial impact of the changes to the proposals is therefore a reduction in savings of £0.53m; this will make the delivery of the full savings target more challenging.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance
14th November 2025

5.2 Legal implications

The recommendations set out in the Assessment & Recommendations Report (Appendix 1) have potential staffing implications.

In respect of any Community Asset Transfer there is the potential for the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (“TUPE”) to apply. If TUPE applies, then employees assigned to the relevant provision will transfer to the new provider with their existing terms and conditions protected. It may also be necessary for the new provider to offer the transferring employees continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme. It is therefore recommended that ongoing advice is sought from legal services and HR to determine whether TUPE would apply to any proposed transfer.

The recommendations which involve either reduced staffed opening hours at retained sites, the closure of sites or the relocation of sites, represent a reorganisation of the current structure. The Council’s organisational review policy would need to be followed should a decision be made to proceed with these recommendations. There is the potential for this to include redundancies and if this is the case the Council’s redundancy policy should be followed to minimise the risk of employment related claims against the Council.

In all of these circumstances management would need to ensure that due process is followed, and meaningful consultation is undertaken with affected staff.

Julia Slipper, Principal Lawyer (Education & Employment).
18 November 2025

It is anticipated that the proposed changes will require additional goods and services to be purchased which will need to be undertaken in line with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation. Any modifications to existing contracts due to changes in scope of library management services should be managed in accordance with contractual provisions and, where relevant, internal approvals sought

as necessary. Legal Service should be engaged to provide guidance and support throughout this process.

Mannah Begum, Principal Lawyer (Commercial Legal).
18 November 2025

When property is to be disposed of, the Council has a legal obligation to dispose of land at the best consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Open marketing is acknowledged to achieve best consideration. A disposal includes either a freehold sale or lease for a term of more than 7 years. However, the Council also has the power to dispose of land and property at less than best consideration in accordance with the 2003 General Disposal Consent. In order to utilise the Consent, the Council must be satisfied that the proposed disposal will contribute to the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area in which the property is situated. The limit of the undervalue in respect of each individual site must not exceed £2m. If any proposed undervalue will exceed £2m then Secretary of State consent would be required for any disposal to proceed.

Following the Localism Act 2011, the Council adopted its Community Asset Transfer Policy to provide community groups the opportunity to have a greater control in their community governance. The procedure for CAT transfers is contained within the Policy.

Therefore when considering options for disposal, the Council should have regard to its adopted Framework for Property Disposals and the Community Asset Transfer Policy. Legal Services will continue to advise should subsequent disposals be realised.

Zoe Iliffe, Principal Lawyer (Property Highways & Planning)
19 November 2025

Throughout the programme the Neighbourhood and Environmental Services Division have sought, and taken, advice regarding robust governance of the transformation journey by appointing a legal advisor to the Programme Board. This has spanned the design, engagement, consultation and decision-making phases. The aim of this advice has been to enable a fair and transparent decision to be made which minimises the risk of a successful public law (J.R.) challenge

Kamal Adatia, City Barrister
18 November 2025

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

If a property is transferred out of the Operational Estate under CAT, the carbon emissions arising from its heating and other energy use will no longer be included in reporting of the council's own carbon footprint. However, it will continue to be part of the city's footprint.

For properties that are retained within the council's portfolio, reduced operating hours may have a positive impact on overall energy use, ultimately reducing the associated emissions.

Transfer of a property has an opportunity cost to it in carbon terms, in the sense that it removes the ability for the council to invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy and decarbonisation improvements to the building while it remains transferred. However, it does create a possibility for the community group and the community it serves to explore opportunities to make those investments themselves and secure the benefits for the duration of the lease. This is more likely to have a viable business case if the group has a long lease on the building and should therefore be considered, where applicable. The conditions of lease and availability of support after the transfer may have a positive impact on the community groups' ability to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation improvements.

Providing there are no significant building closures, the impact on service users' methods of travel should be minimal and therefore have a negligible effect on associated carbon emissions.

There is a risk of an increase in energy use where self-access services are provided, however the installation and use of automatic lighting and automated powering down of equipment should mitigate the risk down to a minor impact.

On balance, there is likely to be a reduction in the council's own emissions associated with reducing the number of buildings within the operational estate, however the city as a whole may see little change in its annual emissions with a minor risk of these increasing over time if opportunities to carry out energy efficiency, renewable energy and decarbonisation improvements are not realised for buildings that have been transferred out of the operational estate.

Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246
14th November 2025

5.4 Equality Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in making decisions and carrying out their activities they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Leicester's multi-service centres, community centres, and libraries play an important role in local neighbourhoods. They promote health and wellbeing, bring communities together and provide places for people to meet.

An updated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the future recommended delivery model for Libraries and Community Centres is attached at Appendix 3. This assessment incorporates the detailed findings of the public consultation (Appendix 2) and has informed the final recommendations in Appendix 1.

The recommended delivery model has been revised following the consultation and EIA findings to include specific mitigating actions. The EIA is an iterative process and should be revisited as part of the decision-making process.

The implementation of the recommendations will be monitored for equality impacts as part of the formal review process.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148 14/11/2025

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

Future Library and Community Centre Provision and Delivery



Assessment &
Recommendations
Report

Version Control

Version	Author	Description
1.0	Michael Clarke	Draft
2.0	Michael Clarke	Updated Draft
3.0	Michael Clarke	Final

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1. Summary of recommendations

- 1.1 Leicester City Council undertook an extensive consultation process on proposals for libraries and community centres between 2 April and 29 June 2025 as part of a wider service transformation process.
- 1.2 The proposals consulted on were developed as part of a needs assessment of council run libraries and community centres in Leicester City. The purpose of the needs assessment is to inform the transformation of the council's Neighbourhood Services facilities to deliver a modern, efficient service which recognises the changed patterns of use and the needs of local residents now and in the future.
- 1.3 The local authority has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons" who want to make use of it.
- 1.4 The programme is delivered within the context of the Council's financial position. The Revenue Budget 2025/26 report states that "the medium-term financial outlook is the most severe we have ever known". As part of the strategy to balance the budget for the next three years the Council plans to make ongoing savings to the revenue budget of over £23m per year.
- 1.5 The proposals consulted on would deliver a revenue saving from the Neighbourhood Services budget of be **up to** £2.1 million. This would contribute towards a divisional savings target for Neighbourhood & Environmental Services of £7.2 million.
- 1.6 Following consultation, the proposals have been revised to take into consideration the feedback received. The revised proposals recommended in this report would retain more services under council management and deliver a savings figure of £1.57 million.
- 1.7 The development of the proposals for consultation is outlined in section 3 of this report. In overview the proposals consulted on were:
- To retain and develop the Central Library and 12 multiservice centres including library, community room hire and other internal and external services.
 - St Matthews library would relocate from St Matthews Centre due to the poor condition of the building. The Centre would be released.
 - A small library would be installed at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre
 - Library Self-Access would be installed at 6 of the multi-service centres
 - It was proposed that opening hours be standardised with reduced staffed hours as follows:

Type	Proposed Staffed Hours Per Week
Central Library	45
5 multi-service centres	40
4 multi-service centres	30

- The council would withdraw from 3 stand-alone libraries and to support the community to take on the running of these
- The council would withdraw from 8 community centres and to support community groups to take on the running of these
- The council would withdraw from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library

1.8 There was a high level of participation in the consultation. A separate findings report is published with details of the feedback received during the twelve-week period. The feedback from the consultation has been considered together with the latest service data to develop final recommendations for the libraries and community centres. As a result there are substantial changes to the original proposals. The recommendations are for the council to retain 18 facilities as follows:

1.9 **Leicester Central Library** service would continue to deliver a broader offer, serving residents living in all areas of the city. A wide range of reading and cultural programmes would be further developed to support the promotion of reading for pleasure, to bring communities together and to support informal learning and improve life chances. The city centre offer is supplemented by a recent partnership with the two city universities and Loughborough University providing access to study space, Wi-Fi and specialist book stock for members of the public with extensive opening hours. There would be a small reduction in the opening hours for the Central Library.

1.10 **Twelve multi-service centres** would operate as hubs to support wellbeing by integrating a range of services provided by the council and its partners. Multi-service centres would provide a range of services under one roof to improve access to council and partner services for local residents. Services could include Customer Service and Housing pop up offices, Leicester Adult Learning and DWP Work Coach sessions and Family Hubs signposting and services. The centres would provide library and community services to a wide catchment area with accessible transport routes. The multi-service centres would include Thurnby Lodge Community Centre with a small non-statutory library provision installed, and St Matthews Library which would be relocated as below.

1.11 **St Matthews Library** and services would be relocated to St Matthews Children's, Young People and Family Centre as one of the twelve multi-service centres. The recommended

relocation reflects consultation feedback that the library should remain on the estate. St Matthews Centre is not sustainable in the medium to longer term future due to the poor condition of the building including the large sports hall area which is closed for safety reasons due to the presence of RAAC concrete in the roof. Options would be explored for the future of the St Matthews Centre site once the services have relocated. This work does not form part of the Neighbourhood Services programme and will instead be led by the Housing and Estates and Building Services divisions. Neighbourhood Services would work in partnership with community groups to explore options for them to relocate.

- 1.12 Three further stand-alone libraries**, previously proposed for community management, would be retained. Following feedback from the recent consultation exercise the council would continue to run Evington, Knighton and Rushey Mead Libraries. The staffed opening hours would be reduced (full details of opening hours can be see below in section 5.2). Knighton and Evington Libraries already have extended customer self-access hours outside of staffed times – this will continue. It would not be cost effective to install self-access at Rushey Mead Library due to the very low usage of the building.
- 1.13 Two stand-alone community centres**, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre, previously proposed for community running, would continue to be run by council. The council would work with the local community to improve the usage and financial sustainability of the centres.
- 1.14 Staffed opening hours would be standardised** across the estate informed by local need and national benchmarking. A reduction in staffed opening hours at retained sites would enable the widest network of facilities to be sustained. The Central Library would be staffed for 45 hours per week. The five busiest multi-service centres would be open and staffed for 40 hours per week, with the seven less busy multi-service centres open and staffed for 30 hours per week. Standalone libraries would be staffed for 25 hours per week (Knighton and Evington Libraries) and 20 hours per week (Rushey Mead Library). Additional unstaffed opening hours would be available at suitable sites. The proposed opening hours have been amended to reflect the consultation feedback for each building. Full details of recommended opening hours can be see below in section 5.
- 1.15 Customer self-access systems** are already in place at Knighton and Evington Libraries. On the basis that these installations have been well received and operated successfully for two years the system would be implemented at a further 6 library centres to extend the overall opening hours. The technology will provide self-access for inducted customers via their library card with live CCTV monitoring in place. 8am to 8pm weekday opening would be supported by the introduction of library self-access systems extending availability for customers over 16yrs and accompanied children beyond the staffed opening hours.

1.16 Five community centres would be made available for lease under the council's Community Asset Transfer policy. The council would no longer run Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, Eyres Monsell Community Centre, Gilmorton Community Rooms and Tudor Centre. There has been positive engagement at all five centres and early interest is evident for each of these. A formal opportunity would be published with support for community organisations to develop a business case to take on the running of the five centres.

1.17 Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre: It is recommended to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of *either* the Armadale Centre *or* Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre following positive engagement and early interest from the local community. A study would be undertaken to determine the feasibility of relocating the community centre to the Armadale building following suggestions made through the consultation. It is noted that housing development is planned for the land on which the Armadale Centre is located and that this would need to be switched to the site of the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre.

1.18 Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library would close due to the low usage of the facility and the poor condition of the building. There are several libraries nearby which are considered accessible for local residents with 100% of residences falling within a 1.25 mile radius of alternative library provision:

- Westcotes library is 0.5 miles (19 minutes' walk) from the Fosse Neighbourhood centre.
- New Parks Library is 1.3 miles from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre directly accessible by the number 14 bus.
- The BRITE centre is 1.5 miles from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre directly accessible by the number 104 bus.
- The Central library is 1.2 miles away from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre with regular buses to the city centre.

The council will also explore locations for book drop offs and pick up points in the local area.

It is proposed to work in partnership with Alice Hawkins Community Projects which operates from the annex of the building and would be supported to relocate elsewhere within Fosse ward recognising the significant benefits delivered to local people.

The council's estates and buildings team has undertaken a review of building options for the Fosse Centre and would commence an early marketing process following a decision.

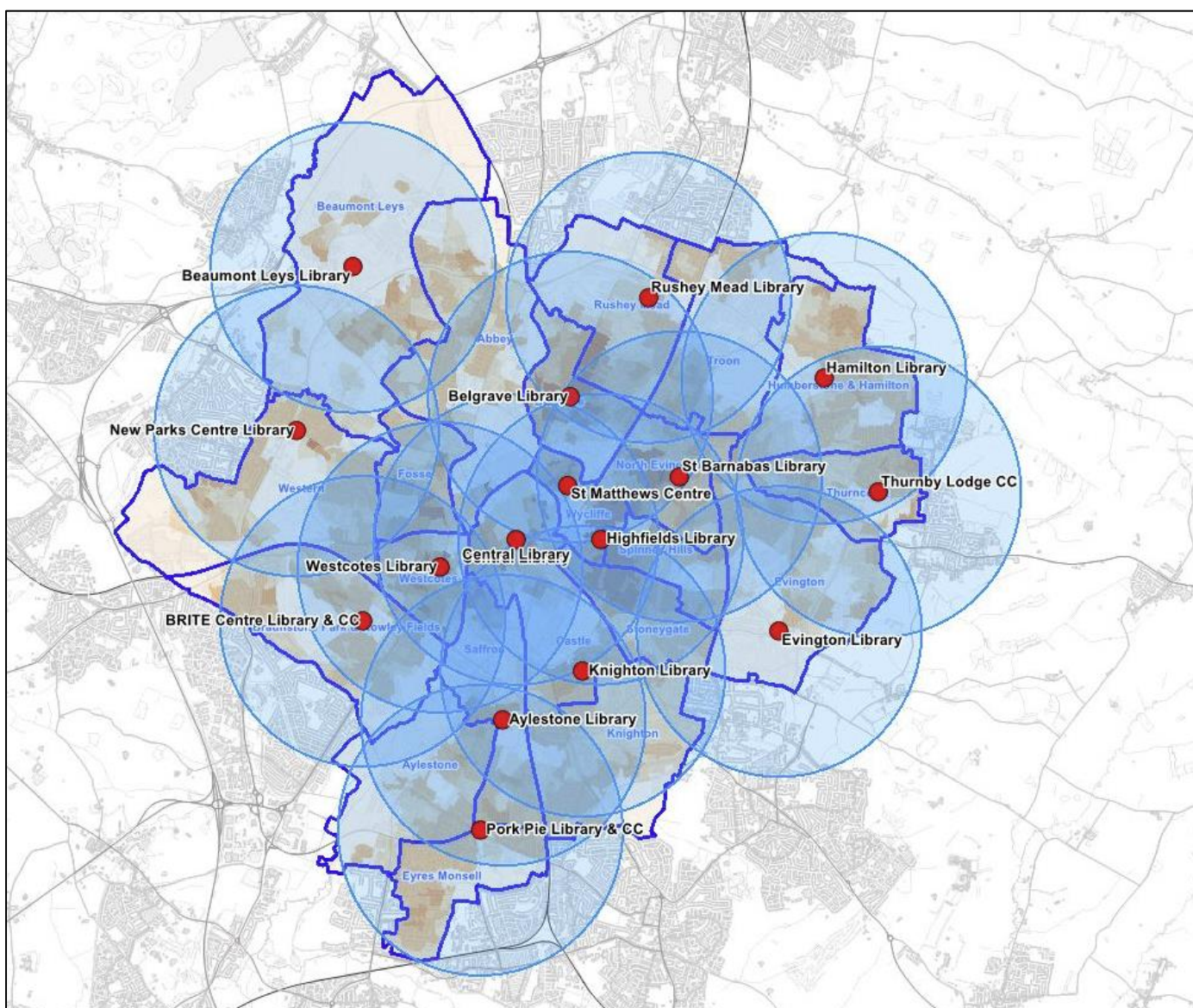
1.19 Staffing and operating costs would be reduced with a revised staffing model reflecting the changes in service delivery and opening hours. Core skills would be retained within the service to ensure quality services continue to be developed in the transformed service.

- 1.20 **The Book Fund budget would be reduced** by £30,000 from £415,000 to £385,000 recognising the reduction of the library network and changes in book borrowing patterns. This is a revised figure to reflect the retention of 3 standalone libraries.
- 1.21 **Community room hire charges** would be increased by 20 per cent, phased over 2 years, to support the operation and financial viability of the remaining council run community centres. This is a new recommendation reflecting a large variety of suggestions during the consultation relating to improved income generation.
- 1.22 **Capital investment would** be made to adapt and further develop retained buildings as multi-service centres. The multi-service centre model is already in operation and feedback indicates further development of this model is well supported to ensure buildings are used to their full potential, well-presented and signed, and in good condition to serve communities. Investment will further enable services to be delivered together from local neighbourhood facilities, to include future library and community services, adult learning facilities, customer services and early years provision as appropriate.
- 1.23 **Enhanced activity programmes** would be provided around our “Universal Offers” in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together. The libraries reading programme and children’s engagement activities would be prioritised to encourage reading for pleasure and to improve life chances from early years onwards.
- 1.24 **Online services and resources including the e-library** would continue to receive investment recognising the growth in this area and the convenience of 24/7 digital services for city residents for their reading and information needs.
- 1.25 **Volunteer opportunities** would be developed to enhance and add value to the services we offer and to provide a range of benefits to participants. This proposal is supported by consultation feedback and submissions from library and community centre users to work with the council to enhance a co-produced offer at retained sites.
- 1.26 **Small libraries** at identified Children, Young People and Family Centres would continue to be provided for additional access to books for children, and parents and carers with young families.
- 1.27 **The Home Library Service** The service is delivered in partnership with Ride Leicester and with local volunteers to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever they live in the city. Linked to our volunteer offer it would be expanded to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever residents are unable to leave their homes to access reading.

1.28 **The Children's BookBus** service would be reviewed following the implementation of changes outlined above to support children and young families living in disadvantaged communities and to provide access to books and reading programmes in these areas.

1.29 The recommended library provision would be at 15 statutory sites with a small non-statutory offer at Thurnby lodge Community Centre. This would increase the current coverage to 99.5% of all residential properties within Leicester City to be within 1.25 miles of a library in the statutory provision.

Figure 1: Recommended library provision with 1.25-mile catchment areas. The map shows 99.5% of all residential properties in Leicester city are within 1.25 miles of a council run library.



1.30 A summary table of the sites which will be retained by Leicester City Council can be seen below:

Table 1: Leicester City Council retained sites

Centre	Staffed Hours Per Week	Self-Access Hours
Central Library	45	
Aylestone Library (Leisure Centre MSC)	30	Yes
Beaumont Leys Library MSC	40	
Belgrave Library MSC	40	Yes
BRITE Centre MSC	40	Yes
Hamilton Library MSC	30	Yes
Highfields Library MSC	40	
New Parks Centre MSC	30	Yes
Pork Pie Library MSC	30	Yes
St Barnabas Library MSC	40	Yes
St Matthews Library (relocated to CYPF MSC)	30	
Thurnby Lodge Centre MSC (with small library)	30	Yes
Westcotes Library MSC	30	
Evington Library	25	Yes
Knighton Library	25	Yes
Rushey Mead Library	20	
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	As required	
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	Self-access	Yes

2. Introduction, background and strategic context

Purpose

- 2.1 The Community Services & Library Needs Assessment programme was launched in 2023 to assess the needs of Leicester residents, to develop options for services which will be fit for the future and to implement decisions flowing from this work. The purpose of the programme is to transform library and community services to ensure our communities have the right type of service offering for the future, based on robust evidence gathering and delivered within the constraints of a significantly reduced divisional budget.
- 2.2 Leicester's multi-service centres, community centres, and libraries play an important role in our local neighbourhoods. However, the public engagement and secondary research reports demonstrate that the way people use these services is changing. The 2021 census shows the demographics of the city have changed significantly with new communities moving into the city. National and local usage patterns for libraries, community centres and neighbourhood-based council services have changed. The shift to 24/7 online services has provided challenges and opportunities for residents which library and other services must respond to. The reports show that the priorities of local residents have changed following the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, and that library and community centre services need to transform to respond to these changes. The reports also highlight that many people do not currently visit any of the multi-service centres, community centres, and libraries or are unaware of the services that they offer. The programme aims to transform library and community centre services to ensure they are modern, efficient and fit for purpose for future years.
- 2.3 The programme is delivered within the context of the Council's financial position. The Revenue Budget 2025/26 report states that "the medium-term financial outlook is the most severe we have ever known". As part of the strategy to balance the budget for the next three years the Council plans to make ongoing savings to the revenue budget of over £23m per year. The full Revenue Budget Report can be seen here <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/city-mayor-peter-soulsby/budget/>
- ### Statutory Duty
- 2.4 The local authority has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons" who want to make use of it. Although the Council is not legally obligated to provide neighbourhood and community centres the consultation responses demonstrate the important contribution these services make towards health and wellbeing and community cohesion within the city.
- 2.5 Every council in England is required to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service under the Act. It must do so in a way which meets the needs of people living, studying or working in the area, taking into account the resources available. The public library service is not a national service, but a local service. What a comprehensive and efficient service means will differ between

councils and will depend on the needs of each area. It is therefore the role of councillors and officials at a local level to determine how much they spend on libraries and how they manage and deliver their service.

2.6 The current statutory library service in Leicester City includes the Central Library Service and 15 community libraries, as well as the Children's BookBus and the Home Library Service.

Financial context

2.7 The Neighbourhood Services net budget for scoped services (excluding the ward and community engagement function) for 2025 / 26 is £6,179,000.

2.8 The full proposals outlined in the public consultation which ran from April to June 2025 would deliver a revenue saving from the Neighbourhood Services budget of up to £2.1 million to contribute towards a divisional savings target for Neighbourhood & Environmental Services of £7.2 million.

2.9 Following analysis and evaluation of the feedback received from the consultation, the proposals have been significantly revised. The recommended proposals outlined in this report have been updated to respond to feedback received and would deliver a revenue saving from the Neighbourhood Services budget of £1.57 million.

Service context

2.10 Neighbourhood Services promote health and wellbeing, bring communities together and provide places for people to meet. They help residents with books and reading and with study and learning. They support people to access information and digital services and provide cultural events and creative activities for children and adults. Neighbourhood Services support community groups and activities, Adult Skills and Learning, food banks, room hire, conferences, events and functions. Neighbourhood Services actively promotes and develops volunteering in our centres.

2.11 All 25 Neighbourhood Services facilities are included in the scope of the Community Services & Library Needs Assessment programme. Current facilities include nine multi-service centres offering library and community centre services together with other locally appropriate services. Including multi-service centre settings, Neighbourhood Services currently run sixteen library service points and thirteen community centres.

2.12 In addition, Neighbourhood Services also delivers the following in scope services (The Ward and Community Engagement Team is not within the scope of the CSLNA programme.):

- Book Start programme in partnership with Booktrust, sharing reading resources with babies and young children under 5 years old.
- Home Library Service providing book deliveries to housebound individuals

- Children's Bookbus providing regular library services to children and young families in disadvantaged areas of the city
- Online library including e-books, e-audio, e-magazines and e-newspapers for loan
- Reader development programmes for children, young people and adults

Needs Assessment

2.13 A twelve-week public engagement exercise was undertaken between July and October 2023 to inform the Needs Assessment. The engagement activity was independently run by Activist Group commissioned by Neighbourhood Services. The written report identified the key areas of need:

- **Reading:** People have told the Council that one of the most important library services offered to them is access to reading and literacy materials
- **Health and wellbeing:** People have told the Council that libraries and community centres offer respite and relief from life's challenges, supporting their wellbeing and helping to address isolation.
- Residents, and partners, trust Leicester's library and community centre staff.
- There is a significant growing need for more mental health support in Leicester, as well as support with improving people's physical health post-Covid.
- Libraries and community centres offer highly valued free, or low cost, communal and socialization spaces for Leicester residents
- **Information and digital:** People have told the Council that libraries and community centres help people with access to free IT, Wi-Fi, information, face to face advice and support signposting needs.
- Leicester residents continue to have core information, advice and IT access support needs. Libraries and community centres can, and should, play a role in supporting these needs across all age groups and demographics.
- People have told the Council that one of the most important services offered by libraries and community centres is space to safely and quietly study and learn. There is a significant need for safe out of classroom hours study space for children, young people and adult learners. Residents would like the existing offer to be expanded further, and existing facilities and availability of workspaces improved
- **Culture and creativity:** People would like to see more creative and cultural activities and events being offered, tailored to each unique locality and reflecting the blend of communities and cultures that live in the immediate surrounding areas.
- There is an opportunity to align any refreshed library and community centre offer with a broader refresh of the cultural offer and marketing of Leicester as a city destination, particularly through programming in the Central Library
- **Children's promise:** A significant proportion of Leicester children are understood to grow up in poverty, with related impacts on school readiness and future life outcomes. Libraries and community centres can play a role in helping children, young people and

their families with these early year challenges, in part through the provision of pre-school literacy and reading support.

- There is a significant need for safe out of classroom hours study space for children and young people.

2.14 Following the phase one Needs Assessment public engagement and secondary research exercise, it is recommended that Neighbourhood Services continues to expand and develop the four “Universal Offers” and the “Children’s Promise” developed by Libraries Connected. The offers adopted by Neighbourhood Services are:

- Health and Wellbeing Offer
- Reading Offer
- Culture and Creativity Offer
- Digital and Information Offer
- Children’s Promise

Key Principles

2.15 The following principles have been applied in developing the model for a transformed neighbourhood services offer to meet the needs of city communities.

2.15.1 The local authority has a statutory obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. Within Neighbourhood Services delivery of the statutory service should be prioritised.

2.15.2 The transformation of neighbourhood services should prioritise need within the city, whilst recognising the core remit of the service, the different types of need, the availability of other services and providers to respond to this and the different ways in which the service can be delivered.

2.15.3 Wherever possible building-based services should be co-located in neighbourhood based multi-service centres to ensure best use of facilities and to deliver joined up, efficient and convenient services in one place and to serve the widest possible catchment area.

2.15.4 Communities should have the opportunity to take on the running of services where this is possible. Community organisations can often provide added value services and may have a deeper reach into local communities through their networks. Support can be provided for community organisations to develop business plans to take on the running of services where this can bring benefits to local people.

2.15.5 Buildings retained within the council delivered service should be viable for the future. Whilst building condition should not drive service planning, buildings should be efficient and sustainable to optimise the services able to be delivered from a reduced estate in the future. Investment in technologies such as library self-access systems should be explored to make the best use of retained buildings.

Outcomes

2.16 The success of the Neighbourhood Services transformation will be assessed by the following outcomes

Table 2: Outcomes assessment criteria

Primary Outcome	Supporting Outcomes
1. Neighbourhood Service meets the needs of the whole community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are reaching more people People know what we are offering We reach the people who need us most in Leicester People have access to more of the services they need
2. Our service is more efficient to deliver best value within the resources available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our services are delivered from fewer but better facilities Our facilities are used more efficiently to optimise the services available for local people Services are delivered through a wide range of systems to improve access for local people
3. Local people are more involved in the running of library and community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is available for community organisations to be able to take on the running of services. More of our services are run by local organisations More local people volunteer for our services
4. Our service is sustainable for the next 10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes are delivered on time in line with the Council's budgetary strategy Our services are affordable within the available budget Our facilities are welcoming and fit for the future More partners and services share our facilities

Local context

2.17 The Community Services and Library Needs Assessment programme includes all of the physical building assets within service as follows:

Table 3: Neighbourhood Services Facilities

Facility	Description
Leicester Central Library Bishop Street, LE1 6AA	The Central Library provides a breadth and depth of library services accessible to all residents within the city. As a result the library has the highest number of book issues (123,000) and

	<p>computer usage (28,000 hours) in the city. The two storey Library is located off Town Hall Square and includes a specialist family/local history collection and a learning facility.</p> <p>The library is currently open 52.5 hours per week.</p>
<p>Aylestone Library (Aylestone Leisure Centre) 2 Knighton Lane East, LE2 6LU</p>	<p>The service is co-located within Aylestone Leisure Centre multi-service centre and benefits from very high footfall due to cross-service usage.</p> <p>The library is currently open 65 hours per week, and staffed for 32 hours</p>
<p>Beaumont Leys Library Beaumont Way, LE4 1DS</p>	<p>Beaumont Leys Library is a multi-service centre offering community rooms and housing appointments. It is co-located with services such as adult social care and hosts a regular DWP Job Shop. It is positioned next to Leicester Leys leisure centre at the rear of the Beaumont Leys shopping centre.</p> <p>The library is currently open 49.5 hours per week.</p>
<p>Belgrave Library 39 Cossington Street, LE4 6JD</p>	<p>The library is ideally located alongside multiple council services including a refurbished gym, refurbished swimming pool, children's centre and Cossington Park. The library has the highest footfall of all city libraries and offers multi-services including DWP work coach sessions.</p> <p>The library is currently open 55 hours per week.</p>
<p>Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Rothley Street, Leicester, LE4 6LF</p>	<p>The neighbourhood centre currently houses a busy police beat office, a pre-school, a daily lunch club, Gujarati Language classes through an external provider and Adult Learning classes. There are a number of other council services located in close proximity, including a library, children's centre, park, swimming pool and gym. The centre has the highest footfall of all council run community centres.</p> <p>The neighbourhood centre is currently open 79 hours per week.</p>
<p>Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre 29a Sharmon Crescent, Leicester, LE3 6NW</p>	<p>This is a single hall community centre overlooking the green. A local foodbank operates from the building.</p> <p>The recreation centre is available unstaffed 60 hours per week</p>
<p>BRITE Centre & Library 130 Braunstone Avenue, Leicester, LE3 1LE</p>	<p>The BRITE Centre is a multi-service centre housing a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and community café, and training kitchen. The centre built in 2005 has excellent facilities and is located on Braunstone Avenue near Braunstone Park and Imperial Infants School and Fullhurst College.</p> <p>The centre is currently open for 56.5 hours per week.</p>
<p>Coleman Neighbourhood Centre</p>	<p>The community centre houses a pre-school and some limited community use. It also includes a ball court.</p>

Balderstone Close, Leicester, LE5 4ES	The centre is currently open (staffed) for 16 hours per week.
Evington Library 200 Evington Lane, LE5 6DH	<p>The library is small and well located for residents in the centre of Evington village. The library has a self-access system to extend availability outside of core staffed hours.</p> <p>Evington Library is currently open (staffed) for 47 hours per week.</p>
Eyres Monsell Community Centre Hillsborough Road, LE2 9PQ	<p>Although Eyres Monsell Community Centre has relatively low usage due to its' small catchment area (20,000 visits per year) the building is well located within the estate and has good engagement from local residents. The centre has a community garden and recently refurbished MUGA.</p> <p>Eyres Monsell Community Centre is currently open 40 hours per week.</p>
Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library Mantle Road LE3 5HG	<p>Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library is a Grade II listed school building. Although community use is low, there is a very active food bank operating from the annex.</p> <p>Fosse Neighbourhood Centre is currently open 50 hours per week.</p>
Gilmorton Community Rooms 7-9 Hopyard Close LE2 9GY	<p>Gilmorton Community Rooms is a small hall located next to a retail unit. The centre has modest usage with a food bank which operates from the facility on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Gilmorton Community Rooms is available for hire unstaffed.</p>
Hamilton Library & Community Centre 20 Maidenwell Avenue LE5 1BL	<p>The Library Centre is an existing multi-service centre housing a library and community centre. Hamilton Centre was built in 2006 next to a health centre and Tesco superstore.</p> <p>Hamiton Library is currently open 40 hours per week, with the community hall available outside of staffed hours.</p>
Highfields Library 8 Melbourne Road LE2 0DS	<p>The library multi-service centre is well located within the Highfields estate, next to local retail units and in an area of high density terraced housing and social housing tower blocks. The library was refurbished in 2020.</p> <p>Highfields Library is currently open 51 hours per week.</p>
Knighton Library 167-9 Clarendon Park Road LE2 3AJ	<p>The stand-alone library is located on the busy Clarendon Park Road and was recently refurbished in 2021. The library has a self-access system to extend availability outside of core staffed hours.</p> <p>Knighton Library is currently open (staffed) for 47 hours per week.</p>
Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre Armada Drive, Leicester LE5 1HF	<p>The unstaffed centre is poorly located in an open space within the Netherhall estate. The centre hosts a pre-school a ball court which is planned to receive investment.</p> <p>The community centre is available to hire unstaffed.</p>

New Parks Centre Library 321 Aikman Avenue LE3 9PW	<p>The multi-service centre houses a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and access to housing appointments. New Parks Centre. Library was built in 2010 and is ideally located within the local retail parade and overlooking New College secondary school.</p> <p>The library is currently open 40 hours per week.</p>
Pork Pie Library and Community Centre LE2 6QS	<p>The multi-service centre houses a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and a weekly DWP Job Shop. The Pork Pie Library was refurbished in 2015,</p> <p>The library is currently open 45 hours per week.</p>
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre 215 Gleneagles Avenue, Leicester LE4 7YJ	<p>Although the unstaffed hall building is small it enjoys good usage by local people with 27,000 visits in 2023-24.</p> <p>The hall is available to hire unstaffed.</p>
Rushey Mead Library Lockerbie Walk LE4 7YJ	<p>The small library located in a small shopping precinct. Although it has low use, it is well situated for local residents of Rushey Mead.</p> <p>The library is currently open 29 hours per week.</p>
St Barnabas Library 2 French Road, LE5 4AH	<p>The multi-service centre offers a digital and performance suite, adult learning classes, housing enquiries, and a weekly DWP Job Shop. The library has received Arts Council Funding for investment in one wing to create a space for performance, cultural and community activities.</p> <p>The library is currently open 49.5 hours per week.</p>
St Matthews Centre and Library 10 Malabar Road, Leicester LE1 2PD	<p>The multi-service centre has good use however the building located alongside retail in the St Matthews estate is in very poor condition. The centre houses a preschool, housing reception, library and community rooms.</p> <p>The community centre is currently open 74 hours per week.</p>
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre Thurncourt Road, Leicester LE5 2NG	<p>The centre is well located next to a parade of retail units and well served by public transport. The centre is well used and shares a car park with the neighbouring Peace Centre.</p> <p>The community centre is currently open (staffed) 36.5 hours per week.</p>
Tudor Centre Bewcastle Grove, Leicester LE4 2JU	<p>The Tudor Centre is located in the Mowmacre estate next to the local retail units and has good engagement from local residents.</p> <p>The centre is currently open 35 hours per week and is available for hire outside of staffed hours.</p>
Westcotes Library 38-40 Narborough Road, LE3 0BQ	<p>The library is located on the busy Narborough Road. It serves an area of high density terraced housing with extensive retail on the main Narborough road. The library received investment in 2015 to</p>

	<p>create a flexible community space and to expand the IT provision.</p> <p>The library is currently open 54 hours per week.</p>
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2.18 Neighbourhood Services provide a wide range services for people who live, work and study in Leicester. Libraries and community centres serve as local hubs, with services and activities tailored at local level to respond to the needs of residents. Neighbourhood Services work with a range of internal and external partners to deliver services and activities. Citywide services include:

- **Library Resources:** A wide range of adult and children’s books available in formats including large print, audio, eBooks and eNewspapers. A large stock of community language titles is available to appropriate local communities in Leicester.
- **Reading programmes:** Quality reading and informal learning programmes would continue to be delivered by a small team of specialist staff in partnership with local and national agencies. Programmes include the children’s Summer Reading Challenge, the primary school’s Our Best Book awards, half term activity programmes and the CILIP national “Libraries Week.”
- **Book Start Programme:** The Book Start programme is run in partnership with the Book Trust charity who provide book gifting resources for all newborn babies. The local programme supports the development of language and literacy skills in 0 – 5 year olds to prepare for school readiness and provide early exposure to books and reading, through book sharing sessions with targeted families.
- **Book Bus:** The Children’s Bookbus service operates regular routes and stops with a focus on covering areas of disadvantage to ensure city children have access to book borrowing. The service also visits early years settings, schools and festivals to promote reading to children.
- **Home Library Service:** The service is delivered in partnership with Ride Leicester and with local volunteers to support more housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever they live in the city.
- **Digital resources:** Access to printing, office software and online services through 170 public access computers and free Wi-Fi at all library service points, and support and signposting from staff members.
- **Homework Help:** After school homework help and support for primary and secondary school aged children at 12 libraries
- **Toddler Time:** Weekly sessions for young children aged 0-5yrs and parents and carers at local libraries
- **DWP Job Shops:** Weekly work coach sessions delivered in partnership with the DWP at 8 libraries.

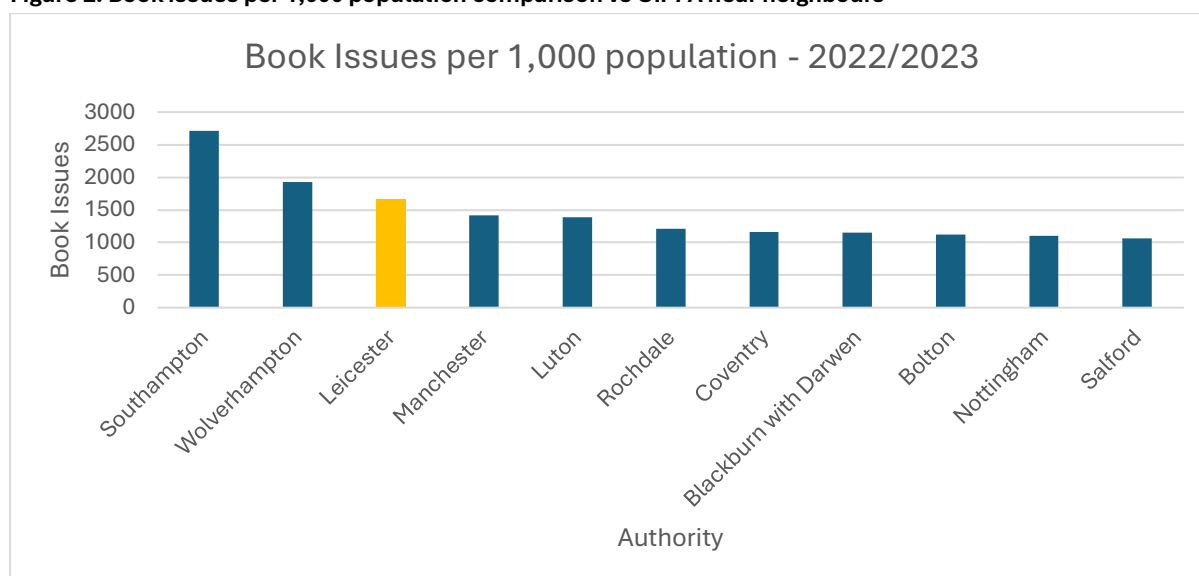
National Context

- 2.19 The latest national library data collected by CIPFA for 2024/25 indicates that library usage post covid is continuing to increase, with both in-person and online visits rising. Physical visits increased by 13.5%, from 2,114 per 1,000 people in 2022/23 to 2,400 per 1,000 people in 2023/24. Web visits saw an even more significant jump of 36.9%. Book issues rose by 0.5%.
- 2.20 However, a report by National Literacy Trust published in June 2025 found that the percentage of children and young people responding to the survey who said they enjoyed reading was its lowest in 20 years. The report noted that the drop in reading enjoyment over the last year has been especially steep among primary-aged children and boys, particularly boys aged 11 to 16.
- 2.21 A DCMS report published in October 2024 was commissioned to identify barriers to library use. The key barriers which were identified in the report were lack of awareness of non-users of the full range of services on offer, inconvenient opening hours emerged as a significant barrier, especially for parents and full-time workers and the ability to access similar resources elsewhere (e.g., online or in bookshops).
- 2.22 In September 2025, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government published its Pride in Place Strategy. The strategy outlines the government's plan "to create safer, healthier neighbourhoods where communities can thrive." Pride in Place funding has been allocated to an additional 169 places in England and Wales, each of which will receive £20 million over 10 years. In Leicester City the places identified by national government for funding are Braunstone West, Eyres Monsell and Thurnby Lodge. Whilst further information is awaited from national government on the fund, it is anticipated that the funding would enhance the proposals around the local facilities in these areas.

Benchmarking

- 2.23 The CIPFA Public Library Users Survey is a tool for understanding user attitudes to libraries across the UK. Leicester City submits figures annually against a number of indicators to help benchmark the service against other authorities, view trends over time and obtain evidence to guide the future development of libraries. The charts and tables below compare usage and performance of Leicester Libraries to similar sized library authorities known as "near neighbours" for 2022/2023 (our latest available dataset).
- 2.24 Book Issues (Leicester vs CIPFA defined near neighbours 2022 – 23): Leicester performs well in comparison with its 'near neighbour' authorities and has recovered to the same levels of issues as before the pandemic and better than most 'near neighbour' authorities (1,661 book issues per 1000 population in 22/23).

Figure 2: Book issues per 1,000 population comparison vs CIPFA near neighbours



2.25 Library Opening hours (Leicester v CIPFA near neighbours 2022 - 23): The table below shows Leicester City has the longest library opening hours within its comparator group of 'near neighbours' with all but one Leicester library currently open for 40 hours per week or more.

Table 4: CIPFA near neighbour opening hours comparison

	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49	50 to 54	55 to 59	60 +	% 40+
Blackburn with Darwen	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	20%
Bolton	0	2	0	2	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	10%
Coventry	1	1	2	3	2	0	3	4	0	0	1	47%
Leicester	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	3	4	1	4	94%
Luton	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	67%
Manchester	0	4	0	0	3	2	2	3	1	0	7	59%
Nottingham	0	0	2	0	0	4	4	1	3	1	0	60%
Rochdale	0	5	0	0	2	5	1	3	0	0	0	25%
Salford	1	1	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	1	5	43%
Southampton	2	0	1	1	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	27%
Wolverhampton	0	6	3	0	2	3	0	1	0	1	0	13%

2.26 Library service points per 1000 population (Leicester v CIPFA near neighbours, 2022-23): The table below shows Leicester City has the 4th highest service points per 1000 population within its comparator group of 'near neighbours'

Table 5: Service points per 1000 population CIPFA near neighbour comparison

	Population	Service points per 1000 population
Rochdale	229,756	0.070
Wolverhampton	272,425	0.060
Salford	284,106	0.050
Leicester	379,780	0.048
Coventry	360,702	0.048
Nottingham	329,276	0.046
Southampton	256,110	0.044
Manchester	579,917	0.039
Bolton	302,383	0.033
Blackburn with Darwen	157,503	0.032
Luton	231,028	0.026

2.27 Community Centres maintained by the local authority (2023): There is no national arrangement for collecting community centre statistics. For the purposes of benchmarking, the CIPFA defined near neighbour local authorities have been contacted to share local authority run provision. The following table shows the number of community centres run by local authorities compared to Leicester City, where a response was given:

Table 6: Community centre benchmarking against CIPFA near neighbours

Local Authority	Community centres run by LA
Leicester	12
Derby	0
Wolverhampton	0
Nottingham	3
Newcastle	0
Coventry	0
Southampton	0

3. Development of proposals for consultation

- 3.1 Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, local authorities have a legal obligation to provide “a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons” who wish to use it. However, following a decade and a half of reduced funding from central government, we are no longer able to sustain current levels of support for libraries and community centres. Findings from the public engagement exercise and secondary research undertaken in 2023/24 were used to develop a set of proposals for public consultation. The full proposals consulted upon would have delivered a revenue saving from the Neighbourhood Services budget of up to £2.1 million (up to 35% of the 2024/25 net budget), to contribute towards a divisional savings target for Neighbourhood & Environmental Services of £7.2 million.

Proposals put forward for consultation

- 3.2 The proposals that were put forward for consultation were as follows:

- 3.2.1 Consultation proposal: 12 Multi-service centres would function as hubs, bringing together different services from the council and its partners to support people's wellbeing. The Central Library service would continue to deliver a broader offer, serving residents living in all areas.
- Aylestone Library (located in Aylestone Leisure Centre)
 - Beaumont Leys Library Hub
 - Belgrave Library Hub
 - BRITE Centre Hub
 - Central Library
 - Hamilton Library Hub
 - Highfields Library Hub
 - New Parks Centre Hub
 - Pork Pie Library Hub
 - St Barnabas Library Hub
 - St Matthews Library (relocated nearby)
 - Thurnby Lodge Centre Hub (with new self-service library)
 - Westcotes Library Hub
- 3.2.2 Consultation proposal: A reduction in opening hours across the 12 remaining multi- service centres and the Central Library. Full details of the proposed changes to opening hours can be seen below:

Table 7: Proposed changes to opening hours, consulted upon April – June 2025

Centre		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Aylestone Library**^	Current Staffed Hours	1pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-1pm	N/A	32
	Proposed Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	N/A	30
Beaumont Leys Library^	Current Staffed Hours	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-5pm	9.30am-1pm	Closed	49.5
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Belgrave Library*^	Current Staffed Hours	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	55
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40
BRITE Centre**^	Current Staffed Hours	9am-8.30pm	9am-7.30pm	9am-8pm	9am-7.45pm	9am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	57.75
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Central Library	Current Staffed Hours	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	9am-4pm	Closed	52.5
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	45
Hamilton Library*^	Current Staffed Hours	10am-2pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	40
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Highfields Library	Current Staffed Hours	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	10am-4pm	Closed	51
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
New Parks Library*^	Current Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Pork Pie Library*^	Current Staffed Hours	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	45
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30

St Barnabas Library*	Current Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	49.5
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40
St Matthews Centre (Centre would be closed and the library relocated nearby)	Current Staffed Hours	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	74
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre^ (Proposed new library service)	Current Staffed Hours	1pm-10pm	9.30am-10pm	1pm-10pm	12.30pm-7pm	3.30pm-10pm	Closed	Closed	43.5
	Proposed Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Westcotes Library	Current Staffed Hours	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	51
	Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Total Current Staffed Hours									640.75
Total Proposed Staffed Hours									455

^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times

*Self-access introduced for library members (8am-8pm)

**Self-access is currently in use during Aylestone Leisure Centre opening hours

3.2.3 Consultation proposal: The following facilities would no longer be run by the council.

Community organisations would be supported to develop a business case to take on the running of the following community libraries and community centres where appropriate:

- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre
- Coleman Neighbourhood Centre
- Eyres Monsell Community Centre
- Evington Library
- Gilmorton Community Rooms
- Knighton Library
- Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- Rushey Mead Library
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Tudor Centre

3.2.4 Consultation proposal: The council would no longer run the following facilities. Due to the poor condition of the buildings they would not be offered for community organisations to run:

- Fosse Neighbourhood Centre would not be put forward for Community Asset Transfer as the council policy requires buildings to be of a minimum standard. Condition surveys indicate that the building requires £2.6million in investment to maintain over the next 10 years.
- St Matthews Centre would be closed, and the library would be re-located nearby. The building forms part of the Housing divisional estate and has undergone numerous surveys which show the building is not sustainable for the future. All services would therefore move out of the community centre.

3.2.5 Consultation proposal: Additional investment would support a range of proposals to ensure the service could continue to meet the needs of individuals and communities across the city including:

- Extending Self-Access after core staffed hours at suitable sites. The self-access system would enable registered customers aged 16 years and over, and accompanied children, to access the library outside of staffed opening times using their library card and PIN. Self-access libraries would be monitored by CCTV and customers would be given an induction in order to use the service. Self-access customers would have access to book loans, study space, computers and Wi-Fi through existing self-service facilities.
- Investment to further develop retained buildings as multi-service centres including libraries, community rooms and adult learning facilities.
- Reviewing the areas visited by the Children’s BookBus to focus on covering areas of disadvantage.
- Providing enhanced activity programmes around our “Universal Offers” in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together.
- Continuing to invest in our online services and resources including our e-library.
- Supporting community groups to take on the running of more services.
- Developing volunteer opportunities to enhance the services we offer and to provide benefits to participants.
- Providing small libraries at identified children’s centres for additional access to books for children and young families.
- Expanded Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries.

Development of proposals for consultation

3.3 A wide range of information, research and engagement findings was used to develop the above proposals for consultation. The following sections outline the considerations underpinning the development of the proposals.

3.4 The consultation builds on the **public engagement** work conducted in 2023 as part of the Community Services and Library Needs Assessment programme, with the aim of shaping a future model for Neighbourhood Services across the city. The Council commissioned Activist

Group, as specialists in engagement, research and advice on library and council services, to undertake the engagement and produce a public engagement report. The 2023 public engagement report is available on the consultation website at [public-engagement-report.pdf](#). The key findings of the engagement report are outlined in 2.16 and underpin the proposals to provide enhanced activity programmes around our “Universal Offers” in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together as the key areas of need.

- 3.5 The public engagement survey asked what ideas people thought the Council should investigate which are being tried elsewhere to better meet the needs of residents. ‘more multi-service centres,’ ‘reviewing opening hours to match peak demand’ and ‘involving community organisations in running services’ were the most popular ideas to consider. This feedback was used to inform the proposals which were developed for consultation.

Table 8: Responses to public engagement survey September 2023, “Many councils are changing how they operate community centres and library services in order to better meet the needs of residents. Please tick up to three ideas that you think we could look at.”

Option	Total	Percent
Have more multi-service centres to bring community centres, libraries and local services together	1014	58.78%
Involving community organisations more in running services	621	36.00%
Reviewing opening hours to match peak demand	596	34.55%
Making more use of volunteers	377	21.86%
Making more use of customer self-service in public libraries	375	21.74%
Providing more services online	294	17.04%
None of the above	211	12.23%
Other	91	5.28%

- 3.6 The Neighbourhood Services project team undertook an extensive **secondary research** exercise in 2024 to support the needs assessment. The report is available on the consultation website at [Secondary Research Report](#). Research included:
- Leicester city population analysis, health and employment data
 - Service overview including performance data
 - Usage and service cost information
 - Benchmarking information
 - Service delivery (analysed through the national Universal Offers developed by Libraries Connected)
 - Building profiles (for each Neighbourhood Services facility)

Key Principles

- 3.7 The following 5 principles have been applied in developing the model for a transformed neighbourhood services offer to meet the needs of city communities:
1. The local authority has a statutory obligation to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. Within Neighbourhood Services delivery of the statutory service should be prioritised.
 2. The transformation of neighbourhood services should prioritise need within the city, whilst recognising the core remit of the service, the different types of need, the availability of other services and providers to respond to this and the different ways in which the service can be delivered.
 3. Wherever possible building-based services should be co-located in neighbourhood based multi-service centres to ensure best use of facilities and to deliver joined up, efficient and convenient services in one place and to serve the widest possible catchment area.
 4. Communities should have the opportunity to take on the running of services where this is possible. Community organisations can often provide added value services and may have a deeper reach into local communities through their networks. Support can be provided for community organisations to develop business plans to take on the running of services where this can bring benefits to local people.
 5. Buildings retained within the council delivered service should be viable for the future. Whilst building condition should not drive service planning, buildings should be efficient and sustainable to optimise the services able to be delivered from a reduced estate in the future. Investment in technologies such as library self-access systems should be explored to make the best use of retained buildings

Service Performance Information

- 3.8 The following service performance information from the secondary research report was used to inform proposals with regard to local services. The information has been updated to include the latest financial year 2024/25 and is used to inform the recommendations following consultation.
- 3.9 The following 3 tables show the number of visits, book issues and PC hours for each of our sites during the 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years. The tables show the usage trends of each multi-service centre, library and community centre over three years, following the pandemic. The tables show the current usage for a range of indicators for the latest full year, 2024 – 25. The data shows:
- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre is the busiest community centre with visits continuing to increase year on year. Belgrave Library is the busiest community library, with visits continuing to increase.
 - The centres with the least visits in 2024/25 are Gilmorton Community Rooms, Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre, Rushey Mead Library and Fosse Neighbourhood Centre (including the library).

Table 9: Key performance metric – Visitors

Site	Number of visitors		
	22/23	23/24	24/25
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	110,253	231,016	263,548
Belgrave Library	115,917	145,109	166,523
Central Library	107,303	122,358	136,450
St Matthews	110,089	113,822	110,823
Highfields	109,562	117,900	108,396
Aylestone	148,681	99,833	104,796
BRITE Centre	55,025	70,039	67,351
Beaumont Leys	67,691	73,330	60,516
Pork Pie	28,743	41,937	59,623
Knighton	49,283	56,440	55,632
St Barnabas	49,937	56,285	52,420
Hamilton	39,996	47,254	52,131
Evington	29,671	38,607	48,747
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	34,334	36,574	48,556
New Parks	36,883	44,555	42,624
Eyres Monsell Community Centre	20,978	34,389	33,959
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	23,472	27,054	33,373
Westcotes	25,037	32,014	30,427
Tudor Centre	15,822	16,326	20,923
Bookbus	9,799	6,365	17,594
Fosse	7,915	16,130	17,128
Rushey Mead Library	11,588	14,457	15,649
Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	10,919	10,121	9,881
Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	14,446	14,119	8,337
Braunstone Frith	8,742	9,372	6,126
Gilmorton	909	1,106	1,512
Total	1,242,995	1,476,512	1,573,045

- The libraries with the highest book loans in 2024/25 are the Central Library, Belgrave Library and Knighton Library.
- The libraries with the lowest number of book loans in 2024/25 are St Matthews Library and Fosse Library.

Table 10: Key performance metric – Book Issues

Site	Number of Book Issues		
	22/23	23/24	24/25
Central	53,613	72,693	83,065
Belgrave	51,273	54,681	60,698
Knighton	49,449	55,230	58,707
Beaumont Leys	55,122	58,958	53,493
Highfields	54,452	45,901	52,323

Hamilton	44,545	45,069	48,642
Evington	38,053	40,015	43,399
St Barnabas	42,745	46,209	43,069
Westcotes	23,056	26,210	28,342
Brite	21,682	20,817	22,563
Aylestone	20,830	20,893	22,224
Pork Pie	15,271	18,153	21,067
New Parks	16,514	18,007	15,991
Rushey Mead	12,259	12,382	14,724
Fosse	7,904	10,056	12,651
St Matthews	8,607	9,556	10,633
Bookbus	8,037	4,894	6,874
Total	523,412	559,724	598,465

- The libraries with the highest number of PC hours used in 2024/25 are the Central Library, Westcotes Library, Highfields Library and St Barnabas Library
- The libraries with the lowest number of PC hours used in 2024/25 are Rushey Mead Library and Fosse Library.

Table 11: Key performance metric – Public PC Hours

No. of hours	Number of PC hours		
	22/23	23/24	24/25
Central	26,115	27,754	31,034
Westcotes	6,623	8,313	8,534
Highfields	5,335	6,339	8,012
St Barnabas	4,569	6,434	7,287
Belgrave	6,647	6,700	6,479
Knighton	3,694	4,153	4,279
Hamilton	3,633	4,128	4,160
Beaumont Leys	4,736	4,874	3,969
St Matthews	3,310	3,463	3,604
Brite	3,073	2,984	2,565
New Parks	2,620	2,732	2,427
Aylestone	1,131	1,053	1,814
Evington	1,464	1,660	1,748
Pork Pie	1,899	1,915	1,515
Fosse	566	1,448	1,368
Rushey Mead	426	572	493
Total	75,841	84,522	89,288

Service & Building Costing Information

3.10 Running and maintaining Leicester's libraries and community centres requires significant and ongoing investment. The Council's Estates and Buildings Division commissioned conditions surveys to be conducted on all of our libraries and community centres (excluding Aylestone Library as this sits within the leisure centre and has been subject to separate condition surveys as part of the recent redevelopment of the centre).

Details can be seen in table 11 below which shows the condition rated A-D. The ratings are applied as follows:

A = Good Condition: As new, or with no defects.

B = Fair condition: Wear and tear or minor defects evident requiring minor repair and maintenance.

C = Poor Condition: Prevalent or serious defects evident, requiring extensive or invasive remedial work as soon as practicable in order to prevent consequential deterioration.

D = Failed: The element described has failed and has reached the end of its functioning life

Table 12: Building condition overview

Site	Overall Building Condition
Beaumont Leys Library	B
Belgrave Library	B
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	B
Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre	B
Brite Centre	B
Central Library	B
Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	B
Evington Library	B
Eyres Monsell Community Centre	B
Fosse Neighbourhood Centre	C
Gilmorton Neighbourhood Centre	B
Hamilton Library	B
Highfields library	B
Knighton Library	B
Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	B
New Parks Library	B
Pork Pie Library	B
Rushey Mead Library	B
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	B
St Barnabas Library	B
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	B
Tudor Centre	B
Westcotes Library	B

- All buildings (excluding St Matthews Centre) are rated as B – Fair condition, except for Fosse Neighbourhood Centre which is rated as C – poor condition, with prevalent or serious defects evident requiring extensive work. The cost of backlog work and maintenance work required over the next 10 years is in excess of £2.6 million due to the age and condition of the building.
- More extensive survey work was undertaken separately for St Matthews Centre which is a Housing owned building. The report prepared by the estates team confirms extensive maintenance costs over the next 10 years of over £4 million and widespread deterioration of fabric and services. Mechanical and electrical systems are nearing the end of their life. The report concludes that significant liabilities exist with any form of retention. The Sports Hall has been closed since 2022 due to the presence of RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) which would need to be wholly replaced.

3.11 Table 12 below presents the financial performance of each centre based on best value indicators. Sites such as Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre and Gilmorton Community Rooms perform less well against these metrics. Aylestone Library is within the Leisure Centre and therefore has limited running costs whilst Rushey Mead Recreation Centre is unstaffed and therefore costs less to run.

Table 13: Financial performance – Running costs and cost per visit

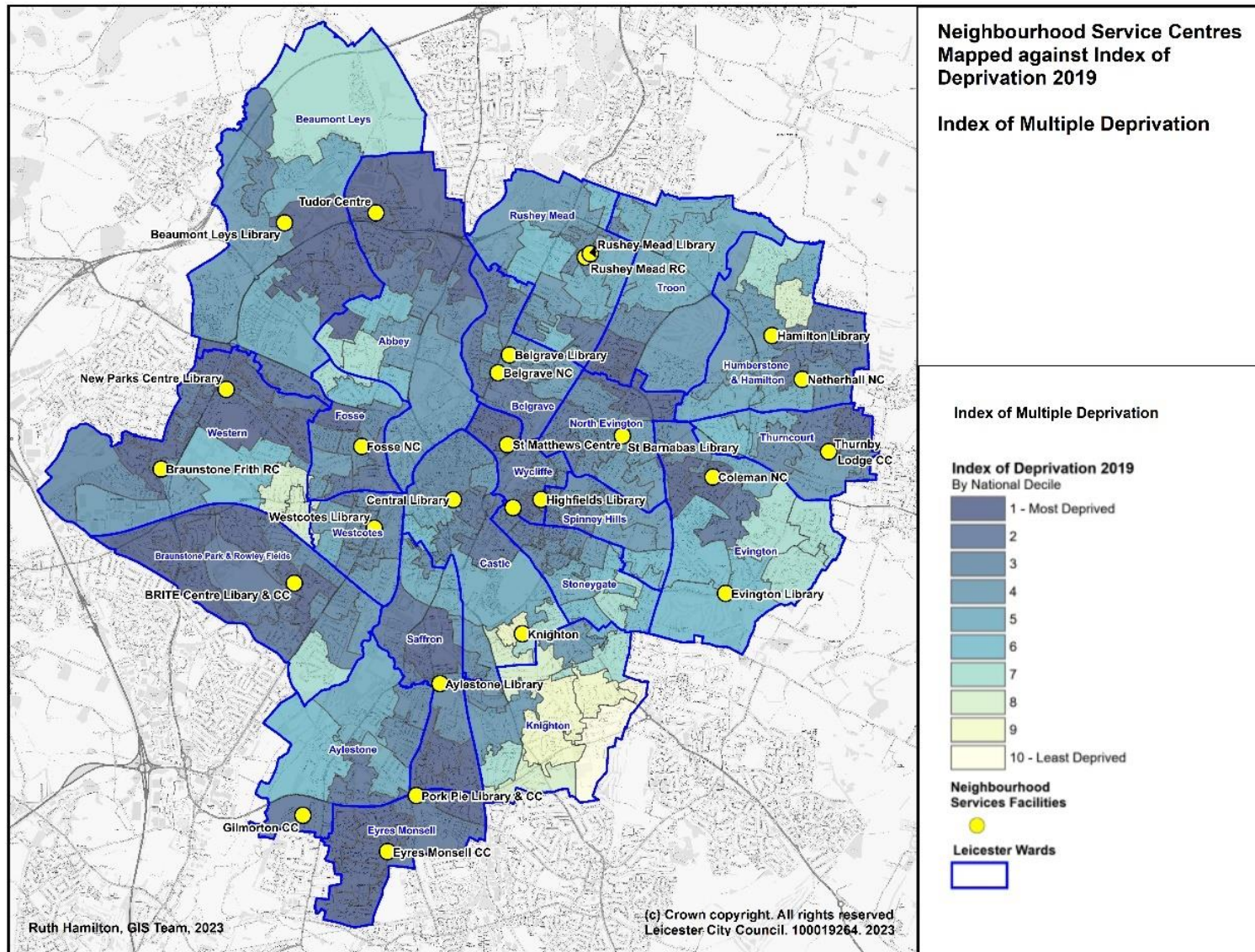
Site	Total Running Costs (includes staffing)	Spend Per Visit
Aylestone Library	£55,518	£0.53
Beaumont Leys MSC	£280,721	£4.64
Belgrave Library	£262,283	£1.58
Belgrave NC MSC	£275,490	£1.05
Braunstone Frith RC	£5,314	£0.87
BRITE Centre MSC	£239,081	£3.55
Central Library	£633,514	£4.64
Coleman NC	£84,545	£10.14
Evington Library	£188,196	£3.86
Eyres Monsell CC	£154,845	£4.56
Fosse Centre	£292,950	£17.10
Gilmorton CC	£16,566	£10.96
Hamilton MSC	£192,378	£3.69
Highfields MSC	£268,422	£2.48
Knighton Library	£216,566	£3.89
Netherhall NC	£35,836	£3.63
New Parks MSC	£202,721	£4.76
Pork Pie MSC	£193,627	£3.25
Rushey Mead RC	£15,286	£0.46
Rushey Mead Library	£107,186	£6.84
St Barnabas MSC	£290,284	£5.54
St Matthews MSC	£342,511	£3.09

Thurnby Lodge CC	£130,190	£2.68
Tudor Centre	£144,817	£6.92
Westcotes Library	£196,905	£6.47

Needs & Access

3.12 The following map shows the location of Neighbourhood Services facilities plotted on a map showing the Indices of Multiple Deprivation by Super Output Area. The Indices included are Income, Employment, Education, Health, Crime, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment.

Figure 3: Neighbourhood Services facilities mapped against index of multiple deprivation



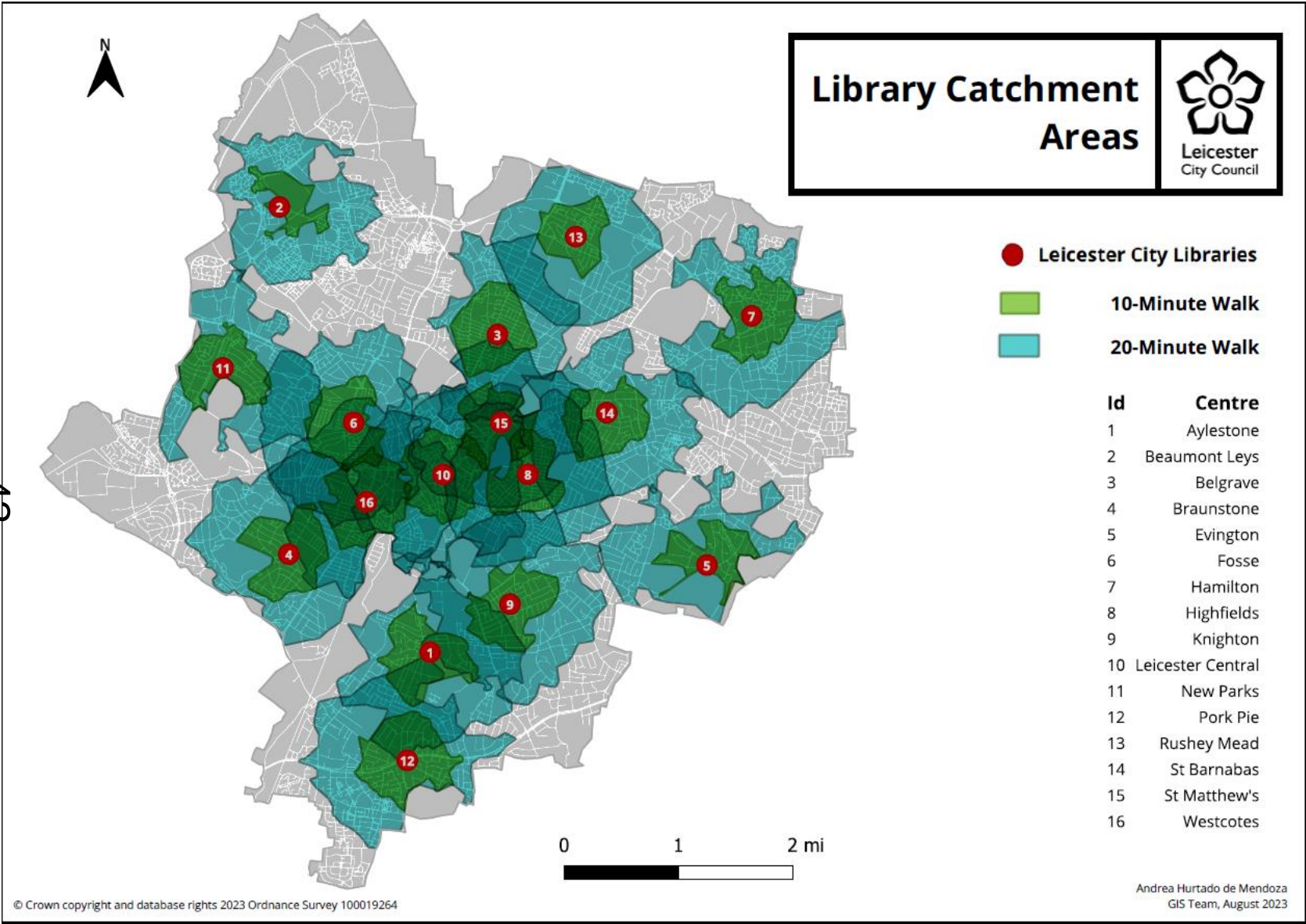
3.13 The table below ranks Neighbourhood Services facilities by the ward they are located in, ordered from the ward with the highest Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score to the lowest, based on 2019 data:

Table 14: Ranked Neighbourhood Services facilities by IMD

Site	IMD Value
Eyres Monsell Community Centre	48.8
BRITE Centre	45.3
Pork Pie Library & Community Centre	45.2
New Parks Library Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre	40.7
St Matthews Centre Highfields Library	38.3
Tudor Centre	36.5
Fosse Neighbourhood Centre	34.9
Beaumont Leys Library	34.1
St Barnabas Library	31.5
Belgrave Library Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	29.8
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	29.2
Aylestone Library Gilmorton Community Rooms	26.6
Westcotes Library	26.3
Evington Library Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	25.3
Rushey Mead Library Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	24.3
Central Library Knighton Library	22.4
Hamilton Library Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	22.2

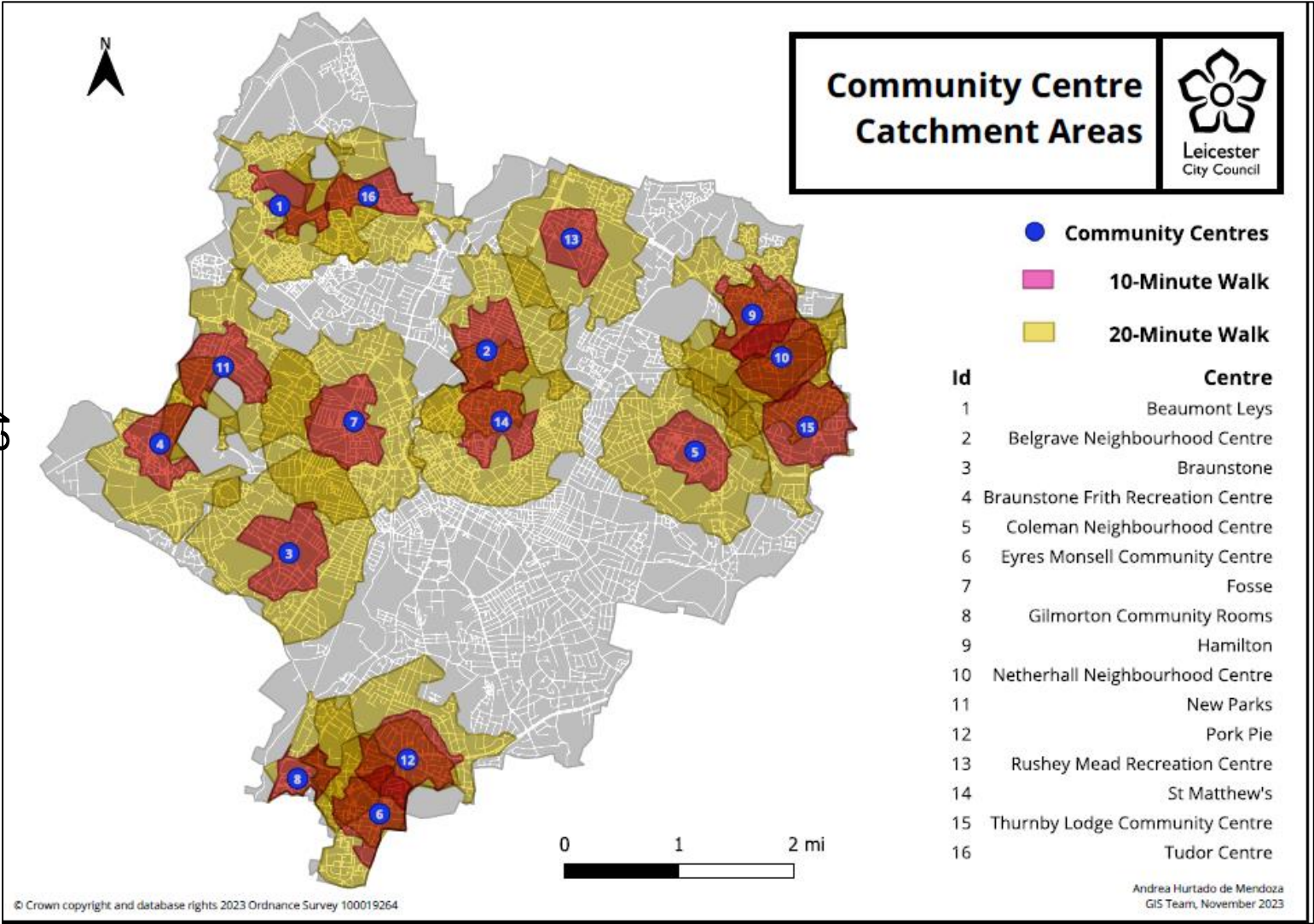
3.14 The map below shows the residential properties within a 10 and 20-minute walking catchment from each library.

Figure 4: Residential properties within a 10 and 20 minute walk of each library



3.15 The map below shows the residential properties within a 10 and 20-minute walking catchment from each community centre or room hire facility.

Figure 5: Residential properties within a 10 and 20 minute walk of each community centre or room hire facility



3.16 The maps below show the residential properties within a 30-minute bus catchment from each current library and community centre. The distance combines the time taken to walk to the bus stop with time taken to travel on the bus. The maps show excellent access to the existing library buildings for residents travelling by bus. The darker areas indicate greater overlap of 30-minute bus route coverage areas for each centre. All areas of the city have access to one or more libraries within a 30-minute bus journey. Most areas of the city also have access to a community centre within a 30-minute bus journey.

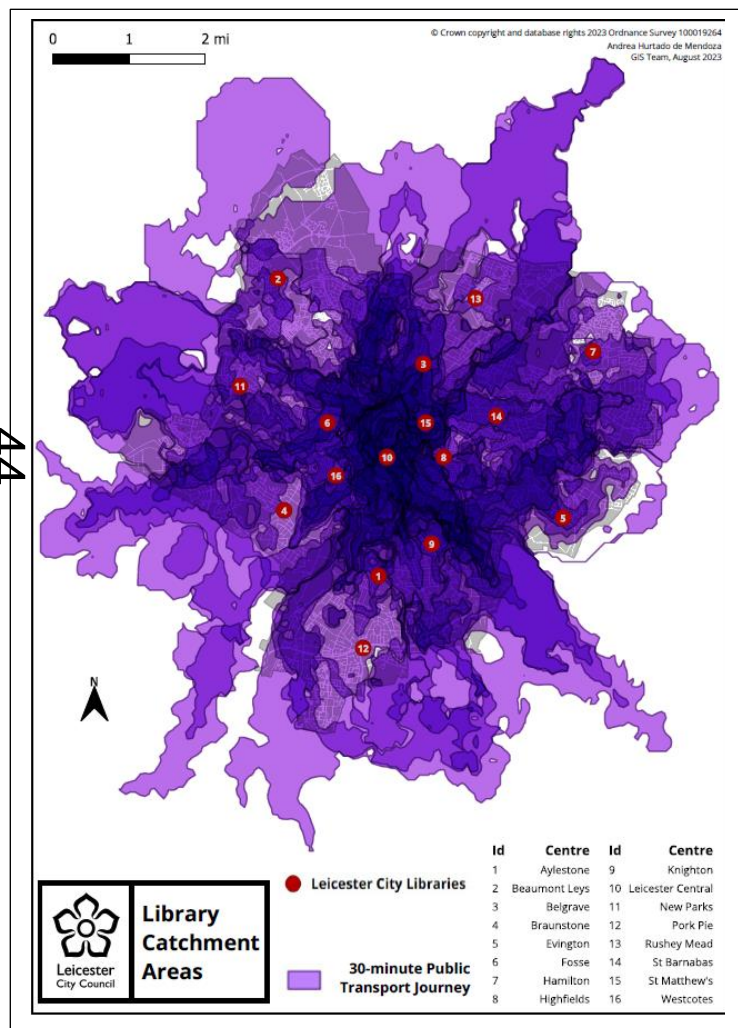


Figure 6: residential properties within a 30-minute public transport catchment from each library

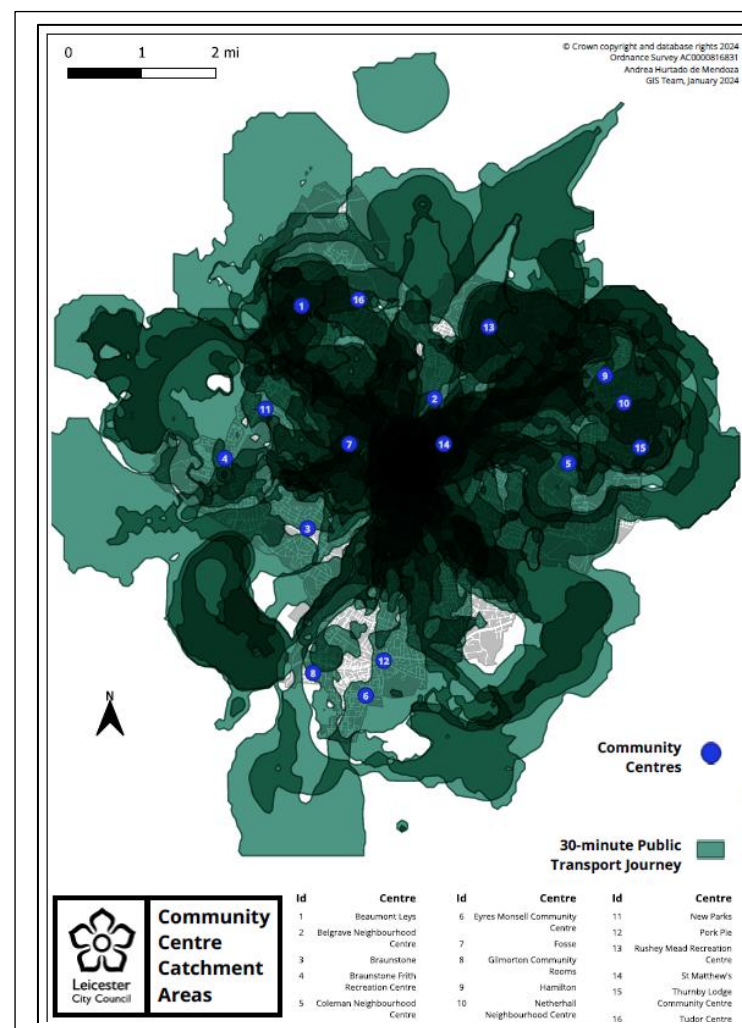
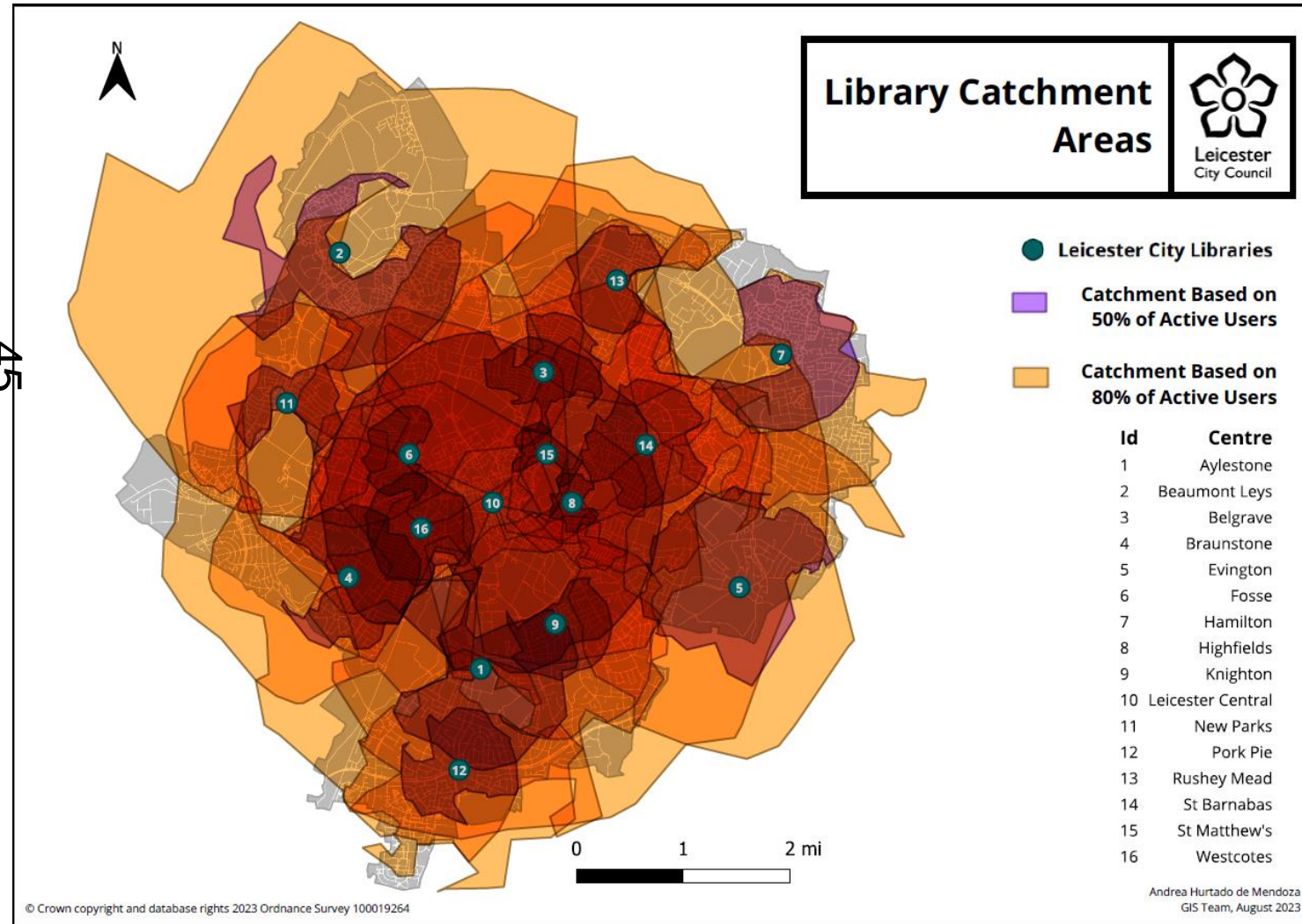


Figure 7: residential properties within a 30-minute public transport catchment from each community centre

3.17 Additional access information for libraries is available through the library system database, which includes registered members' postcode details. The map below illustrates the actual catchment areas of library users from April 2022 to March 2023, highlighting the locations of the closest 50% and 80% of users. This data is based on one or more in-person transactions made during that period.

Figure 8: Catchment areas of library users from April 2022 to March 2023



3.18 The table below displays the percentage of library users who visit multiple libraries, highlighting where customers have access to other library locations and illustrating potential overlaps in service provision:

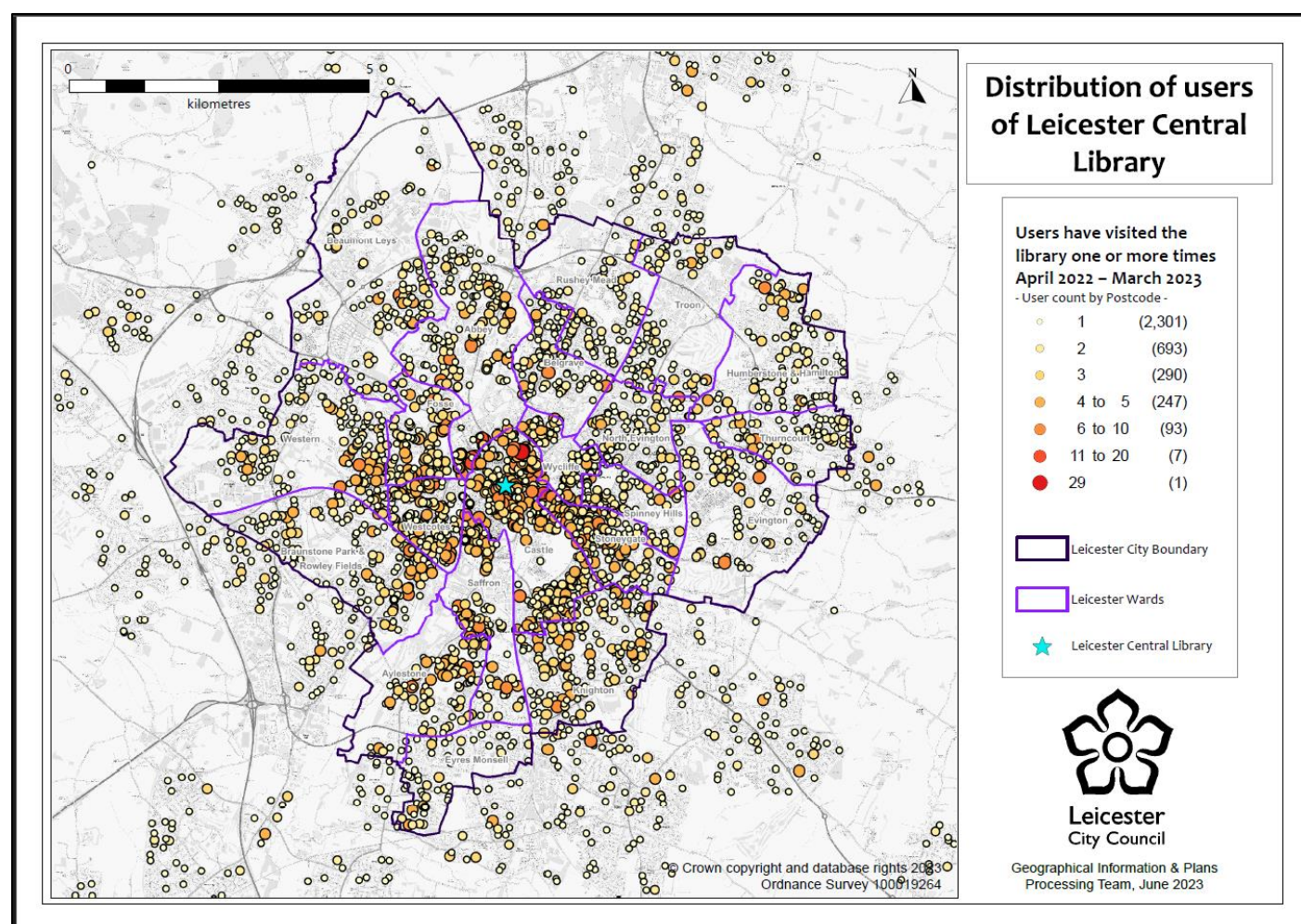
Table 15: Percentage of users who visit multiple libraries

% of Contacts Visiting Both Centres	Aylestone	Beaumont	Belgrave	BRITE	Central	Evington	Fosse	Hamilton	Highfields	Knighton	New Parks	Pork Pie	Rushey Mead	St Barnabus	St Matthews	Westcotes
Active Users - in last 12 months	1218	4668	5312	2176	7986	2712	1328	3884	5596	3505	2221	1683	1097	4323	1486	3031
Aylestone		0.69%	0.26%	0.78%	2.68%	1.25%	0.83%	0.39%	0.50%	7.42%	0.81%	7.78%	0.36%	0.32%	0.27%	1.75%
Beaumont	2.63%		2.48%	2.76%	4.16%	1.47%	3.69%	2.29%	0.84%	1.57%	4.73%	1.54%	2.64%	1.02%	2.83%	1.95%
Belgrave	1.15%	2.83%		0.74%	2.03%	1.62%	0.98%	4.33%	1.45%	0.57%	0.86%	0.42%	21.06%	2.98%	3.30%	1.06%
BRITE	1.40%	1.29%	0.30%		1.85%	0.15%	3.01%	0.10%	0.07%	0.51%	1.35%	0.71%	0.18%	0.23%	0.13%	4.85%
Central	17.57%	7.11%	3.05%	6.80%		5.57%	7.30%	4.17%	4.07%	13.67%	5.09%	8.32%	4.74%	4.72%	8.34%	13.66%
Evington	2.79%	0.86%	0.83%	0.18%	1.89%		0.30%	4.61%	4.56%	3.22%	0.45%	0.83%	0.91%	5.18%	4.10%	0.23%
Fosse	0.90%	1.05%	0.24%	1.84%	1.21%	0.15%		0.05%	0.18%	0.31%	2.16%	0.30%	0.18%	0.23%	0.20%	2.67%
Hamilton	1.23%	1.91%	3.16%	0.18%	2.03%	6.60%	0.15%		2.06%	0.40%	0.36%	0.59%	3.10%	1.57%	1.14%	0.40%
Highfields	2.30%	1.01%	1.52%	0.18%	2.85%	9.40%	0.75%	2.96%		2.23%	0.68%	1.01%	1.37%	6.85%	6.19%	0.73%
Knighton	21.35%	1.18%	0.38%	0.83%	6.00%	4.17%	0.83%	0.36%	1.39%		0.59%	3.80%	0.73%	1.09%	1.08%	1.91%
New Parks	1.48%	2.25%	0.36%	1.38%	1.41%	0.37%	3.61%	0.21%	0.27%	0.37%		0.59%	1.28%	0.37%	0.40%	1.45%
Pork Pie	10.76%	0.56%	0.13%	0.55%	1.75%	0.52%	0.38%	0.26%	0.30%	1.83%	0.45%		0.18%	1.36%	0.81%	0.66%
Rushey Mead	0.33%	0.62%	4.35%	0.09%	0.65%	0.37%	0.15%	0.88%	0.27%	0.23%	0.63%	0.12%		0.72%	0.67%	0.30%
St Barnabus	1.15%	0.94%	2.43%	0.46%	2.55%	8.26%	0.75%	1.75%	5.29%	1.34%	0.72%	3.51%	2.83%		3.36%	0.40%
St Matthews	0.33%	0.90%	0.92%	0.09%	1.55%	2.25%	0.23%	0.44%	1.64%	0.46%	0.27%	0.71%	0.91%	1.16%		0.40%
Westcotes	4.35%	1.26%	0.60%	6.76%	5.18%	0.26%	6.10%	0.31%	0.39%	1.65%	1.98%	1.19%	0.82%	0.28%	0.81%	

Central Library Catchment Area

3.19 The following map shows that Leicester's Central Library has a citywide pull due to its extensive cultural and reading programmes and unique depth and breadth of reading and information resources serving all areas of the city. Table 14 above also shows that it is a popular alternative choice for city residents and residents in the county, providing a wider range of resources beyond those of the community libraries. Use of the Central Library is increasing sharply year on year (Table 8) due to the broader activities and services on offer to all city residents. An extensive programme of reading and cultural events and activities is under development following the public engagement work in 2023. The Central Library is in a unique position to offer local and national author events, cultural programmes and activities from Black History Month to Green Libraries Week, partnership events with the city's universities and creative and reading activities for children and young families visiting or living in the city centre. The library offers unique collections such as the family and local history sections and hosts a wide range of study and IT resources as well as specialist online and print reference materials. The city centre offer is supplemented by a recent partnership with the two city universities and Loughborough University providing access to study space, Wi-Fi and specialist book stock for members of the public with extensive opening hours.

Figure 9: Distribution of users of Leicester Central Library



Alternative options considered for consultation proposals

3.20 A range of alternative options were considered in developing the consultation proposals for the delivery of neighbourhood services in Leicester. The following table lists the full range of alternative service delivery model options considered:

Table 16: Sourcing options considered for Leicester's neighbourhood services

Options	Options excluded	Recommended longlist	Response
Make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arm's length company: provides little additional benefit over in-house provision and few prospects for training. 	a. In-house management: existing track record of transformation and maintains continuity and control in period of change.	Option recommended.
Buy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outsourcing to the private sector: there are no specialised operators. Private sector joint venture: complex to establish and no suitable operators in the market. 	b. Outsourcing to voluntary and charitable sector (VCS): brings some financial benefits.	Outsourcing to the VCS is not considered viable at this time. There is not a competitive market for library provision and one plausible provider. Even a truncated procurement exercise and contract process would require significant resources and delay the introduction of transformational change by several years.
Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared service: no immediate candidates for full-service sharing. Takes time to develop. 	<p>c. Sharing with local partners: more formal collaborations with other bodies could widen offer.</p> <p>d. Consortium working: some efficiencies made possible through collaboration.</p>	<p>There is no shared service currently in development and there are limited economies of scale from sharing library services.</p> <p>Consortium working is already in place for procurement of stock and e-libraries to achieve significant discounts through regional bulk buying</p>

demonstrates that all but one comparator Local Authorities who responded to our survey no longer run community centres.

- 3.25 Data from the annual CIFPA library survey returns show that Leicester has by far the highest library opening hours within its comparator group. 95% of Leicester's libraries are currently open for 40 hours or more each week. Feedback from the needs assessment public engagement survey showed that 35% of respondents thought the Council should explore "reviewing opening hours to match peak demand". As the current weekly opening hours are highly inconsistent between library sites, it is proposed to offer consistent weekly staffed opening hours of 40 hours and 30 hours per week based on busy-ness of the facility.
- 3.26 A spread of opening hours was proposed to ensure access for all groups and at times when staff support is required for particular sessions, for example for under 5s sessions, after school access for under 16 years and some evening and weekend access for those working during the day. The Central Library would be open Monday to Saturday to provide service for all city residents.
- 3.27 The way in which people are using our libraries is changing. There is an increase in the use of online services, particularly in terms on book borrowing and loans of other online resources including newspapers, magazines and audio books. Our research shows that loans of e-resources have trebled since 2019-20 rising from 38,663 to 115,067 loans in 2023-24. Whilst physical book loans have remained strong, it is clear that 24/7 online access to reading materials is becoming increasingly convenient for some customers.

4. Consultation on proposals and findings

- 4.1 The public consultation on the proposed changes to libraries and community centres took place from Wednesday 2 April to Sunday 29 June 2025. It was emphasised throughout that no decisions had been made and we wanted to engage as many people as possible, either through the surveys or one of the many meetings that was held for residents.

Consultation Activities

- 4.2 A summary of consultation activities is below:

- Main public survey – 4,989 survey returns comprising of:
 - 2,591 online surveys
 - 2,065 paper surveys
 - 333 community language surveys (the survey was available in English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Somali)
- Children and young people’s survey – 1,366 online survey returns
- Open public meetings – 12 open meetings held across the city with 1,053 attendees. The meetings were chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres and senior officers with a remit for the services in question. An interpreter was present at 2 of the meetings to assist attendees.
- Ward Councillor Engagement Meetings – Engagement meetings were held for all Ward Councillors in small ward groups.
- Officer led drop-in sessions – 15 officer led-drop in sessions were held across the city with approximately 120 attendees.
- Stakeholder Meetings – Stakeholders and community groups could request a meeting with officers and 41 were held.
- Young people drop-in sessions – Were held at Belgrave and Knighton Libraries along with a session at City Hall for the Young Peoples Council.
- Group submissions & individual comments – 33 submissions/comments were received into the consultation email address outside of the survey.
- Petitions – 6 petitions were received.
- Online Platform – A dedicated webpage was created (Proposals for libraries and community centres) and received 395 visits during the consultation period. Corporate and service social media channels were also used to promote the consultation

- 4.3 A findings report is available detailing the responses and feedback to all consultation activities including the open meetings, the drop-in sessions and the main and young people’s surveys. The following summarises the feedback received.

Headline Analysis

- 4.4 There was a very high-level of participation in the consultation on proposals for libraries and community centres with 4,989 responses to the main survey, and 1,366 responses to the children and young people's survey. 1,053 people attended the 12 open meetings and 120 people attended the drop-in sessions.
- 4.5 The profile of respondents demonstrates good participation from communities across the city. The demographic profile of respondents to the main survey generally reflected the makeup of the city although with over representation of some communities, with 49% describing themselves as Asian or Asian British and 27% as White British. Responses were received from all areas of the city, although there were significantly higher returns from Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Knighton and Stoneygate wards. More respondents to the main survey identified their sex as female (64%) than male (32%) or other (0.5%) with the remainder preferring not to say. The junior survey was equally split between boys and girls. 27% of the (adults) responding to the main survey said they were over 66 years old, with next most significant group being those aged 36 – 45 years (18%). In addition to the 4,989 adults responding to the main survey, a further 1,366 young people under the age of 16 years responded to the junior survey (28% 14yrs or over and 20% 8yrs or under). 21% of all respondents to the main survey identified as having a disability.
- 4.6 The high level of participation indicates the consultation was well promoted and that members of the public were well engaged with proposals; however some responses indicate that incorrect information was circulating before and during the consultation. Misinformation was routinely corrected during the public meetings and drop-in sessions.
- 4.7 There was particularly high engagement in three areas of the city: Belgrave ward, Rushey Mead ward and Castle/Knighton wards. This was evidenced by the high percentage of survey responses and the numbers attending open meetings in these wards.
- 4.8 A high number of respondents use library services regularly, with 69% of all respondents to the main survey visiting a library at least once a week, rising to 90% visiting at least once a month.
- 4.9 The library services people said were most important to them are books and reading (83% of all respondents to the main survey); access and support for digital services (41%), children's and family activity programmes (31%), cultural and creativities (29%) and social and meeting spaces (29%). This supports the proposed prioritisation of the four universal offers and the children's promise defined by Libraries Connected.
- 4.10 Around half of all respondents to the main survey (51%) said they visited a community centre at least once a week. Of these, 51% said their primary community centre was Belgrave

Neighbourhood Centre, and 15% said their primary community centre was Rushey Mead Recreation centre.

- 4.11 The community centre services people said were most important to them are community groups or activities (55%), exercise or health related activities (39%), cultural and arts and crafts activities (37%) and a social space to meet people (29%). Whilst fewer people said they regularly used community centres the responses indicate that those who do use them value the centres for social connection, health and wellbeing and the role they play in community cohesion.
- 4.12 Response to the main survey shows there is significant cross usage of libraries by customers, demonstrating some flexibility in use of community libraries. The most commonly used library, other than the primary library of use, is the Central Library. This supports feedback that the Central Library is used to provide a broad range and depth of resources which are available to all city residents, beyond the standard community library offer.
- 4.13 The feedback shows there is also a high level of cross usage between local community libraries. For example 63% of respondents who identify Fosse Library as their primary library, also visit other community libraries, 88% of those who identify Aylestone Library as their primary library also visit other libraries.
- 4.14 There is a high number of community centre users who visit more than one centre, although this is slightly less common than for library users. For example, 56% of users of Rushey Mead Recreation Centre also use another centre, the majority also using Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.
- 4.15 Two thirds (67%) of library users who responded to the question said they usually walk to the library with 19% travelling by car. A higher percentage travel by car and by bus to the Central Library.
- 4.16 Whilst walking remains the most common method of getting to a community centre, a significantly higher percentage travel by car and by bus.
- 4.17 61% of those who responded to the question in the main survey said the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to visit a library, with a further 18% saying it would be “harder” for them. However the percentage of respondents who said the proposals would make it “much harder” varied significantly depending on the main library used.
- 4.18 There was a significantly higher percentage of respondents to both the main and the junior surveys who said that the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to use a library, particularly those who use the libraries proposed for community management (Evington, Knighton and Rushey Mead libraries). Feedback received during the open meetings and drop-in

sessions indicated that key concerns were around the feasibility of community groups taking on the libraries, worries about the quality of a community run service, and the reliability of volunteer delivered opening hours. There were widespread concerns that there was limited capacity and insufficient expertise within the local community for a local group to take on the running of the libraries. There was also concern about the longer-term sustainability of a community run library with many people expressing concern that the library could close if a community management group failed in the future.

- 4.19 Feedback from respondents whose primary libraries were proposed to be run by the council with reduced staff hours was more nuanced. Although fewer people said the proposed hours would make it “much harder” to visit a library this remained a significant concern for many particularly at Belgrave Library. However there were a range of comments and suggestions on the best spread of the staffed opening hours proposed, including concerns about accessing the library in the evenings, early mornings, and at the weekend. 23% of the 664 comments on the proposed opening hours made suggested changes. The feedback has been used to update the proposed opening hours for each library to optimise access to the service.
- 4.20 A significant percentage (70%) of the users of Belgrave Library responded to both the main and the junior survey stating the library would be “much harder” to visit. However a large number of comments received incorrectly reference the closure of the library, a rumour which had circulated immediately prior to the consultation and which may be reflected in the survey feedback. There were a large number of comments in the surveys, and a consensus at the drop-in session that the library should remain open later on weekday evenings to accommodate the very well attended Homework Help sessions.
- 4.21 A high percentage (47%) of respondents who use community centres thought the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to visit, although the percentage is lower overall than the same question for libraries. The percentage who said it would be “much harder” to use a community centre varied depending on the stated primary centre.
- 4.22 The highest percentage of respondents who thought the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit a community centre were users of Rushey Mead Recreation Centre (80%) and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (72%). These two centres attracted significantly more responses than users of other community centres. Responses to the main survey, and feedback from the open meetings at these two centres, demonstrated widespread concerns that Community Asset Transfer could lead to some community groups being marginalised, and the centres being less accessible. There were concerns that, as both centres are already very well used, a successful CAT organisation would need to displace current activities in order to support their own direct provision as there was not sufficient capacity to accommodate new service offers. Many respondents indicated they would prefer the council to explore ideas for income generation in order to support continued Council management of the centres.

- 4.23 There was a broader range of responses to proposals for the Community Asset Transfer of the six other community centres. Early interest was received for all of the centres and discussed at the open meetings. The key considerations were around continued availability of preferred times and rooms, limiting any increase in room hire charges, sustainability of the community offer and ongoing accountability to the council as landlord to ensure the delivery of contracted outcomes. Reassurance was also sought around the formal process through which community organisations would be assessed and recommendations made.
- 4.24 The proposal for Fosse Neighbourhood Centre was to withdraw from the building due to the ongoing maintenance and running costs and noting the availability of alternative libraries nearby. 59% of those who said Fosse was their main community centre and 60% of those who said it was their main library said the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. A key concern raised during the open meeting, and through the survey, was a location for the food bank which is currently based in the neighbourhood centre annex. Other concerns raised through the survey included the travel distance to the next nearest library for children and young people, and the loss of the hall used by the community choir, however the choir has since relocated.
- 4.25 The proposal for St Matthews Centre was to relocate the library and services such as Adult Learning and the Housing reception nearby. 54% of respondents to the main survey who used the community centre were concerned the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. There was good engagement from local user groups at the open meeting, and a key consideration was a reassurance that the relocated services would remain on the St Matthews estate. There was a concern that larger community groups might not be able to be accommodated in an alternative location.
- 4.26 Amongst the alternative or new solutions suggested the highest number of responses were around income generation ideas to enable the Council to continue to run more centres.
- 4.27 The findings of the 12-week consultation on proposals for libraries and community centres have been used to update the Equality Impact Assessment and to inform the recommendations which are made in the following section.

5. Details of options explored and changes made to proposals

5.1 A large number of suggestions were made in response to the consultation. The following table summarises the types of suggestion made in the main survey and the consideration given to each category of suggestion. It is noted that similar suggestions were also made during the Open Meetings and more detailed suggestions were made during the drop-in sessions.

The table shows the percentage of responses for each category and the proposed outcome. Each response category is also RAG rated; Green= Some suggestions to be implemented, Amber= some suggestions to be partially implemented and Red = Not to be implemented.

Table 17: Response categories and outcomes

Response Categories	% of responses	Outcome	RAG Rating (Red, Amber & Green)
Change activities/support provided at centres	6%	It is proposed to change and develop the activities and support delivered at centres through development of the multi-service centre model working with additional external and internal partners, for example Family Hubs, Customer Services, Adult Learning, Housing services and the DWP. It is proposed to develop in-house services to focus on wellbeing activities, digital and information support, reading programmes, cultural and creative programmes and children's activities. This is in line with the consultation proposals and supported by the suggestions received.	Green
Change what council budgets are spent on	10%	There were a range of suggestions for reallocating council budgets from other services to enable the council to retain more direct provision of libraries and community centres. Whilst other council services are out of the scope of this consultation, it is recommended to retain additional Neighbourhood Services facilities in response to the feedback received with the budgets adjusted accordingly.	Amber
Co-location of services	3%	It is recommended to explore further co-location of services as part of the multi-service service	Green

		centre model. This is in line with the consultation proposals and supported by the suggestions received.	
Community Asset Transfer	6%	It is recommended to explore Community Asset Transfer of 6 community centres following the consultation period. Alternative proposals are recommended for a further 2 centres following consideration of the feedback received.	
Greater partnership working	1%	The council will continue to work with a range of partners to deliver added value services as part of the multi-service centre offer. The council will explore opportunities to increase income and achieve efficiencies through internal and external partnership working. A Service Level Agreement will be agreed with the Public Health division. Proposals from local community groups to support library and community centres will be explored to promote community engagement and to support cost effective delivery of services.	
Improve promotion of services and buildings	2%	There were a range of suggestions to increase footfall and income through better promotion and signposting of services, particularly community room hire. It is recommended to invest in retained facilities to improve signage and presentation, and to develop a marketing plan for the promotion of services with a focus on income generation.	
Improvement of current services	4%	It is recommended to target development of Neighbourhood Services delivering the areas of need identified through the Needs Assessment during the 2023 public engagement, and through the consultation. The broad service offers identified are health and wellbeing, reading, digital and information provision, cultural and	

		creative activities and children's reading programmes.	
Income generation ideas	26%	Around a quarter of those who suggested a solution proposed income generation ideas. The recommendations will include an increase of 20%, over 2 years, in the standard community room hire rate and associated concessionary rates. A large number of the responses focused on Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation as an alternative suggestion to retain these buildings under council management. The income targets for both buildings would be increased by 100% to contribute towards greater financial sustainability to enable the council to continue to run these buildings.	
Technology and Innovation: Increase or implement Self-Access hours	4%	It is recommended to implement library self-access systems at 6 additional library centres. It is also recommended to retain Knighton and Evington libraries under council management and to retain the self-access systems whilst reducing staffed opening hours at these sites.	
Increase volunteering opportunities	11%	It is recommended to further develop the framework for volunteering with Neighbourhood Services to provide value added services and to co-create services and support priority programmes.	
Reconfigure proposed opening hours	24%	Suggestions were made for the reconfiguration of proposed opening hours at local level. Suggestions included evening opening, weekend opening and considerations of specific groups and activities. It is recommended to open all multi-service centre libraries at least one evening per week until 6pm, and with Saturday opening at all libraries. Changes to opening hours patterns at most libraries are recommended as a	

		result of the feedback and are further itemised in this section.	
Reduce staff at centres	2%	Suggestions were made to reduce the number of staff working at centres. It is recommended to reduce staffing budgets in line with withdrawal from some centres and reductions in opening hours, however a range of considerations are involved in the robust operation of our services.	
Review Book Bus routes	<1%	There were a handful of suggestions to review the Book Bus routes and stops following changes to the services. It is recommended to undertake a review of Book Bus routes and stops as suggested and in particular to introduce a BookBus route in Fosse ward as part of the mitigation for the closure of the library.	

5.2 Opening hours and access

24% of all responses to the main survey suggested changes to the proposed opening hours. Further discussions were had with members of the public at drop-in sessions, and with members of staff. The feedback has been incorporated into the Equality Impact Assessment and changes have been made to the recommended opening hours at 11 facilities. As a result the recommendations include the following considerations around access and inclusion:

- All statutory library service points will be open and staffed for at least one evening per week until 6pm or later to ensure people working a standard 9-5 week have access to the service.
- All statutory library service points will open and staffed on Saturdays to ensure families are able to visit at the weekend outside of school and traditional working days
- All statutory library service points will be open on a range of mornings, afternoons and early evenings during weekdays to optimise access for the wider community
- The needs of groups who use the buildings have been considered wherever possible. Where groups do not have self-access or require staffed support their requirements have been considered within the context of the wider community
- Core activities such as children's toddler time sessions, homework help sessions and DWP job shop sessions have been accommodated within the recommended hours. These sessions support residents with protected characteristics including children in disadvantage and people living with disability.

5.3 Technology and Innovation

4% of Respondents suggested that Technology Enabled Opening should be further explored to optimise access to libraries and to ensure the most efficient use of library buildings. Library self-access systems would enable registered customers aged 16 years and over, and accompanied children, to access the library outside of staffed opening times using their library card and PIN. Self-access libraries would be monitored by CCTV and customers would be given an induction in order to use the service. Self-access customers would have access to book loans, study space, computers and Wi-Fi through existing self-service facilities. Whilst there was support for this solution from some respondents others were concerned that some groups and activities required a staff presence. There were also concerns about safety. It is recommended to install library self-access systems at 6 libraries and to retain the system at 2 existing sites to optimise and extend access with the following considerations arising from consultation:

- Library-self access has been trialled at two Leicester City libraries for over three years. The service has been well received and feedback from customers has enabled the systems to be refined.
- Whilst self-access provides a significant increase in service availability for many customers it is not suitable for all. Therefore, staffed opening hours are designed with the needs of all members of the community in mind. Regular staffed hours will be offered to ensure availability on some mornings, afternoons, early evenings and at the weekend on Saturdays.
- Customers must be aged 16 years or over and must be inducted in order to use library self-access. Children and young people aged under 16yrs can also use library self-access if accompanied by an inducted adult.
- Year 11 children may need to access the library to support their exam study. To ensure consistency year 11 children may be inducted to use library self-access before their 16th birthday.
- A range of security measures would be put in place as standard. Full fire and risk assessments would be undertaken as part of the installation process. Self-access libraries would be monitored through 100% CCTV coverage. A help number is in place in case of any issue. A roving team member will be available to attend site if needed.

5.4 Community Asset Transfer

There was significant interest in opportunities for community organisations to take on the running of some facilities under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy. Early interest was shown in all 8 community centres proposed for transfer, however there was significant opposition to the proposals for Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre due to lack of capacity for new service offers and the risk of displacing existing groups at these busy buildings. Following the open meetings the council has explored a number of considerations which were raised:

- An updated Community Asset Transfer policy has been developed to include guidelines to support interested groups. This has been approved under the Council's constitution.

- Third party support will be commissioned to help community organisations respond to CAT opportunities and to develop a business plan.
- Legal agreements will include the community benefits to be delivered by the group, including undertakings with regard to room hire and for existing and new users.
- CAT leases will be monitored annually to ensure community benefits are delivered, with provision to end the lease if required.

5.5 Income Generation

26% of respondents to the main survey, and residents attending many of the open sessions suggested that the council should look at ways of generating additional income to support more council run facilities within a reduced budget. A wide range of suggestions for generating income were made. The council has explored the following income generation options to support service delivery within a reduced budget:

- External grant funding: Neighbourhood Services have consistently made successful applications to organisations such as Arts Council England for programmes including the Libraries Improvement Fund rounds 1, 2 and 3, and successive project grants to deliver interventions including three rounds of the “Small Wonders” projects to benefit young children and families in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However grants such as these are intended to provide added value service interventions and one-off capital investment such as the Study Zones installed in all libraries in response to the 2023 Needs Assessment work. These grant programmes are not able to supplement annual revenue funding for core services.
- The council has successfully explored opportunities to fund the “Bookstart” programme through the Government funded Family Hubs programme. The programme supports book gifting for all newborn babies in partnership with the Book Trust organisation, and a programme of book sharing interventions with toddlers and pre-school aged children. This represents a saving of £70,000 to the core revenue budget enabling the BookStart programme to continue to run over coming years.
- Public Health funding: the service has successfully explored opportunities to fund a range of services through Public Health funding. These include the Warm Welcome programme and the Homework Help sessions at libraries.
- Capital funding: Neighbourhood Services have successfully applied for corporate capital funding to invest in its buildings. Under the Transforming Neighbourhoods programme £2.5million capital funding was invested in building refurbishments to reduce ongoing maintenance costs and to modernise services. The following buildings were refurbished:
 - Pork Pie Library and Community Centre (2015)
 - Beaumont Leys Library (2017)
 - Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (2018)
 - Rushey Mead Library (2019)
 - Rushey Mead Recreation Centre (2019)
 - Highfields Library (2020)
 - Knighton Library (2021)

It is recommended to make further capital investment into the retained Neighbourhood Services buildings to improve facilities and reduce annual maintenance costs from the core revenue budget.

- Increasing room hire charges: the council has explored the option of increasing community room hire charges. It is not considered feasible to remove the concessionary rates which enables community groups and instructors to meet at an affordable rate, as many groups would be unable to afford the standard rate. It is therefore recommended to apply a phased increase of 20% to all community room hire rates, over 2 years. The increase would be phased over two years to ensure community groups have time to plan for the increase.

5.6 Co-location of services

Neighbourhood Services currently operate 9 multi-service centres. The proposal to expand the multi-service centre model was well received during the consultation, with many residents welcoming the more efficient delivery of a range of different services under one roof for greater convenience to reduce costs. During the consultation Neighbourhood Services have explored options with a range of internal and external partners to continue and expand the multi-service centre model. Feedback from the consultation indicates that there is no one size fits all. Services would be delivered from the most appropriate locations and dependent on the suitability of the building. Investment would be made to reconfigure and sign multi-service centres. Following consultation services to be delivered from neighbourhood buildings would include:

- Libraries
- Community centre room hire
- Adult Learning classes – using custom classrooms
- Family Hubs programme – signposting and activities. St Matthews Library will be co-located with St Matthews Children’s Centre.

The following services would deliver regular weekly sessions either by appointment or as a drop-in service:

- Pop up housing offices – delivered in city council housing areas
- DWP Job Shops – appointment-based sessions for wide ranging support with job-seeking
- Customer Services – In person access to a council Customer Services officer. This offer was developed to respond to our needs assessment for more in-person support in libraries.

5.7 Volunteer opportunities

11% of respondents to the main survey suggested increasing volunteer opportunities to deliver additional services and to further support the service through friends of groups and fundraising.

- Neighbourhood Services have a very active volunteer programme supporting a wide range of added value activities including the Summer Reading Challenge programme, activity groups and community growing spaces.

- The service has explored an expanded volunteer programme through a temporary part time volunteer coordinator role funded through Public Health administered government funding.
- It is recommended to increase volunteer opportunities to add further value to the service, to extend community participation and to bring benefits to local people:
 - “Friends of” groups to support with promotions and fundraising
 - Home Library Service volunteers to support with an expanded delivery service
 - An expansion of regular cultural and creative events
 - To co-produce reconfigured services

5.8 Partnership Working

Neighbourhood Services consulted with a wide range of partners and received suggestions for service improvements linked with partnership working. Partnership working is considered a particular strength of the organisation, and whilst it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of partners the service will be working with, close work is anticipated with the following:

- Leicester and Leicestershire Universities Partnership
- DWP Job Centre Plus
- Leicester Arts and Museums
- Spark Arts
- Public Health

5.9 Changes to proposals considered and recommendations by site

Suggestions made during the consultation and options explored are outlined below on a building-by-building basis. For each building the consultation proposal is outlined, an assessment of the facility, feedback and suggestions received and any changes to the proposals which are recommended.

5.9.1 Leicester Central Library

Consultation proposal: to retain Leicester Central as a core component of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 52.5hrs to 45hrs per week.

Assessment: The Central Library provides a breadth and depth of library services accessible to and serving the needs of all residents within the city. As a result, the library has the highest number of annual book issues (123,000) and computer usage (28,000 hours per year) in the city. The library is located off Town Hall Square but does require investment to improve visibility and wayfinding

Consultation feedback: following analysis of the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders it was suggested there should be at least one late evening per week to support evening events and to support access for people working later on weekdays. A later start on Saturday morning was suggested due to low footfall before 11am. The table below

summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	9am-4pm	Closed	52.5
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	45
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-7pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	11am-4pm	Closed	45

It is recommended to retain Leicester Central Library as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 52.5hrs to 45hrs per week.

5.9.2 Aylestone Library (multi-service centre: Aylestone Leisure Centre)

Consultation proposal: retain Aylestone Library as part the Aylestone Leisure Centre multi-service centre delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 32hrs to 30hrs per week. Retain self-service access during leisure centre opening hours with no overall reduction in opening hours.

Assessment: The service is co-located within Aylestone Leisure Centre and benefits from very high footfall due to cross-service usage. The cost of the service is low due to shared running costs and high footfall achieved through the shared building. The library benefits from additional self-access hours in line with the leisure centre opening times. The leisure centre is in good condition having recently been refurbished. Investment in the library is recommended to improve visibility and presentation of the service. Location is excellent as the building is on a key arterial route into the city and has extremely good public transport access. Need is assessed as high - the library and leisure centre sit on the boundary between Aylestone and Saffron wards, serving an area of significant deprivation in the north of Saffron with usage of services very high.

Following analysis of the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders no significant changes to the proposed timetable were suggested. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	1pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-1pm	N/A	32
Proposed Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	N/A	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	N/A	30

It is recommended to retain Aylestone Library as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with no reduction in overall opening hours, and to standardise the staffed opening hours at 30 hours per week as per the recommended timetable.

5.9.3 Beaumont Leys Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation Proposal: retain Beaumont Leys Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 49.5hrs to 40hrs per week.

Assessment: The service is co-located with other council services and hosts a regular DWP Job Shop. It is positioned next to Leicester Leys leisure centre at the rear of the Beaumont Leys shopping centre. These facilities serve a broad catchment area in the north-west of the city. There is continued development of the Ashton Green area with the local plan identifying this as one of three strategic growth areas for the city for new homes. The library serves an area of high deprivation in Beaumont Leys and Abbey wards and will cater for the expansion of new homes in the north of the Beaumont Leys ward. Running costs are fair despite the size of the building and long opening hours due to co-location of services and high usage. Access by public transport is very good with frequent bus services running to the shopping centre, however there is a short walk through the shopping centre to reach the public services located to the rear. The usage of the library is high (over 73,000 visits) and need is assessed as high with Beaumont Leys ward 8th most deprived in the city and limited alternative providers nearby.

Feedback from the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders identified a need for the library to be open earlier than 10am particularly on Saturday to enable parents to take children to the library before swim lessons at the leisure centre or shopping at the centre. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-5pm	9.30am-1pm	Closed	49.5
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-6pm	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-3pm	9.30am-1pm	Closed	40

It is recommended to retain Beaumont Leys Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 49.5hrs to 40hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above.

5.9.4 Belgrave Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation Proposal: retain Belgrave Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 55hrs to 40hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The library is ideally located alongside multiple council services including a refurbished gym, refurbished swimming pool, children's centre and Cossington Park. The library serves an area of high density (private) housing and has high ethnic diversity. The library has a wide catchment with 21% of Rushey Mead Library users also visiting Belgrave Library during 2023-24. The building is well maintained and has low running costs. Overall the need for the statutory service is assessed as very high, with over 145,000 visits in 2023-24 – the busiest community library during this year. The ward is ranked 10 out of 21 wards in the indices of multiple deprivation.

Feedback from the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders identified a need for the library to be open later in the evening to accommodate the very busy homework help sessions from Monday – Thursday. There was significant opposition to any reduction in the current staffed opening hours. Self-access is recommended to help address this concern. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	55
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	2pm-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10am-1pm	Closed	63

It is recommended to retain Belgrave Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 55hrs to 40hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to increase overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.5 Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility

Assessment: The community centre has the highest usage of any NS building and a good income base of £50,000 a year from community room hire. The building currently houses multi-services including LCC Adult Learning classes, a busy police beat office, a pre-school, a daily lunch club and Gujarati Language classes through an external provider. There are a number of other council services located in close proximity, including a library, children's centre, park, swimming pool and gym meaning the local community is very well served. The building is well located and has excellent public transport provision. In 2023 – 24 there were 2,275 room hires. Overall the need for the service is assessed as high, with over 250,000 visits in 2023-24 (the busiest facility in the city). The ward is ranked 10 out of 21 wards in the indices of multiple deprivation.

Feedback from the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders identified a high level of opposition to the proposal to transfer the centre to the community. 80% of respondents who use the centre thought the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. There were concerns that, as the centre is already very well used, a successful CAT organisation would need to displace current activities in order to support their own direct provision. There were widespread concerns that Community Asset Transfer could lead to some community groups being marginalised, and the centre being less accessible. Many respondents indicated they would prefer the council to consider ideas for income generation,

to support continued Council management of the centre. The centre has recently been refurbished making it a viable building for the council to retain.

It is recommended to retain Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre as a part of the local multi-service offer and recognising the high level of need in the area. It is recommended to increase the income target for the centre by 100% to improve the financial sustainability of the centre.

5.9.6 Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service.

Assessment: The building is not suitable to be retained as a multi-service centre due to its small size and location. The nearest multi-service centre and library is New Parks Centre Library. There is a community run community centre, Allextion Youth & Community Centre 0.4km away. The building is considered suitable for lease under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy due to its low running costs, small size and opportunity to provide a good local offer to the residents of Braunstone Frith.

Feedback from the consultation indicated there was local interest in the opportunity for the community to take on the running of the centre.

It is recommended to withdraw from Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility

5.9.7 The BRITE Centre (multi-service centre)

Consultation Proposal: retain the BRITE Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 57.75hrs to 40hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The BRITE Centre is an existing multi-service centre housing a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and community café, and is ideal for further co-location of services. The BRITE Centre was built in 2005, is in good condition with low running costs and is ideally configured to serve the needs of Braunstone residents and the surrounding areas. Need in the local area is assessed as high with Braunstone & Rowley Fields ranked as 3rd most deprived out of 21 wards in Leicester. Access to the centre is good with local bus services running past the facility.

Feedback from the consultation identified earlier opening on some days to facilitate class visits from nearby schools and adult learning classes. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	9am-8.30pm	9am-7.30pm	9am-8pm	9am-7.45pm	9am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	57.75
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	10am-5pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-6pm	9am-4pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10pm-1pm	Closed	63

It is recommended to retain BRITE Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 57.75hrs to 40hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.8 Coleman Neighbourhood Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Coleman Neighbourhood Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service.

Assessment: The building is not suitable to be retained as a multi-service centre due to its poor location and low usage. The nearest multi-service centre is St Barnabas Library. The building is considered suitable for lease under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy due to its low running costs, small size and opportunity to provide a good local offer for local residents. Existing centre users include a pre-school and local madrasah would be supported to explore options to collaborate with interested community organisations or to find alternative premises.

Feedback from the consultation indicated there was local interest in the opportunity for the community to take on the running of the centre.

It is recommended to withdraw from Coleman Neighbourhood Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility.

5.9.9 Evington Library

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Evington Library and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility.

Assessment: The library is small and well located for residents of Evington village, however it is not suitable for a wider catchment area or for the co-location of services. The library is not assessed as serving an area of high deprivation within the city with the ward ranked 17th of 21 most deprived. The building running costs are low and the building is in good condition.

Feedback from the consultation: 63% of respondents to the main survey and 47% of respondents to the young people's survey said the proposals would make it "much harder" for them to visit the library. There were strong concerns that there were no local community groups who could take on the running of the library and that the proposals would lead to very low opening hours, loss of knowledgeable staff support and the possibility of closure. There were numerous suggestions that the Council should continue to run the library with reduced staffed opening hours and with support from volunteers. This solution was put forward with good support at the Open Meeting on 10th June.

It is recommended to retain Evington Library as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 47hrs to 25hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours below. It is recommended to maintain overall opening hours for inducted library members aged 16yrs+ through the existing library self-access system.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	47
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-2pm	10am-6pm	2pm-5pm	10am-5pm	Closed	1pm-4pm	Closed	25
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	1pm-4pm	Closed	63

5.9.10 Eyres Monsell Community Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Eyres Monsell Community Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service

Assessment: Although Eyres Monsell Community Centre has relatively low usage due to its' small catchment area (20,000 visits per year) the building is well located within the estate and has good engagement from local residents. The facility is considered suitable for lease under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy due to its low running costs, high need and opportunity to provide a good offer for local residents.

Feedback from the consultation indicated that residents were concerned about the future of the community centre and did not want to see it close. However both the main survey and the open meeting demonstrated there was local interest in the opportunity for the community to take on the running of the centre, and some support for this idea from residents and service users so long as local groups could continue to meet there.

It is recommended to withdraw from Eyres Monsell Community Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility.

5.9.11 Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library

Consultation Proposal: It is proposed to withdraw from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library due to the low usage and poor suitability of the facility and to explore a range of disposal options for the building

Assessment: Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library is one of the lowest use centres with just over 17,000 visits in 2024 - 25. Due to the size and age of the building running costs are very high. A recent building condition survey estimates work totalling £2.6 million is required over the next ten years to maintain the building. Due to the high running costs and complexity of the building it is not considered viable for a community organisation to take on the running. Fosse ward has areas of higher deprivation and is ranked as 7th most deprived of 21 wards. However there are three alternative libraries within the catchment area, Westcotes Library (0.5 miles), New Parks Centre Library (1.3 miles) and the BRITE Centre library and community rooms (1.5 miles). The Central Library (1.2 miles) is also well used by Fosse Library customers. There is a food bank operates from the rear annex of Fosse Centre and it is proposed to explore alternative location options for the organisation. Community room hire is low, however there are some regular groups meeting at the Neighbourhood Centre.

Consultation feedback: 135 people (2.7%) responding to the main survey identified Fosse Neighbourhood Centre as their primary centre. Of these, 115 used the community centre, and 65 used the library. 31% of the Neighbourhood Centre users and 33% of the library users said the proposal would make it "much harder" to use council services. Comments from the open meeting and from the surveys highlight the need for an alternative venue for Alice Hawkins Community Projects currently located in the annex. General comments were made about the importance of the library for children and young people to study and read. The survey responses indicate that overall nearly two thirds (63%) of Fosse Library users already use at least one other library, with one quarter (25%) of Fosse Library users also using Westcotes

library, and one third (33%) also using Leicester Central Library. All residents would have access to an alternative library within a maximum 1.25 miles from their home.

It is recommended to withdraw from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library and to work with existing community groups to find alternative venues for their activities. It is also recommended to support library users to access alternative provision including nearby libraries and to introduce a new children's Book Bus route in the Fosse area and promote the Home Library Service less mobile residents who are unable to leave their homes.

Following a formal options assessment it is recommended that Fosse Neighbourhood centre be offered for commercial lease or sale to ensure best use of the facility.

5.9.12 Gilmorton Community Rooms

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Gilmorton Community Rooms and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service.

Assessment: Gilmorton Community Rooms is a small unit with the lowest usage of all 25 sites in 2024-25. The running costs are modest at £16,500 per year and the hall has low usage of 1,500 visits per year. A food bank operates from the facility on a weekly basis. Due to its small size, peripheral location and very local catchment area the centre is not considered suitable for use as a multi-service centre. The facility is considered suitable for lease under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy due to its low running costs and opportunity to provide a good offer for local residents.

Consultation feedback: 11 people (0.2%) responding to the main survey identified Gilmorton Community Rooms as their primary centre. Of these, 8 said the proposal would make it "much harder" to use council services. Comments from the open meeting and from the surveys highlight that those using centre want to see it remain open. There was support for the community to take on the running of the centre.

It is recommended to withdraw from Gilmorton Community Rooms and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility.

5.9.13 Hamilton Library & Community Centre (multi-service centre)

Consultation proposal: retain the Hamilton Library & Community Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 40hrs to 30hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The Library Centre is an existing multi-service centre housing a library and community centre and is ideal for further co-location of services. Hamilton Centre was built in 2006, is in very good condition with low running costs and is ideally configured to serve the needs of Hamilton, Netherhall and Humberstone residents and the surrounding areas. The library is well located on the Tesco retail site next to a health centre. The centre serves a broad catchment in the northeast of the city with areas of high need in the local area including the Netherhall estate. Access to the centre is good with local bus services running to the busy shopping facility on the outer ring road.

Consultation feedback: Feedback from stakeholders and residents suggested a change to the proposed opening hours to facilitate community group visits on Fridays. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation. All other community groups would be able to utilise the self-access facilities to continue to meet.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	10am-2pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	40
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-2pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10am-2pm	Closed	64

It is recommended to retain Hamilton Library & Community Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 40hrs to 30hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.14 Highfields Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation proposal: retain the Highfields Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 51hrs to 40hrs per week

Assessment: The library is ideally located within the Highfields Estate, next to local retail units in the heart of the highly diverse local community and high density terraced housing and social housing tower blocks. The library has been recently refurbished in 2020 and serves a wide

catchment area. The building is well maintained and has low running costs. Overall need for the statutory service is assessed as very high, with over 108,000 visits in 2024-25 – the second busiest community library during this year. The ward is ranked 5th most deprived out of 21 wards in the multiple indices of deprivation

Consultation feedback: Feedback from stakeholders and residents suggested a change to the proposed opening hours to facilitate the high number of class visits on weekday mornings. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	10am-4pm	Closed	51
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Recommended Staffed Hours	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	9am-6pm	12 noon-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40

It is recommended to retain Highfields Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 51hrs to 40hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above.

5.9.15 Knighton Library

Consultation Proposal: to withdraw from Knighton Library and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility.

Assessment: The library is not suitable for use as a multi-service centre due to its small size and local catchment but is very well located for residents of Knighton and the surrounding area located alongside existing retail. The library is not assessed as serving an area of high deprivation within the city with the ward ranked lowest of all city wards in the indices of multiple deprivation. The usage of the library is very good especially with regard to book borrowing, with over 58,000 book issues in 2024-25. This combined with lower building running costs (excluding staffing) and the recent refurbishment in 2021 means the facility provides excellent value for money.

Feedback: There was a very high response to the consultation from Knighton Library users with the majority expressing opposition to the proposals. 852 people (17%) of respondents to the main survey and 140 (10%) of respondents to the young people's survey said their primary library was Knighton. Of these, 81% of respondents to the main survey and 71% of respondents to the young people's survey said the proposals would make it "much harder" for

them to visit the library. Feedback received during the open meetings and drop-in sessions indicated that key concerns were around the feasibility of community groups taking on the libraries, worries about the quality of a community run service, and the reliability of volunteer delivered opening hours. There were widespread concerns that there was limited capacity and insufficient expertise within the local community for a local group to take on the running of the libraries. There was also concern about the longer-term sustainability of a community run library with many people expressing concern that the library could close if a community management group failed in the future. Suggestions offered favoured a council run service with reduced opening hours and supported through greater volunteer and community involvement.

It is recommended to retain Knighton Library as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 47hrs to 25hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours below. It is recommended to maintain overall opening hours for inducted library members aged 16yrs+ through the existing library self-access system.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	47
Recommended Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-3pm	Closed	1pm-5pm	12pm-4pm	Closed	25
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	12pm-4pm	Closed	64

5.9.16 Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service.

Assessment: The centre is poorly located in an open space within the Netherhall estate making it vulnerable to anti-social behaviour. The facility has low use with 9,900 visits in 2024-25, mainly from a daily pre-school, and a dance and prayer club. Although the facility is not well located to serve a wide catchment, there is need in the immediate local area. Nearby alternatives for community space are provided by the Hamilton Library and Community Centre and by Thurnby Lodge Community Centre. The facility is too small to accommodate additional services but would provide an ideal opportunity for a local group to take on the running of the community centre for the benefit of local people.

Consultation feedback: 63 people (1.3%) responding to the main survey identified Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre as their primary centre. Of these, 31 (49%) said the proposal would make it “much harder” to use the centre. Comments from the open meeting and from the surveys highlight that those using centre want to see it remain open. There was support for the community to take on the running of the centre. A number of comments including from the Chair of Netherhall Neighbourhood Association put forward an alternative suggestion to make the Armadale Youth Centre (currently vacant) available for Community Asset Transfer instead.

It is recommended to explore the suggestion of relocating to the Armadale Centre. It is recommended to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running one of the two facilities depending on the strategic assessment of these sites.

5.9.17 New Parks Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation Proposal: retain the New Parks Library Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 40hrs to 30hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The Library Centre is an existing multi-service centre housing a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and access to housing appointments, and is ideal for further co-location of services. New Parks Centre Library was built in 2010 and is ideally located within the local retail parade and overlooking New College secondary school. The building is in excellent condition with low running costs and is ideally configured to serve the needs of New Parks residents and the surrounding areas. Need in the local area is assessed as high with Western ward ranked as 4th most deprived out of 21 wards in Leicester. The library received 43,000 visitors in 2024 – 25 and hosts a range of community groups and activities in its purpose built community rooms and learning suites. Access to the centre is good with local bus services stopping directly outside the facility and cycle and walking paths extending across the ward. It is proposed to implement a library self-access system to provide early morning and late evening access to library services outside of regular staffed hours.

Consultation feedback: Feedback from stakeholders and residents suggested a change to the proposed opening hours to facilitate community networks and groups on Tuesdays. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation. All other community groups would be able to utilise the self-access facilities to continue to meet.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-3pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-1pm	Closed	30
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10pm-1pm	Closed	63

It is recommended to retain New Parks Library Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 40hrs to 30hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.18 Pork Pie Library and Community Centre (multi-service centre)

Consultation Proposal: retain the Pork Pie Library Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 40hrs to 30hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The Library Centre is an existing multi-service centre housing a library, community centre, adult learning classrooms and a weekly DWP Job Shop, and is ideal for further co-location of services. The Pork Pie Library was refurbished in 2015, is ideally configured for co-location of services as one of the first multi-service centres to be developed in the city. Whilst the building is well presented with average running costs, its ongoing maintenance costs tend to be higher due to the age and listed status of the building. The iconic building is highly visible on the busy Pork Pie roundabout and outer ring road and is well located to serve both Saffron and Eyres Monsell wards. Public transport links are good. Need in the local area is considered high as Eyres Monsell ward and Saffron wards are the 2 most deprived wards as assessed by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

Consultation feedback: Feedback from stakeholders and residents suggested a change to the proposed opening hours to accommodate popular community groups who are unable to operate self-access, on Wednesday evening and on Thursdays. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed

hours following feedback from the consultation. All other community groups would be able to utilise the self-access facilities to continue to meet.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	45
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	10am-1pm	9.30am-7pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-1pm	Closed	30
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10pm-1pm	Closed	63

It is recommended to retain Pork Pie Library and Community Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 45hrs to 30hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.19 Rushey Mead Library

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Rushey Mead Library and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of the facility.

Assessment: The library is small and well located for local residents of Rushey Mead, however it is not suitable for a wider catchment area or for the co-location of services. The library is not assessed as serving an area of high deprivation within the city with the ward ranked 18th of 21 most deprived. The area falls within the catchment of Belgrave Library with 21% of Rushey Mead Library users also visiting Belgrave Library at least once during the same year. The overall usage of Rushey Mead Library is very low at under 16,000 visits per year. The building running costs (excluding staffing costs) are low and the centre received investment in 2019.

Consultation feedback: There was a very high response to the consultation from Rushey Mead Library users with the majority expressing opposition to the proposals. 585 people (12%) of respondents to the main survey and 116 (8.5%) of respondents to the young people's survey said their primary library was Rushey Mead. Of these, 72% of respondents to the main survey and 29% of respondents to the young people's survey said the proposals would make it "much harder" for them to visit the library. Feedback received during the open meetings and drop-in sessions indicated that key concerns were around the availability and capacity of local residents to take on the running the library, worries about the quality of a community run

service, and the reliability of volunteer delivered opening hours. There was also concern about the longer-term sustainability of a community run library with many people expressing concern that the library could close if a community management group failed in the future.

Suggestions offered favoured a council run service with reduced opening hours and supported through greater volunteer and community involvement. 50% of Rushey Mead Library users responding to the survey said they use one or more other libraries, with 41% using nearby Belgrave Library.

It is recommended to retain Rushey Mead Library as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 29hrs to 20hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Hours
Current Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	1pm-6.30pm	Closed	1pm-6.30pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	29
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-3pm	Closed	1pm-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	20

5.9.20 Rushey Mead Recreation Centre

Consultation proposal: to withdraw from Rushey Mead Recreation Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service

Assessment: Although the building is small and not suitable for use as a multi-service centre, the hall enjoys good usage by local people with over 33,000 visits in 2024-25. The building has relatively low running costs and has received some investment in 2019. The facility has low running costs, high usage and provides a good offer for local residents.

Consultation feedback: Feedback from the consultation and further conversations with stakeholders identified a high level of opposition to the proposal to transfer the centre to the community. 550 of the respondents to the main survey said Rushey Mead was their primary centre, and over 200 people attended the open meeting at nearby Soar Valley College. 71% of respondents who use the centre thought the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. There were concerns that, as the centre is already very well used, a successful CAT organisation would need to displace current activities in order to support their own direct provision. There were widespread concerns that Community Asset Transfer could lead to some community groups being marginalised, and the centre being less accessible. Evaluation of the current room hire timetable shows there is extremely limited capacity for additional activity should a community group take on the running of the centre. Many respondents indicated they would prefer the council to explore ideas for income generation, to support

continued Council management of the centre. A submission was received from a local user group keen to work with the Council to improve the financial viability of the centre under council control. The centre has recently been refurbished making it a viable building for the council to retain.

It is recommended to retain Rushey Mead Recreation Centre recognising the high demand for the space and the limited options for a community organisation to take on the centre. It is recommended to work with local groups and to increase the income target for the centre by 100% to improve the financial sustainability of the centre which would become self-sustaining under this model.

5.9.21 St Barnabas Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation proposal: retain St Matthews Centre as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 49.5hrs to 40hrs per week. Library self-access to be implemented to increase overall opening hours.

Assessment: The library is a busy multi-service centre offering a digital and performance suite, adult learning classes, housing enquiries, and a weekly DWP Job Shop. The building is well located off the main Uppingham Road with excellent public transport links and serving a broad catchment area. The library has received Arts Council Funding for investment in one wing to create a space for performance, cultural and community activities. The building is well used with 52,000 visits per year. Running costs are in line with the age of building, and investment is required to ensure the building remains fit for delivery if services in the future. Overall need for the statutory service is assessed as high, with the service covering a wide catchment in a more disadvantaged area of the city including the North Evington ward. North Evington is ranked 9th most deprived out of 21 wards in the multiple indices of deprivation

Consultation feedback: Feedback from stakeholders and residents suggested no changes to the proposed opening hours and some positive comments were received with regard to extended availability through library self-access systems. The table below summarises the current staffed hours, the hours proposed for consultation and the recommended staffed hours following feedback from the consultation.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Current Opening Hours (Staffed)	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	49.5
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40

Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40
Recommended opening hours including Self-Access	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	8am – 8pm	10pm-1pm	Closed	63

It is recommended to retain St Barnabas Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 49.5hrs to 40hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours by installing library self-access.

5.9.22 St Matthews Centre and Library (multi-service centre – St Matthews Children’s Centre)

Consultation proposal: to relocate the library elsewhere on the estate as part of the statutory service and to withdraw from St Matthews Centre which does not form part of the statutory service.

Assessment: Due to the size, condition and cost of running the centre the building is not considered viable for community management. The centre has good usage with 110,000 visits in 2024 – 25. Due to the size and condition and long opening hours of the building the budgeted net running cost is the highest in the service for a neighbourhood facility, at £315,000 in 2023 - 24. Due the poor condition and ongoing running and maintenance costs of the building it is not considered suitable for future service delivery. The area served is assessed as high need with Wycliffe ward the 5th most deprived in the city, and the St Matthews estate experiencing particularly high levels of disadvantage. The ward community is one of the most diverse in the city. St Matthews Centre currently offers a range of services including a well-used housing enquiry desk, library, adult learning classrooms and community rooms. The large sports hall has been closed due to the presence of RAAC in the roof which would be costly to replace. There is also a private pre-school located in the centre.

Consultation feedback: Whilst formal responses to the consultation survey were low, there was excellent engagement from community organisations who use the centre and serve St Matthews community. A key concern at the open meeting was that the library should be relocated on the estate itself. There was also concern that other services currently delivered from building, including Leicester Adult Learning and Housing enquiries should be relocated as part of the library offer. There are a number of community groups meeting regularly in the centre, some with large numbers of attendees. There was a concern that the council should continue to accommodate the groups and where this was not possible to support them to find alternative venues. There were also questions about the future of the community centre which is part of the Housing estate. Following consultation a change was made to the recommended opening hours to deliver the existing Homework Help sessions:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Current Staffed Hours	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	74
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30

It is recommended to relocate St Matthews Library and services to St Matthews Children, Young People and Family Centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council. The recommended staffed opening hours are 30/week as per the timetable below. It is recommended to invest in St Matthews Children's Centre to accommodate multi-services. It is recommended to work with community groups to explore alternative locations for them to meet.

5.9.23 Thurnby Lodge Community Centre (multi-service centre)

Consultation proposal: to retain Thurnby Lodge Community Centre as a multi-service centre with a non-statutory library provision delivered by the council.

Assessment: The community centre is ideally placed for co-location of library and community services to serve a wide catchment across Thurncourt ward and surrounding areas. The centre is well located next to a parade of retail units and well served by public transport. The centre is well used and has a low net running cost of £120,000 per year. The centre shares a car park with the neighbouring Peace Centre madrasah and food bank, making this an ideal location for the introduction of the library. Need within the area is considered high, Thurncourt ward is the 11th most deprived of 21 wards in the city. The building is very well used and consequently in need of investment.

Consultation feedback: Local user groups were keen to engage with the consultation, highlighting the busy-ness of the centre and the need within the local area. A small library provision was welcomed noting this would provide coverage on the periphery of the east of the city. A number of changes were suggested to the staffed opening hours by local groups as some were unable to support self-access to the centre. The recommended changes to the staffed opening hours are as follows:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Current Staffed Hours	1pm-10pm	9.30am-10pm	1pm-10pm	12.30pm-7pm	3.30pm-10pm	Closed	Closed	43.5
Proposed Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	Closed	11am-9.30pm	3pm-7pm	9am-7pm	11.30am-5pm	Closed	Closed	30

It is recommended to retain Thurnby Lodge Community Centre as a multi-service centre and to implement a small library service point delivered by the Council. It is recommended to reduce staffed opening hours from 43.5hrs to 30hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above. It is recommended to maximise overall opening hours with community centre self-access.

5.9.24 Tudor Centre

Consultation proposal: Consultation proposal: to withdraw from the Tudor Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility does not form part of the statutory library service.

Assessment: Although the Tudor Centre has relatively low usage due to its' small catchment area (21,000 visits in 2024 – 25) the building is well located within the local estate with retail units and has good engagement from local residents. The facility is considered suitable for lease under the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy due it's low running costs, high need and opportunity to provide a good offer for local residents. The nearest multi-service centre is Beaumont Leys Library which serves the northwest of the city, Beaumont Leys and Abbey wards.

Consultation feedback: Feedback from the consultation indicated that residents were concerned about the future of the community centre and the main concern was that they did not want to see it close. 61 people (1% of all responses) responding to the main survey said the Tudor Centre was their main community centre. Of these 25 people (41%) said the proposals would make it "much harder" to visit. However, both the main survey and the open meeting demonstrated there was local interest in the opportunity for the community to take on the running of the centre. At the open meeting there was particular interest in the policy and processes around Community Asset Transfer to ensure that a community organisation would continue to make the centre available to existing users.

It is recommended to withdraw from Tudor Centre and to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running as the facility.

5.9.25 Westcotes Library (multi-service centre)

Consultation proposal: retain Westcotes Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the council with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 51hrs to 30hrs per week.

Assessment: The Library is very well located in an area of high density terraced housing with extensive retail on the main Narborough road, once described as “the most diverse road in Britain.” The library received investment in 2015 to create a flexible community space and to expand the IT provision which is especially well used. Westcotes Library is highly accessible with excellent public transport links on one of the main transport routes into the city. The library is well used for services such as computers, Wi-Fi and the printing, with over 8,000 hours of public computer use in the last year. The running costs are low and the library is ideally configured to serve the needs of Westcotes residents and the surrounding areas including Fosse ward. Need in the local area is assessed as higher with Westcotes ward ranked as 13th most deprived out of 21 wards in Leicester.

Consultation feedback: Consultation responses highlighted the higher use of IT facilities at Westcotes Library and the higher weekend footfall at the library. No changes are recommended to the proposed staffed opening hours noting the schedule provides evening and weekend availability.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Current Staffed Hours	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12 noon-4pm	51
Proposed Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30

It is recommended to retain Westcotes Library as a multi-service centre as part of the statutory library service delivered by the Council, with a reduction in staffed opening hours from 51hrs to 30hrs per week and with the recommended opening hours above.

5.9.26 The maps below show the residential properties within a 30-minute bus catchment from the recommended library and community centre provision, for the recommended proposals. The distance combines the time taken to walk to the bus stop with time taken to travel on the bus. The maps show a citywide saturation of bus route access. The darker areas indicate greater overlap of 30 minute bus route coverage areas for each centre. All areas of the city have access to one or more libraries within a 30 minute bus journey. Most areas of the city also have access to a community centre within a 30 minute bus journey.

Figure 10: residential properties within a 15 and 30-minute public transport catchment from the recommended library provision

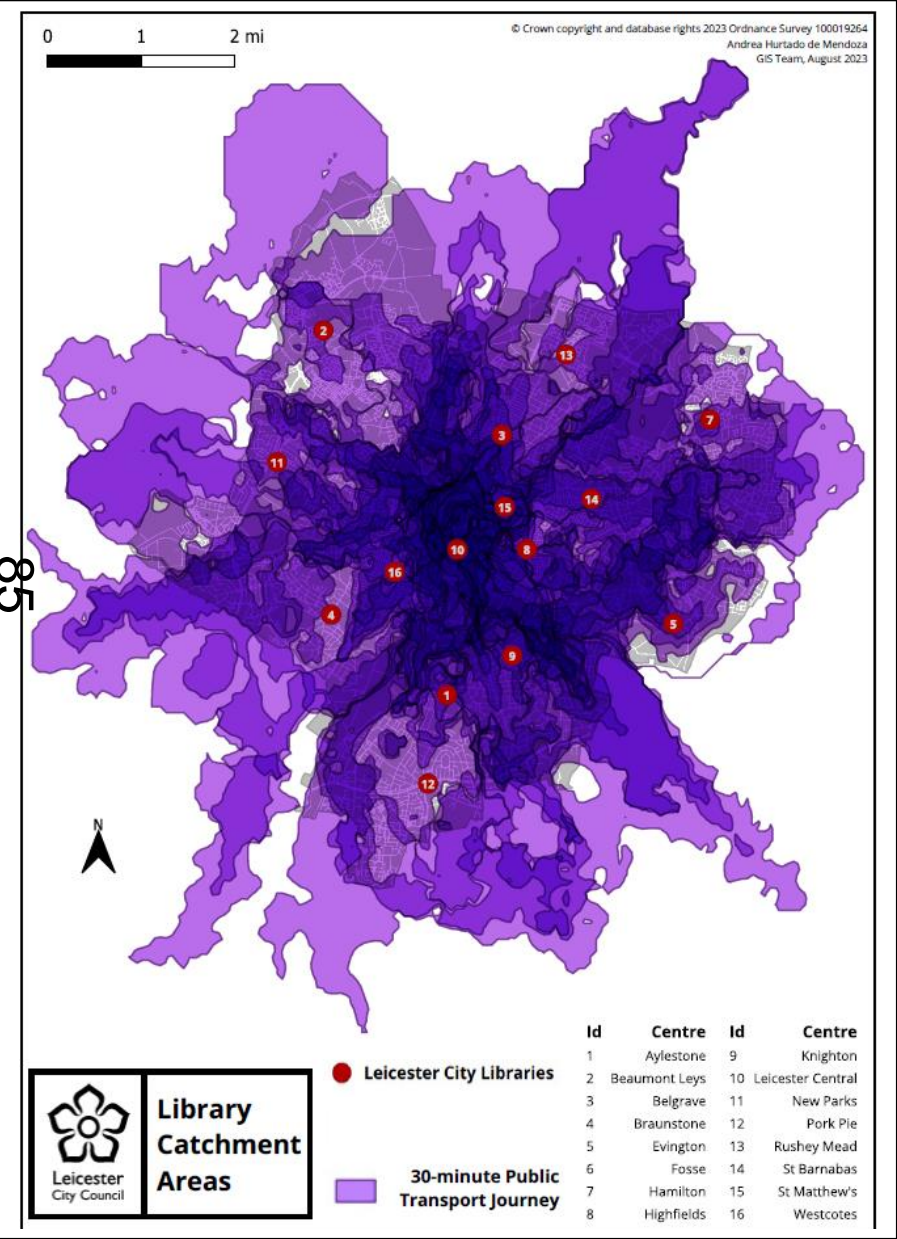
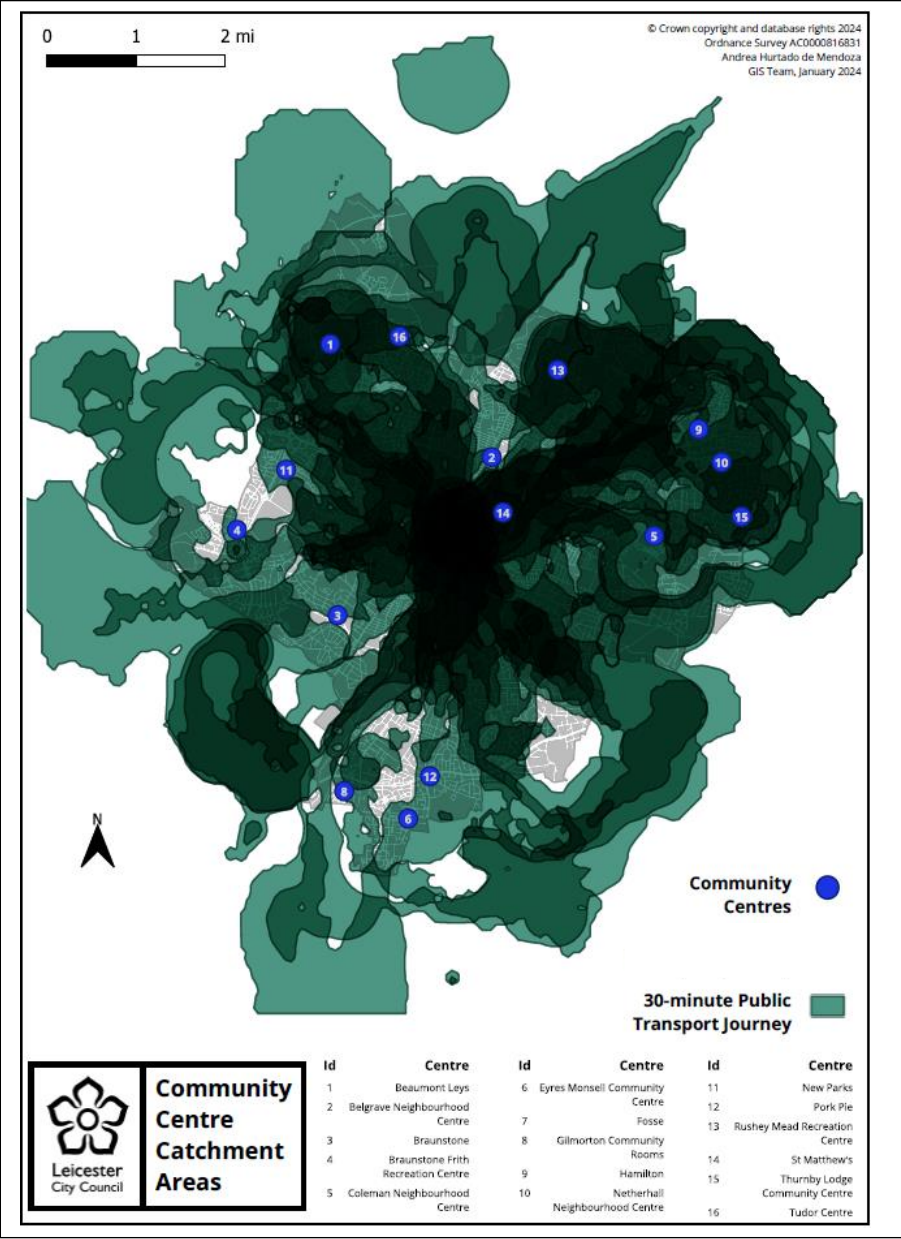


Figure 11: residential properties within a 15 and 30-minute public transport catchment from the recommended community centre provision



Non building specific proposals and recommendations

5.10 Below is a table of the non-building specific proposals and details of any changes made following the consultation.

Table 18: Non-building specific proposals and recommendations

Proposal Consulted On	Recommendation
Investment of £1,000,000 to further develop retained buildings as multi-service centres	Investment would be made to further develop and adapt retained buildings as multi-service centres including libraries, community rooms and adult learning facilities.
Reviewing the areas visited by the Children's BookBus	It is recommended to undertake a review of the Book Bus routes and stops following the implementation of the building based changes. In particular it is recommended to explore regular (weekly) provision in the Fosse area.
Providing enhanced activity programmes around our "Universal Offers"	Enhanced activity programmes would be provided around our "Universal Offers" in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together. The libraries reading programme and children's engagement activities would be prioritised to encourage reading for pleasure and to improve life chances from early years onwards.
Continuing to invest in our online services and resources including our e-library	Online services and resources including the e-library would continue to receive investment recognising the growth in this area and the convenience of 24/7 digital services for city residents.
Supporting community groups to take on the running of more services	As part of the recommendations six community centres would be made available for lease under the council's Community Asset Transfer policy. The council would no longer run Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, Eyres Monsell Community Centre, Gilmorton Community Rooms, Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and Tudor Centre. The council is committed to supporting community groups take on these sites and services.
Developing volunteer opportunities	Volunteer opportunities would be developed to enhance and add value to the services we offer and to provide a range of benefits to participants.
Providing small libraries at identified children's centres	Small libraries at identified children's centres would continue to be provided for additional access to books for children, and parents and carers with young families.
Expanded Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer	The Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer would be expanded to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever residents are unable to leave their homes to access reading.
Increase community room hire charges	This is a new recommendation arising from the consultation feedback, particularly around the feedback from some users of Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead

	Recreation Centre. Community room hire charges would be increased by 20 per cent, over 2 years, to support the operation of and financial viability of the retained council run community centres.
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6. Conclusions and detailed recommendations

- 6.1 An extensive public engagement exercise on the provision of libraries and community centres was undertaken in 2023 to information research on a needs assessment for these services in Leicester City. The resulting public engagement report and secondary research report were used to develop proposals for consultation between April – June 2025. There was a very high level of participation in the public consultation. The responses and feedback received have been analysed and a findings report produced. This feedback has been considered to shape final recommendations as follows.
- 6.2 The programme is delivered within the context of the Council’s financial position as outlined in the report for the current year Budget 2025/26. The recommendations would retain more services under Council management and would deliver a reduced annual revenue saving of £1.57 million to contribute towards a required divisional saving of £7.2 million.

Areas of need: community and wellbeing focus

- 6.3 The consultation findings reaffirm the areas of service delivery to be prioritised. The feedback received demonstrates the need for community hubs with a focus on services and activities supporting wellbeing, bringing people together and overcoming loneliness and social isolation. Within the scope our libraries and community centres the following “Universal Offers” defined by Libraries Connected would be developed and prioritised:
- Health and wellbeing – collaborating with partner services to provide community hubs, overcome loneliness and isolation, and provide access to health and wellbeing information and initiatives
 - Culture and creativity – events and activities reflecting Leicester’s diverse communities to bring people together
 - Reading – providing programmes to promote reading for pleasure in a wide range of formats for residents of all ages to support leisure and learning and to help improve life chances
 - Digital and Information – providing access to resources and support to help residents access services online and in person
 - Children’s Promise – providing reading and activity programmes for young families and children of all ages, noting the young age profile of Leicester city.

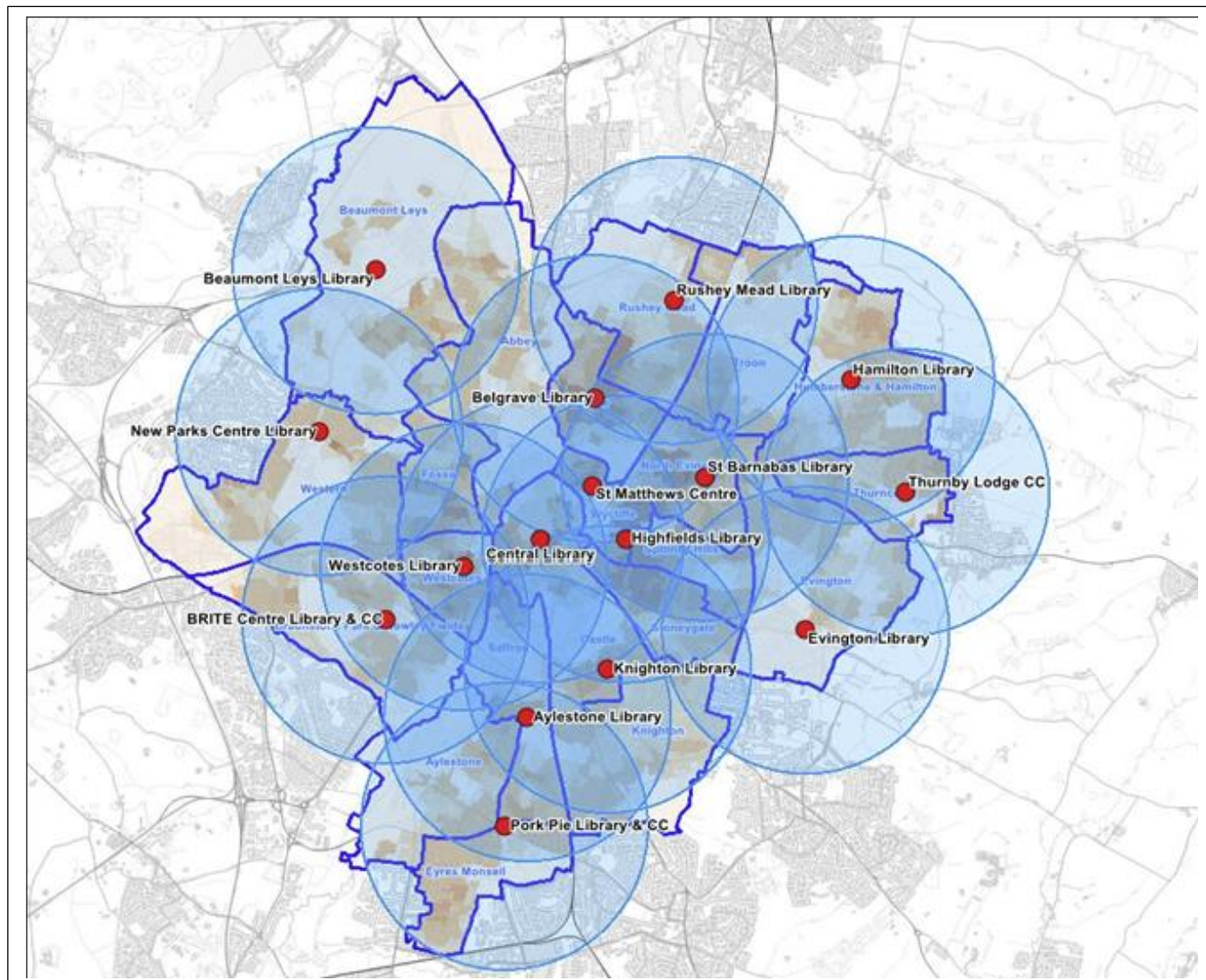
Recommended model

- 6.4 There was a high level of participation in the consultation. A separate findings report is published with details of the feedback received during the twelve-week period. The feedback from the consultation has been considered together with the latest service data to develop final recommendations for the libraries and community centres. As a result there are substantial changes to the original proposals. The recommendations are for the council to retain 18 facilities as follows:

Library provision

- 6.5 The recommended library provision would be at 15 statutory sites with a small non-statutory offer at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre. This would give 99.5% coverage to residential properties within 1.25 miles of a library. A map of provision is below:

Figure 12: Recommended library provision within Leicester City



Multi-service centres

- 6.6 It is recommended that 12 multi-service centres would offer library, community centre and internal and external partner services. Multi-service centres would have good access within a broad catchment area bringing a range of services together under one roof to provide joined up services in local neighbourhoods and improve access to council and partner services for local residents. Services offered focus on wider wellbeing and would be appropriate to the local setting. Partner services would include Customer Service and Housing pop up offices, Leicester Adult Learning and DWP Work Coaches and Family Hubs signposting and services. The centres would provide library and community services to a wide catchment area with accessible transport routes.

Central Library

- 6.7 The Central Library would continue to deliver a broader offer, serving residents living in all areas of the city. A wide range of reading and cultural programmes would be developed to support the promotion of reading for pleasure, to bring communities together and to support informal learning and improve life chances. The city centre offer is supplemented by a recent partnership with the two city universities providing access to study space, Wi-Fi and specialist book stock for members of the public with extended opening hours. There would be a small reduction in the opening hours for the Central Library.

Three stand-alone libraries

- 6.8 Three stand-alone libraries would be retained. Following feedback from the recent consultation exercise the council would continue to run Evington, Knighton and Rushey Mead Libraries. The staffed opening hours would be reduced. Knighton and Evington Libraries would continue to offer extended customer self-access hours outside of staffed times. It would not be cost effective to install self-access at Rushey Mead Library due to the very low usage of the building.

Two stand-alone community centres

- 6.9 Two stand-alone community centres, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre would continue to be run by the council in addition to multi-service centre community facilities. The council would work with the local community to improve the usage and financial sustainability of the centres.

Standardised staffed opening hours

- 6.10 Staffed opening hours would be standardised across the estate informed by local need and national benchmarking. A reduction in staffed opening hours at retained sites would enable the widest network of facilities to be sustained. The Central Library would be staffed for 45 hours per week. The five busiest multi-service centres would be staffed for 40 hours per week, with the seven less busy multi-service centres staffed for 30 hours per week. Standalone libraries would be staffed for 25 hours per week (Knighton and Evington Libraries) and 20 hours per week (Rushey Mead Library). The proposed opening hours have been amended to reflect the consultation feedback for each building.
- Core (staffed) library opening hours (including the closure of Fosse Library) would be reduced by 208 hours per week
 - Overall library opening hours including self-access at 8 libraries would be reduced by 64.25 hours per week
 - Weekend opening: all libraries will open on Saturday
 - Evening opening: all libraries will open for one evening or more until 6pm or later

Library self-access technology

- 6.11 Customer self-access systems would be implemented at eight (six additional) library centres to extend the overall opening hours. The technology provides self-access for inducted customers via their library card with live CCTV monitoring in place. 8am to 8pm opening would be

supported by the introduction of library self-access systems extending availability for customers over 16yrs and accompanied children beyond the staffed opening hours.

Community run services

6.12 Five community centres would be made available for lease under the council's Community Asset Transfer policy. The council would no longer run Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, Eyres Monsell Community Centre, Gilmorton Community Rooms and Tudor Centre. A formal opportunity would be published with support for community organisations to develop a business case to take on the running of the five centres. Should there be no suitable applications to take on the running of one or more of the five centres the facilities would be considered for commercial lease or sale.

6.13 **Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre:** It is recommended to offer community organisations the opportunity to take on the running of *either* the Armadale Centre *or* Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre following positive engagement and early interest from the local community. A study would be undertaken to determine the feasibility of relocating the community centre to the Armadale building following suggestions made through the consultation. It is noted that housing development is planned for the land on which the Armadale Centre is located and that this would need to be switched to the site of the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre.

Released buildings

6.14 **Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library** would close due to the low usage of the facility and the poor condition of the building. There are several libraries nearby which are considered accessible for local residents with 100% of residences falling within a 1.25 mile radius of alternative library provision. Local residents and service users would be proactively signposted to these alternative services as part of the transition programme, with in person visits and inductions arranged to welcome customer to alternative libraries:

- Westcotes library is 0.5 miles (19 minutes' walk) from the Fosse Neighbourhood centre.
- New Parks Library is 1.3 miles from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre directly accessible by the number 14 bus.
- The BRITE centre is 1.5 miles from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre directly accessible by the number 104 bus.
- The Central library is 1.2 miles away from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre with regular buses to the city centre.

The council will also explore locations for book drop offs and pick up points in the local area to enable residents to order books by phone or online for local pickup.

The Children's BookBus routes would be reviewed to include weekly stops in the Fosse area to engage children and young families with books and reading.

The Home Library Service which is available to all city residents would be promoted to residents and service users in Fosse ward during the transition period to ensure those with limited mobility are able to continue to borrow books through deliveries to their homes.

It is proposed to work in partnership with Alice Hawkins Community Projects which operates from the annex of the building and would be supported to relocate elsewhere within Fosse ward recognising the significant benefits delivered to local people.

The council's estates and buildings team has undertaken a review of building options for the Fosse Centre and would commence an early marketing process following a decision.

- 6.15 St Matthews Library would be relocated to St Matthews Children, Young People and Family Centre on St Matthews Estate, which would also accommodate Adult Learning and other services as a multi-service centre. St Matthews Centre is not sustainable in the medium to longer term future due to the poor condition of the building including the large sports hall area which is closed for safety reasons due to the presence of RAAC concrete in the roof. Options would be explored for the future of the St Matthews Centre site once the services have relocated. This work does not form part of the Neighbourhood Services programme and will instead be led by the Housing and Estates and Building Services divisions.

Staff and budget adjustments

- 6.16 Staffing and operating costs would be reduced with a revised staffing model reflecting the changes in service delivery and opening hours. Core skills would be retained within the service to ensure quality services continue to be developed in the transformed service.
- 6.17 The Book Fund budget would be reduced by £30,000 from £415,000 to £385,000 in line with the recommendations.
- 6.18 Community room hire charges would be increased by 20%, over a two-year period, to support the operation and financial viability of the remaining council run community centres.

Investment

- 6.19 Investment would be made to further develop and adapt retained buildings as multi-service centres including libraries, community rooms and adult learning facilities. Some retained buildings would benefit from a refurbishment programme to modernise facilities to reflect the needs of local people, and to ensure our multi-service centres are fit for the future.
- 6.20 Online services and resources including the e-library would continue to receive investment recognising the growth in this area and the convenience of 24/7 digital services for city residents.

Volunteer support

6.21 Volunteer opportunities would be further developed to enhance and add value to the services we offer and to provide a range of benefits to participants.

Extended library access

6.22 Small libraries at identified children's centres would continue to be provided for additional access to books for children, and parents and carers with young families, in addition to the statutory library service.

6.23 The Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer would be expanded to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever residents are unable to leave their homes to access reading.

6.24 The routes and Children's BookBus service would be reviewed following the implementation of changes outlined above to support children and young families living in disadvantaged communities and to provide access to books and reading programmes in these areas.

6.25 The opening hours for libraries are recommended as follows:

Table 19: Recommended staffed and self-access opening hours

Centre		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Staffed Hours
Aylestone Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	N/A	30
	Self-Access Hours	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-1pm	8am-1pm	
Beaumont Leys Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-6pm	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-3pm	9.30am-1pm	Closed	40
Belgrave Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	2pm-6.30pm	10am-6.30pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
BRITE Centre	Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	10am-5pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-6pm	9am-4pm	10am-1pm	Closed	40
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
Central Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-7pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	11am-4pm	Closed	45
Evington Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-2pm	10am-6pm	2pm-5pm	10pm-5pm	Closed	1pm-4pm	Closed	25
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
Hamilton Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-2pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
Highfields Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-1pm	9am-6pm	12 noon-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	40
Knighton Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-3pm	Closed	1pm-5pm	12pm-4pm	Closed	25

	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
New Parks Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-3pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-1pm	Closed	30
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
Pork Pie Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	9.30am-5pm	10am-1pm	9.30am-7pm	10am-5pm	Closed	10am-1pm	Closed	30
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
Rushey Mead Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-3pm	Closed	1pm-6pm	Closed	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	Closed	20
St Barnabas Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	Closed	40
	Self-Access Hours	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	Closed	
St Matthews Library (within the Childrens Centre)	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	Closed	30
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	Recommended Staffed Hours	Closed	11am-9.30pm	3pm-7pm	9am-7pm	11.30am-5pm	Closed	Closed	30
Westcotes Library	Recommended Staffed Hours	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	Closed	10am-2pm	Closed	30

6.26 The table below shows the current and recommended staffed hours and the current grand total of hours compared to the recommended grand total of hours. The grand total of hours includes Self-Access hours.

Table 20: Recommended staffed and total hours v current staffed and total hours

Opening hours	Current	Recommended
Staffed opening hours	754	525
Total opening hours (with self-access)	825	778

Equalities Impact

6.27 A full Equality Impact Assessment was carried out following the public engagement undertaken and secondary research work carried out in 2023 to support the proposals developed for consultation. The EIA has been updated to reflect the findings of the consultation and recommendations put forward in this report. The assessment is summarised as follows.

6.28 The engagement work and subsequent consultation has placed equalities considerations for Leicester residents at the forefront of the recommended future delivery model. Key equalities deliverables for Leicester's libraries and community centres for the future of the service include:

- Supporting digital inclusion for our communities
- Offering modern, warm, safe spaces for study and hosting/signposting to support services.
- Providing library and community services to areas of deprivation and socio-economic need
- Focusing on those who are NOT using libraries and community centres but may have need and what can be done to encourage wider use. It is clear from the consultation that

libraries and community centres should be better promoted and signed to ensure those who need them are aware of the help and support on offer.

- Supporting and providing access to a wide range of services within our facilities.

6.29 Current usage of our libraries and community centres by ethnicity demonstrates a close correlation with the ethnic make-up of the city as a whole. This is also reflected at local facility level. The proposals are intended to serve the widest range of residents and to promote community cohesion by bringing different groups together through a programme of cultural and creative events and activities. It is recommended to monitor usage by a range of protected characteristics including ethnicity to ensure the new model is serving all sections of the community.

6.30 Age is a consideration for inequalities faced by two groups (older people and children). There is disproportionately high usage of libraries by children and young people under 16yrs. Children may be less able to travel to use a local library. A large number of the children responding to the under 16yrs survey said they used an after-school homework club, indicating they are visiting the library on their way home from school. Homework Clubs would be developed under the proposal to respond to broader needs around health and wellbeing and especially recognising the role the clubs play in providing a neutral, safe and welcoming space outside of school and home and have a role to play in boosting mental health. Following consultation the proposed opening hours have been amended at Belgrave Library to ensure the busy homework club can continued to be accessed by the children.

6.31 Children living in deprived areas are affected by child poverty. Under the recommendations multi-service centres including library provision will be located in areas of greatest need where possible. A range of children's reading programmes will continue to be developed to include outreach programmes delivered through primary and secondary schools. The children's BookBus routes will be reviewed to focus on children in the most disadvantaged areas considering any changes in local service provision and in particular in the area around Fosse Neighbourhood Centre which is recommended to close. Satellite libraries at local children's centres will be expanded to reach more children and young families in these areas. Outreach programmes will be prioritised under the transformed service to provide opportunities for all children to engage with reading for pleasure. Schemes such as Our Best Book, Our Best Picture Book and the Reading Rampage will continue to be delivered to children at participating primary and secondary schools.

6.32 Older people were over-represented in the consultation responses with 27% of all respondents over the age of 65yrs. This was reflected in comments from older people living in deprived areas who said they visit community run groups at local facilities to improve physical health and overcome social isolation. Under the recommendations the Council would work with groups meeting to socialise at Community Centres to support them through the community asset transfer of centres, or to explore alternative arrangements where the centre is recommended for

closure. A programme will be set up to support community organisations to take on the running of community facilities where appropriate to develop wider community benefits.

6.33 There is an impact on all groups using Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library due to the recommendation to withdraw from the building.

- There is proportionately higher use of the library by children especially younger children aged 5-9 years. The Children's BookBus routes would be reviewed to include weekly stops in the Fosse area to ensure children and young families continue to have access to books and reading. There are several libraries nearby which are considered accessible for local residents with 100% of residences falling within a 1.25 mile radius of alternative library provision. Local residents and service users would be proactively signposted to these alternative services as part of the transition programme, with in person visits and inductions arranged to welcome customer to alternative libraries including Westcotes library which is 0.5 miles (19 minutes' walk) from the Fosse Neighbourhood centre and New Parks Library which is 1.3 miles from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre directly accessible by the number 14 bus. The council will also explore locations for book drop offs and pick up points in the local area to enable residents to order books by phone or online for local pickup.
- There are proportionately fewer older people using the library. The Home Library Service which is available to all city residents would be promoted to residents and service users in Fosse ward during the transition period to ensure those with limited mobility are able to continue to borrow books through deliveries to their homes.
- Children in poverty could be impacted by the need to relocate the Alice Hawkins Community Projects foodbank. It is proposed to work in partnership with Alice Hawkins Community Projects which operates from the annex of the building and would be supported to relocate elsewhere within Fosse ward recognising the benefits delivered to local people.

Finance

6.34 Following consultation, the proposals have been revised to take into consideration the feedback received. The revised proposals recommended in this report would retain more services under council management and deliver a savings figure of up to £1.57 million.

6.35 It is noted that the recommendations would achieve around a reduced saving of £0.5 million less than the proposals consulted upon.

6.36 The proposed profile for savings is over a two-year financial period as follows. The savings profile takes into account the timescale for a range of projects required to implement the recommendations:

Table 21: Cumulative revenue savings achieved from recommendations

Financial Year	Cumulative revenue saving
2026 – 27	£570,000
2027 – 28	£1,570,000
Full year saving (future years)	£1,570,000

Risks and issues

6.37 The following risks and issues have been identified in relation to the recommendations.

Table 22: Risks and issues relating to recommendations

Risk or Issue	Proposed mitigation
Community Asset Transfer Risk there is no viable interest in one or more community centres proposed for Community Asset Transfer	Early expressions of interest were received for all 6 community centres during the consultation period. The council has developed a robust policy and process to support community asset transfer. Third party infrastructure support would be provided to help community organisations to develop a viable business plan.
Community Asset Transfer Risk that community benefits would not be delivered or that existing community groups might be unable to continue	A robust business plan would be required to outline the community benefits and approach to supporting existing centre users. The plan would be included in the legal contract and would be monitored by the council to ensure the agreed outcomes are delivered.
Community Asset Transfer Issue: TUPE Transfer of staff may apply to one or more Community Asset Transfer scenarios	Any potential implications for Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) for staff will be clearly stated in the council's published CAT opportunities. The council's legal team will assess and advise as to whether TUPE would apply or not for each scenario.
Reduced opening hours There is a risk reduced opening hours may impact in accessibility of services.	The recommended opening hours have been revised following consultation to respond to the feedback received. All statutory multi-service centre libraries will have weekend opening on Saturdays, and at least one weekday evening beyond 5pm to ensure people working during weekdays can access services. Self-Access will be available for inducted customers at 8 library sites, extending current availability.
Recruitment of volunteers There is a risk the service will not be able to recruit volunteers to deliver added services and engage local residents	The service has a robust volunteer policy in place and uses a corporate system and procedures to recruit. The service has a strong record of volunteer recruitment and a good base of already active volunteers. Indications

	from the consultation are that communities want to volunteer to support services.
Sustainability of council run buildings There is risk that Neighbourhood Services buildings will deteriorate if backlog and ongoing maintenance and repairs are not able to be funded	Full condition surveys have been undertaken of all Neighbourhood Services buildings. Capital funding has been identified to invest in buildings which will be recommended to deliver council services in the future.
Future use of vacated buildings There is a risk that Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and St Matthews Centre may remain empty attracting Anti-Social Behaviour and with missed opportunities for the neighbourhood	Asset Development Reviews have been undertaken for the two buildings proposed for withdrawal, which are not considered suitable for community running. The Council's Housing and Estates divisions are engaged in planning for the future use of these sites.
Project delivery There is a risk that transformation projects may not be delivered on time, delaying budgetary savings and/or resulting in gaps in service	It is recommended that revenue savings are profiled to ensure services will continue to be delivered by council until community asset transfer processes have concluded. Neighbourhood Services would continue to run St Matthews Centre until reconfiguration works at the Children's Centre are complete.
Community groups and events There is a risk some community groups and events could be displaced by the recommended changes.	Self-access systems will be in place at many centres to support community groups to meet at times suitable for them. Neighbourhood Services officers will work with community groups to explore alternative locations where groups are displaced.
Communication of changes There is a risk that local residents and service users are not aware of the changes to the service resulting in reduced usage and uncertainty of service availability.	A full communications programme will be put in place for each stage of the transformation to include all partners and stakeholders. Contacts collected through the consultation will be used to provide updates and communication the decision.

7. Appendices

7.1 A separate Findings Report and Equalities Impact Assessment are available as separate reports.

Proposals for Libraries and Community Centres

Findings Report



Version Control

Version	Author	Description
1.0	Michael Clarke	Draft
2.0	Michael Clarke	Final

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Introduction and Background

In 2023, Leicester City Council launched the Community Services & Library Needs Assessment (CSLNA) — a transformational programme aimed at reviewing and shaping the future of our Neighbourhood Services. This comprehensive assessment covers all our facilities and examines current and future community needs across the entire city.

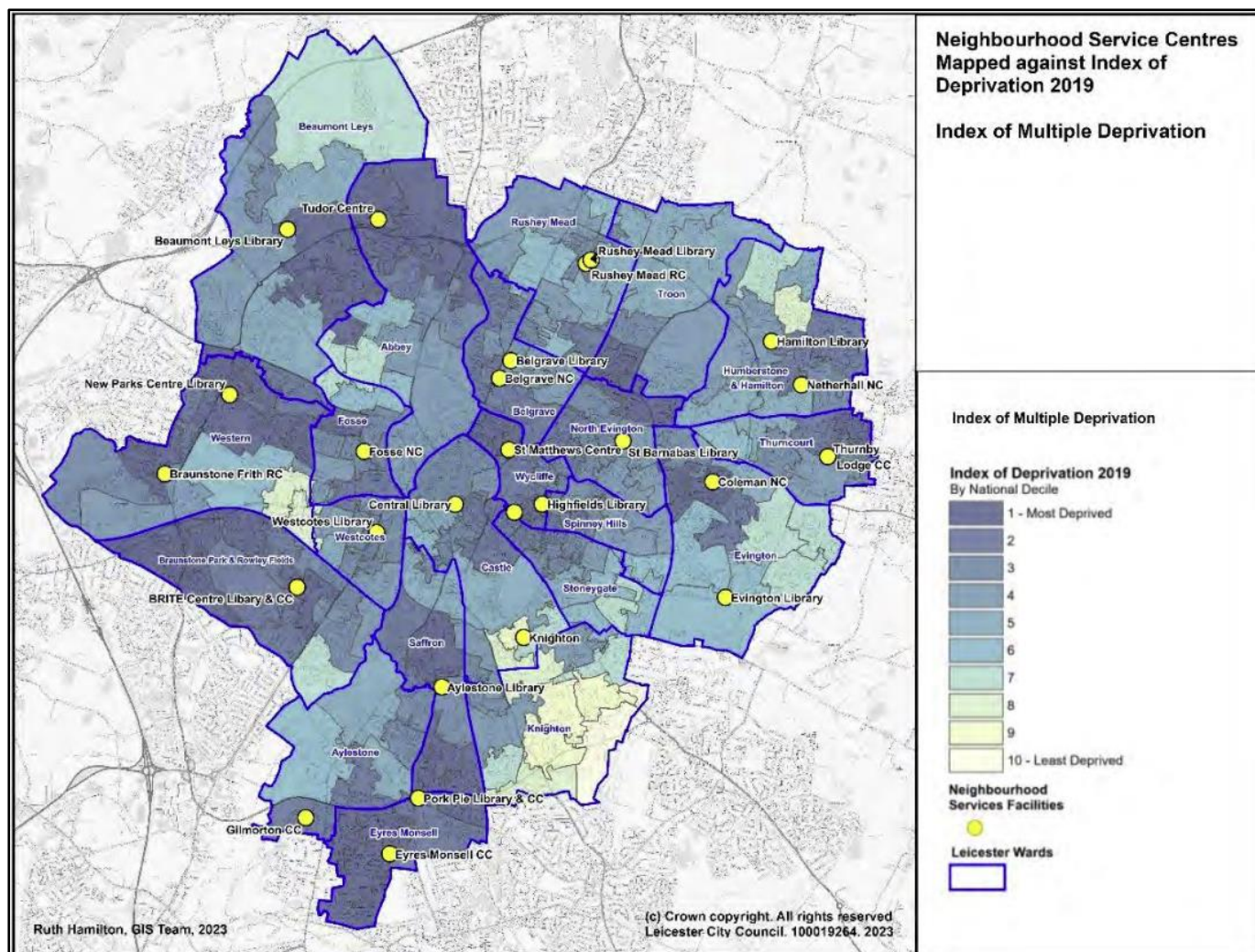
The programme is split into two phases; phase 1 was an engagement phase which ran from July 2023 – October 2023 and phase 2 was the consultation phase which ran from April 2025 – June 2025. The aim of the Phase 1 engagement was to gain insight into how library and community services are currently being used and to identify what residents may need in the future. A summary report was produced by the Activist Group (specialists in research and advice on libraries and community centres) at the conclusion of Phase 1 to present the findings from the engagement activities, alongside the Council's own supporting secondary research report. These insights helped inform proposals for consultation in phase 2.

The CSLNA was introduced in response to shifting city demographics and the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, both of which have influenced how residents use and what they expect from our services. The programme seeks to build a service offer for the future, informed by robust evidence and community input.

Like many local authorities, Leicester City Council is navigating a challenging financial climate. It's therefore essential that our services are both responsive to community needs and delivered in a cost-effective way. Our goal is to make the best use of available resources while safeguarding these much valued and widely used services.

The Council currently operates 25 community facilities citywide, including 9 multi-service centres, 16 libraries, and 13 community centres (some of which share space with libraries). These venues offer access to books and digital services, host groups and events, and serve as important hubs for community connection and support. Together, they play a key role in bringing people together and helping families improve their life opportunities.

Our 25 community facilities can be seen on the below map over the indices of multiple deprivation.



Consultation Method

Objectives and techniques

The public consultation on proposals for libraries and community centres ran from Wednesday 2nd April 2025 to Sunday 29th June 2025. The aim of the consultation was to gather views on a set of proposals which have been developed following a 12 week period of public engagement in 2023. Details of the proposals can be found here ([proposals-for-leicester-city-libraries-and-community-centres.pdf](#))

This consultation builds on the engagement work conducted in 2023 as part of the CSLNA programme, with the aim of shaping a future model for Neighbourhood Services across the city. The Council commissioned Activist Group, as specialists in engagement, research and advice on library and council services, to undertake the engagement and produce a public engagement report. The 2023 public engagement report is available here [public-engagement-report.pdf](#)

The Neighbourhood Services project team undertook an extensive secondary research exercise in 2024 to support the needs assessment. The report is available here [Secondary Research Report](#). Research included:

- Leicester city population analysis, health and employment data
 - Service overview including performance data
 - Usage and service cost information
 - Benchmarking information
 - Service delivery (analysed through the national Universal Offers developed by Libraries Connected)
 - Building profiles (for each Neighbourhood Services facility)
- The data and feedback gathered through the engagement activities were analysed to develop a draft set of proposals, which was presented to the City Mayor and Executive in March 2025.
 - An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed as part of the draft proposals and has been updated to inform the current proposals.
 - Consultation on the draft proposals ran from Wednesday 2nd April to Sunday 29th June. Details of activities undertaken during the consultation can be found in the summary section below.

The next steps are:

- Analysis of responses received through the consultation.
- Refined proposals for libraries and community centres presented to City Mayor and the Executive.
- Updated EIA.
- Subject to approval, commencement of implementation projects to effect the changes.

Qualitative data analysis

As part of the consultation there were a number of questions which gave respondents a free text box to write comments and give ideas. In order to ensure our analysis of these comments was fair our Digital, Data and Technology team developed 3 outputs, using advanced statistical analysis methods, which allowed us to independently verify the results and show no bias occurred during the analysis. These outputs were:

- Sentiment Analysis - which analyses a sentence and then creates a sentiment score. It does this by applying a score to each word in a sentence. It then examines the context of the word by looking at pre and post words and applies an amplifier to this original score. The score for the sentence is then summarised into three categories – positive elements, negative elements and neutral elements. These scores are then combined to give an overall “compound” sentiment score for the comment / response.
- Frequency Analysis - This part of the analysis counts the number of times words appear in the comments being analysed to give an impression of the overall thoughts of the responder.
- Text summarisation - This part of the analysis uses the concept of frequency analysis and expands it across whole sentences. Each word is given a score which is the proportion of its own frequency divided by the frequency of the most common word. This proportion is then summed for each word in the sentence. As per the frequency analysis stop words are removed from this calculation. The top 10 scoring sentences are then output as the summary.

Summary of citywide engagement (July 2023 – October 2023)

Details of the public engagement has been previously published and the public engagement and secondary research reports are available to view here [public-engagement-report.pdf](#) and here [Secondary Research Report](#).

The main outcomes of the previous engagement were:

- A good level of engagement through:
 - **Interviews** - 15 interviews and small group conversations with 17 key library and community centre stakeholders, including Council officers, managers, library and community centre partners and representatives of the voluntary, education and creative sector in Leicester.
 - **Main public survey** – The survey ran from Monday 3rd July 2023 until Sunday 24th September 2023. We received:
 - 2,340 survey returns comprising of:
 - 930 online surveys
 - 1,244 paper surveys
 - 166 community language surveys
 - **Children and young people's survey** - The survey ran from Monday 25th September 2023 until Sunday 22nd October 2023. We received 511 survey returns.
 - **Staff workshops** – Three staff workshops were held with officers from Neighbourhood Services that work with libraries and community centres.
 - **Focus Groups** - We also conducted twelve focus groups and spoke with 80 members of the public who were a mixture of users and non-service users, of all ages and demographics.
- **Reading:** People have told the Council that one of the most important library services offered to them is access to reading and literacy materials.
- **Health and wellbeing:** People have told the Council that libraries and community centres offer respite and relief from life's challenges, supporting their wellbeing and helping to address isolation.
- Residents, and partners, trust Leicester's library and community centre staff.
- There is a significant growing need for more mental health support in Leicester, as well as support with improving people's physical health post-Covid.
- Libraries and community centres offer highly valued free, or low cost, communal and socialization spaces for Leicester residents.
- **Information and digital:** People have told the Council that libraries and community centres help people with access to free IT, Wi-Fi, information, face to face advice and support signposting needs.
- Leicester residents continue to have core information, advice and IT access support needs. Libraries and community centres can, and should, play a role in supporting these needs across all age groups and demographics.

- People have told the Council that one of the most important services offered by libraries and community centres is space to safely and quietly study and learn. There is a significant need for safe out of classroom hours study space for children, young people and adult learners. Residents would like the existing offer to be expanded further, and existing facilities and availability of workspaces improved
- **Culture and creativity:** People would like to see more creative and cultural activities and events being offered, tailored to each unique locality and reflecting the blend of communities and cultures that live in the immediate surrounding areas.
- There is an opportunity to align any refreshed library and community centre offer with a broader refresh of the cultural offer and marketing of Leicester as a city destination, particularly through programming in the Central Library.
- **Children's promise:** A significant proportion of Leicester children are understood to grow up in poverty, with related impacts on school readiness and future life outcomes. Libraries and community centres can play a role in helping children, young people and their families with these early year challenges, in part through the provision of pre-school literacy and reading support.
- There is a significant need for safe out of classroom hours study space for children and young people.
- The survey asked what ideas people thought the Council should investigate which are being tried elsewhere to better meet the needs of residents. 'more multi-service centres,' 'reviewing opening hours to match peak demand' and 'involving community organisations in running services' were the most popular ideas to consider.

Table 1: "Many councils are changing how they operate community centres and library services in order to better meet the needs of residents. Please tick up to three ideas that you think we could look at."

Option	Total	Percent
Have more multi-service centres to bring community centres, libraries and local services together	1014	58.78%
Involving community organisations more in running services	621	36.00%
Reviewing opening hours to match peak demand	596	34.55%
Making more use of volunteers	377	21.86%
Making more use of customer self-service in public libraries	375	21.74%
Providing more services online	294	17.04%
None of the above	211	12.23%
Other	91	5.28%

Summary of citywide consultation (April 2025 – June 2025)

The period of consultation had several key parts.

- **Main public survey** - The survey ran from Wednesday 2nd April 2025 to Sunday 29th June 2025. We received 4989 survey returns comprising of:
 - 2591 online surveys
 - 2,065 paper surveys
 - 333 community language surveys (the survey was available in English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Somali)
- **Children and young people's survey** - The survey ran from Tuesday 22nd April 2025 until Sunday 29th June 2025 . We received 1,366 survey returns.
- **Open public meetings** – 12 open meetings were held across the city (details can be seen in the table below and notes from the meetings at appendix c) with 1,053 attendees. The meetings were chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres and senior officers with a remit for the services in question. An interpreter was present at 2 of the meetings to assist attendees.
- **Ward Councillor Engagement Meetings** – Engagement meetings were held for all Ward Councillors in small ward groups.
- **Officer led drop in sessions** – 15 officer lead drop in sessions were held across the city (details can be seen at appendix d) with approximately 120 attendees.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** – Stakeholders and community groups could request a meeting with officers and 41 were held.
- **Young people drop in sessions** – Were held at Belgrave and Knighton Libraries along with a session at City Hall for the Young Peoples Council.
- **Group submissions & individual comments** – 33 submissions/comments were received into the consultation email address outside of the survey.
- **Petitions** – 6 petitions were received and details of these can be found further on in this report.

Details of the meetings held are as follows:

Opening Meetings, Chaired by Cllr Vi Dempster

Meeting	Venue	Date/Time	Attendance
Open Meeting	Eyres Monsell Community Centre	Tuesday 15 th April 15 00 – 16 30	46
Open Meeting	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Wednesday 23 rd April 18 00 – 19 30	400
Open Meeting	Tudor Centre	Tuesday 13 th May 14 30 - 16 00	46
Open Meeting	Soar Valley College	Wednesday 14 th May 18 00 – 19 30	240
Open Meeting	Fosse Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 20 th May 18 00 – 19 30	24

Open Meeting	Avenue Primary School (near Knighton Library)	Wednesday 21st May 18 00 – 19 30	122
Open Meeting	St Matthews Centre	Thursday 29th May 18 00 – 19 30	57
Open Meeting	Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	Wednesday 4th June 18 00 – 19 30	18
Open Meeting	Evington Library	Tuesday 10th June 14 30 – 16 00	39
Open Meeting	Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 17th June 18 00 – 19 30	26
Open Meeting	Gilmorton Community Rooms	Thursday 19th June 18 00 – 19 00	21
Open Meeting	Braunstone Recreation Centre	Tuesday 24th June 14 00 – 15 00	14

Drop-in sessions, Led by Neighbourhood Services Officers

Session	Venue	Date/Time	Attendance
Officer led drop-in session	Central Library	Tuesday 8th April 14 00 – 15 30	6
Officer led drop-in session	Hamilton Library	Thursday 10th April 10 00 – 11 30	4
Officer led drop-in session	Highfields Library	Monday 14th April 14 00 – 15 30	9
Officer led drop-in session	Beaumont Leys Library	Wednesday 16th April 14 00 – 15 30	6
Officer led drop-in session	BRITE Centre	Wednesday 23rd April 14 00 – 15 30	7
Officer led drop-in session	Pork Pie Library	Thursday 15th May 14 00 – 15 30	4
Officer led drop-in session	St Barnabas Library	Monday 19th May 10 00 – 11 30	5
Officer led drop-in session	New Parks Library	Thursday 22nd May 14 00 – 15 30	2
Officer led drop-in session	Westcotes	Thursday 29th May 14 00 – 15 30	6
Officer led drop-in session	Rushey Mead Library	Wednesday 4th June 14 00 – 15 30	4
Officer led drop-in session	Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	Thursday 5th June 10 00 – 11 30	8
Officer led drop-in session	Belgrave Library	Thursday 12th June 14 00 – 15 30	25
Officer led drop-in session	Aylestone Library	Tuesday 17th June 13 00 – 14 30	1
Officer led drop-in session	Evington Library	Wednesday 18th June 14 00 – 15 30	11

Officer led drop-in session	Knighton Library	Thursday 26th June 14 00 – 15 30	13
Young Peoples Council	City Hall	Thursday 3rd July 17 00 – 18 30	8

Ward councillor engagement meetings

Seven ward councillor engagement meetings were chaired by Cllr Vi Dempster with attendance from the Head of Neighbourhood Services. Councillors from all 21 city wards were invited on a ward cluster basis.

Young Peoples Council

A special meeting was arranged with members of the Young People's Council at City Hall to take their views on the proposals. The meeting was led by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and supported by the Youth Engagement Team.

Stakeholder Meetings

41 meetings were held during the consultation period with stakeholders and partners to take views on the proposals. The meetings were attended by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and by representatives from the stakeholder groups.

Communications

In advance of the launch and throughout the consultation an extensive communications plan was undertaken. Communications activity included but was not limited to:

- All councillor pre-launch briefing session
- All staff pre-launch briefings, online and in person
- High level press release
- Articles in local newspaper, LeicesterLive and BBC online
- The Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres along with the Head of Neighbourhood Services went onto numerous local radio channels including EAVA and BBC Leicester to promote the consultation
- Briefings to a wide range of stakeholders including Primary and Secondary school Heads, Emergency Food Partnership, NHS Partnership, Universities Partnership
- All stakeholder emails
- Face-to-face promotion and support through Neighbourhood Services staff to all customers
- Letters to all community centre users
- Library newsletter (received by c17,000 subscribers)
- Posters and displays in all neighbourhood services facilities, and circulated to nearby venues
- Promotion of campaign across all 176 library public access computers, and library display screens
- Promotion of campaign through city centre digital display panels

- Posters displayed at children centres, customer services, Adult Learning Centre and other LCC dependant services to display
- Promotion to all schools through Schools Extranet bulletin
- Your Leicester newsletter
- Sent emails all local stakeholders (community groups etc)
- MPs and local councillors used networks to circulate information
- Internal staff communications through the FACE email

Public response and views expressed

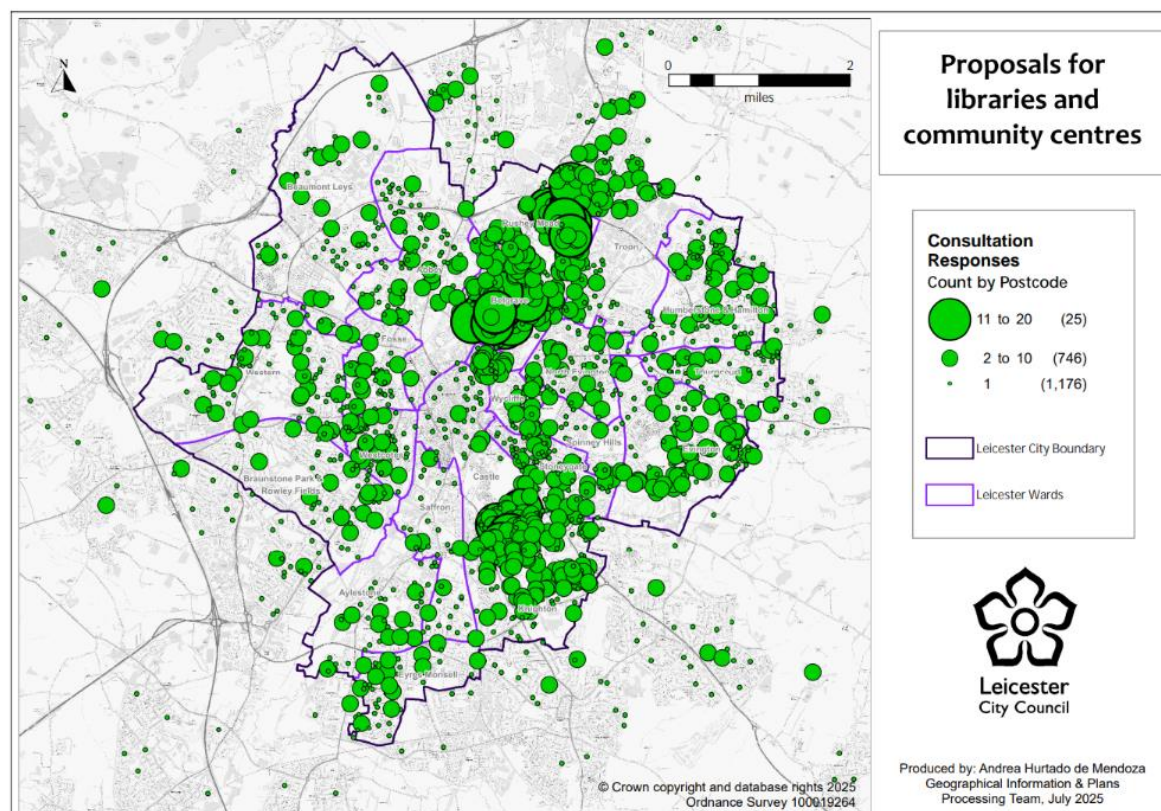
Consultation meetings

A series of consultation meetings were held and attended by residents, service users, community organisations and stakeholders (details can be found on the table above). The meetings included 12 open public meetings chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres and attended by the Head of Neighbourhood Services. Notes from these meetings can be seen at appendix c.

In addition 15 officer lead drop in sessions were held (the notes can be seen at appendix d) and meetings with groups were arranged on request.

Written and online comments and responses

Of the 4,989 responses submitted to the main survey, 4,225 postcodes were provided in total. Of these 3,916 (92.69%) were usable postcodes, the remainder were partial or incorrect. The below map shows a breakdown of responses by postcode:



The following table shows a breakdown of responses, where a valid postcode has been given, by their resident wards for the main survey:

Ward	Count of responses	Ward Population (Census 2021)	% of ward who completed the consultation
Abbey	131	22,112	0.59%
Aylestone	57	11,942	0.48%
Beaumont Leys	93	18,823	0.49%
Belgrave	683	20,563	3.32%
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	73	21,021	0.35%
Castle	408	23,691	1.72%
Evington	173	17,261	1.00%
Eyres Monsell	62	12,011	0.52%
Fosse	59	14,363	0.41%
Humberstone & Hamilton	134	21,133	0.63%
Knighton	357	16,831	2.12%
North Evington	96	23,905	0.40%
Rushey Mead	581	17,396	3.34%
Saffron	44	13,888	0.32%
Spinney Hills	56	13,037	0.43%
Stoneygate	115	21,095	0.55%
Thurncourt	58	12,067	0.48%
Troon	127	14,792	0.86%
Westcotes	80	15,795	0.51%
Western	98	21,074	0.47%
Wycliffe	105	15,792	0.66%
Not in City	326	N/A	
Total	3916		

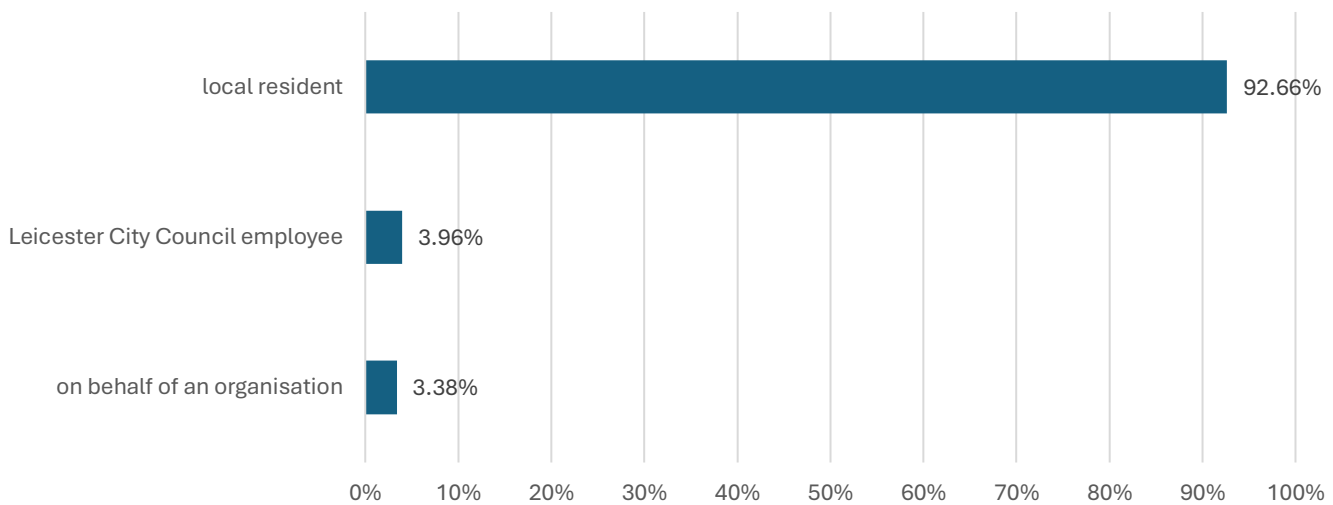
View and comments (main survey consultation)

This section provides a summary of the feedback received in response to the main survey consultation questions. For reference, a copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix A of this document. The following outlines the responses to each question:

Q1: I am completing this survey as a...?

All respondents were asked to indicate in what capacity they were completing the survey. The majority (92.66%) identified as local residents. A small proportion completed the survey as Leicester City Council employees (3.96%) or on behalf of an organisation (3.38%).

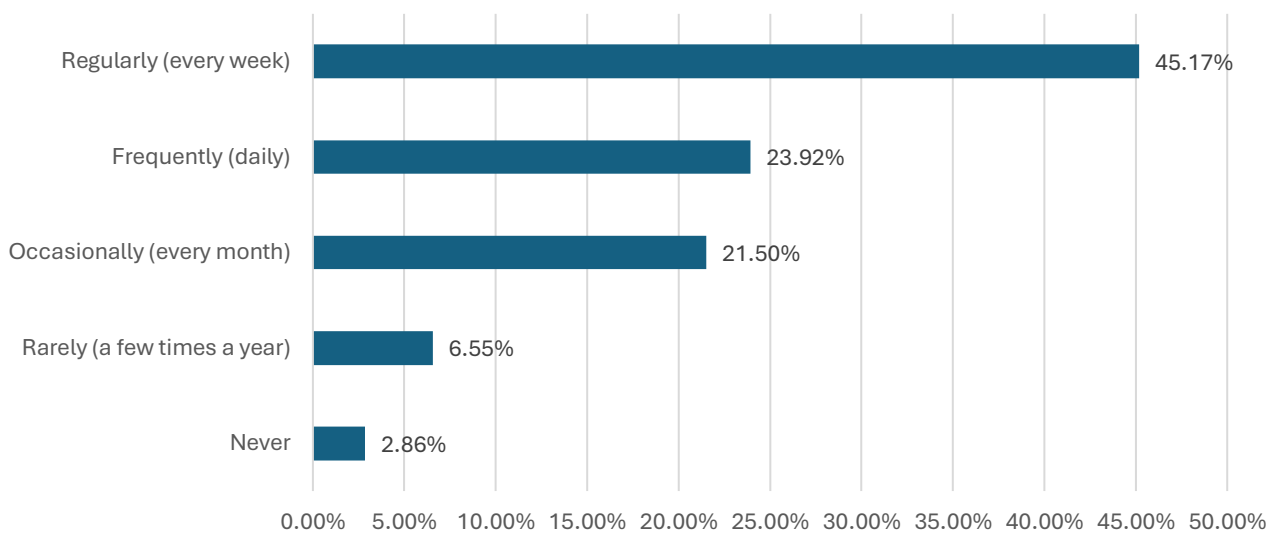
Q1: I am completing this survey as a...?



Q2: How often do you visit a public library in Leicester?

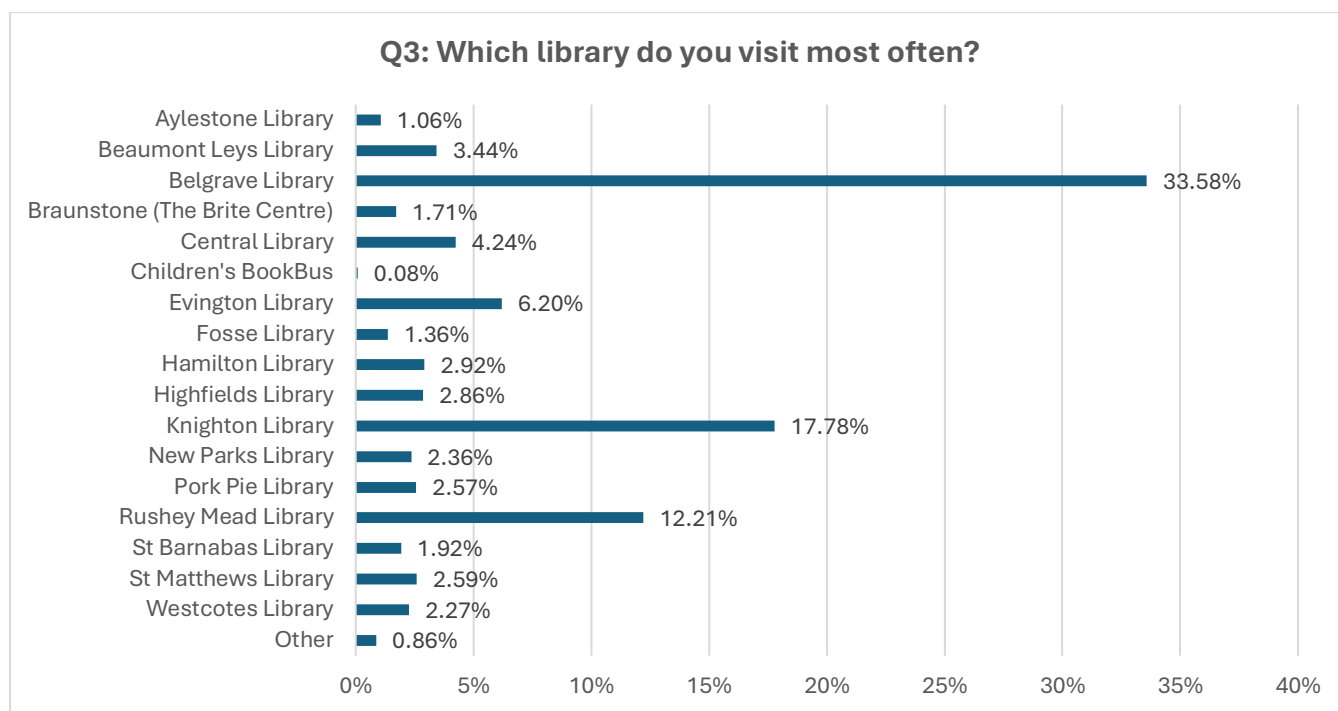
Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they visited public libraries in Leicester. The responses varied, showing a mix of regular and infrequent users, with a small proportion stating that they do not visit libraries at all. The following chart shows a breakdown of responses.

Q2: How often do you visit a public library in Leicester?



Q3: Which library do you visit most often?

Respondents were asked to indicate which library they visited most often. Out of 4,989 responders, 4,959 (99.40%) answered one or more parts of this question. The following chart shows the percentage that selected each option.



The below table shows cross provision of use across our library sites.

Cross provision of use across library sites

% visiting both centres	Aylestone	Beaumont	Belgrave	BRITE	Central	BookBus	Evington	Fosse	Hamilton	Highfields	Knighton	New Parks	Other	Pork Pie	Rushey Mead	St Barnabas	St Matthews	Westcotes
# visited most often	51	165	1609	82	203	4	297	65	140	137	852	113	41	123	585	92	124	109
Aylestone		7.8%	3.9%	15.7%	33.3%	2.0%	15.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	29.4%	2.0%	0.0%	31.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%
Beaumont	1.8%		21.2%	5.5%	32.7%	1.2%	1.8%	6.1%	7.9%	2.4%	1.8%	12.1%	1.8%	2.4%	10.3%	4.2%	2.4%	4.2%
Belgrave	0.4%	5.9%		0.9%	10.3%	2.2%	1.8%	0.6%	6.8%	1.7%	0.9%	0.9%	0.3%	0.4%	29.3%	2.8%	2.8%	1.1%
BRITE	7.3%	6.1%	3.7%		30.5%	2.4%	2.4%	7.3%	2.4%	2.4%	4.9%	4.9%	0.0%	3.7%	1.2%	2.4%	0.0%	34.1%
Central	7.4%	12.3%	10.3%	5.4%		2.0%	7.9%	6.9%	7.9%	8.4%	19.2%	5.9%	1.0%	7.9%	3.4%	4.9%	5.9%	20.7%
BookBus	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Evington	2.4%	2.0%	6.1%	1.3%	20.9%	1.7%		1.7%	19.5%	15.5%	17.5%	0.7%	0.0%	2.4%	3.4%	16.5%	4.0%	1.3%
Fosse	3.1%	10.8%	3.1%	16.9%	33.8%	0.0%	1.5%		0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	15.4%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	24.6%
Hamilton	2.1%	8.6%	20.7%	0.7%	20.0%	3.6%	15.0%	1.4%		6.4%	2.1%	0.7%	0.0%	2.1%	10.0%	21.4%	3.6%	1.4%
Highfields	0.0%	5.1%	9.5%	0.7%	33.6%	2.2%	24.8%	0.0%	13.9%		6.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.7%	24.1%	13.9%	2.2%
Knighton	12.1%	1.5%	2.1%	1.3%	30.2%	0.7%	6.1%	0.8%	0.7%	1.6%		0.8%	1.9%	6.5%	0.6%	0.8%	0.5%	2.1%
New Parks	1.8%	17.7%	5.3%	13.3%	15.9%	4.4%	2.7%	9.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%		0.0%	2.7%	0.9%	2.7%	6.2%	15.0%
Other	7.3%	2.4%	4.9%	7.3%	17.1%	0.0%	4.9%	2.4%	7.3%	0.0%	12.2%	0.0%		12.2%	0.0%	2.4%	4.8%	4.8%
Pork Pie	22.8%	3.3%	3.3%	1.6%	22.0%	2.4%	5.7%	0.8%	0.8%	3.3%	8.9%	0.0%	1.6%		0.8%	1.6%	1.6%	3.3%
Rushey Mead	0.3%	5.8%	40.5%	0.3%	7.5%	0.2%	1.5%	1.0%	13.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%		1.5%	0.9%	0.5%
St Barnabas	1.1%	7.6%	19.6%	2.2%	31.5%	4.3%	25.0%	2.2%	30.4%	17.4%	6.5%	2.2%	0.0%	1.1%	7.6%		6.5%	3.3%
St Matthews	3.2%	7.3%	5.6%	2.4%	9.7%	0.0%	11.3%	0.8%	4.0%	20.2%	1.6%	4.8%	0.0%	2.4%	0.8%	7.3%		0.0%
Westcotes	3.7%	9.2%	6.4%	28.4%	54.1%	2.8%	4.6%	12.8%	0.9%	4.6%	8.3%	7.3%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%	

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The table should be read from left to right on a row by row basis where column 1 is the most visited library as identified by the respondent e.g. 12.1% of people who use Knighton Library also use Aylestone Library.

‘Other’ libraries include University, School and County based libraries.

The ‘BookBus’ does not visit every ward in the city.

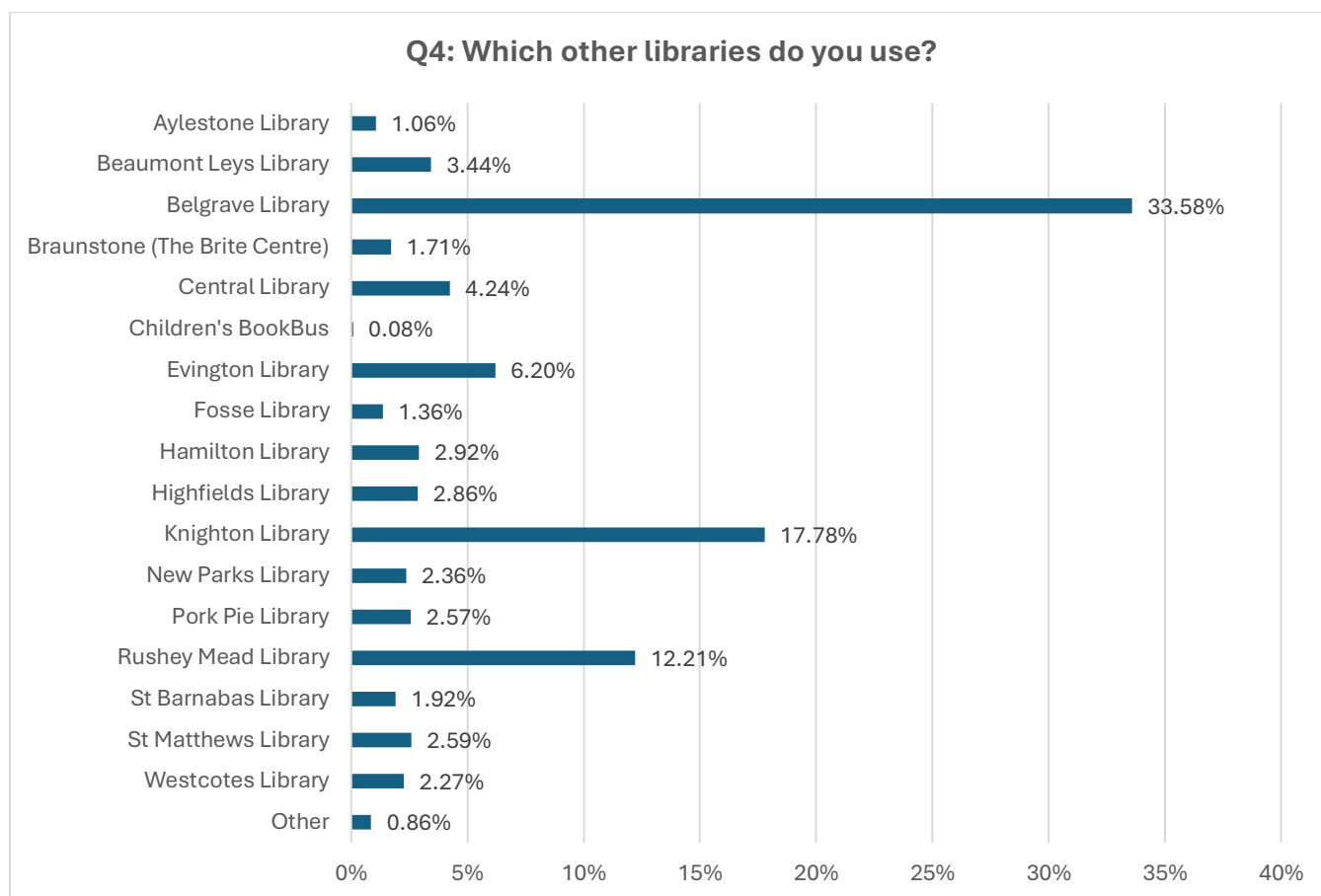
The below table shows, by library most visited, the % of visitors who also visit other libraries. For example, 88.2% of respondents who identified Aylestone as the library they visit most often also use other libraries in the City.

Library Most Visited	% Visiting Other Libraries
Aylestone	88.2%
Beaumont Leys	63.6%
Belgrave	43.6%
BRITE	56.1%
Central	76.4%
BookBus	100.0%
Evington	63.3%
Fosse	63.1%
Hamilton	58.6%
Highfields	75.2%
Knighton	48.0%
Other	55.8%
New Parks	43.9%
Pork Pie	48.8%
Rushey Mead	49.9%
St Barnabas	81.5%
St Matthews	50.0%
Westcotes	79.8%

Q4: Which other libraries do you use?

This was a multiple-choice question and allowed respondents to select any additional libraries they visit. Out of 4,989 responses, 3,394 (68.03%) answered this question. This shows that a high number of library users do use alternate library sites.

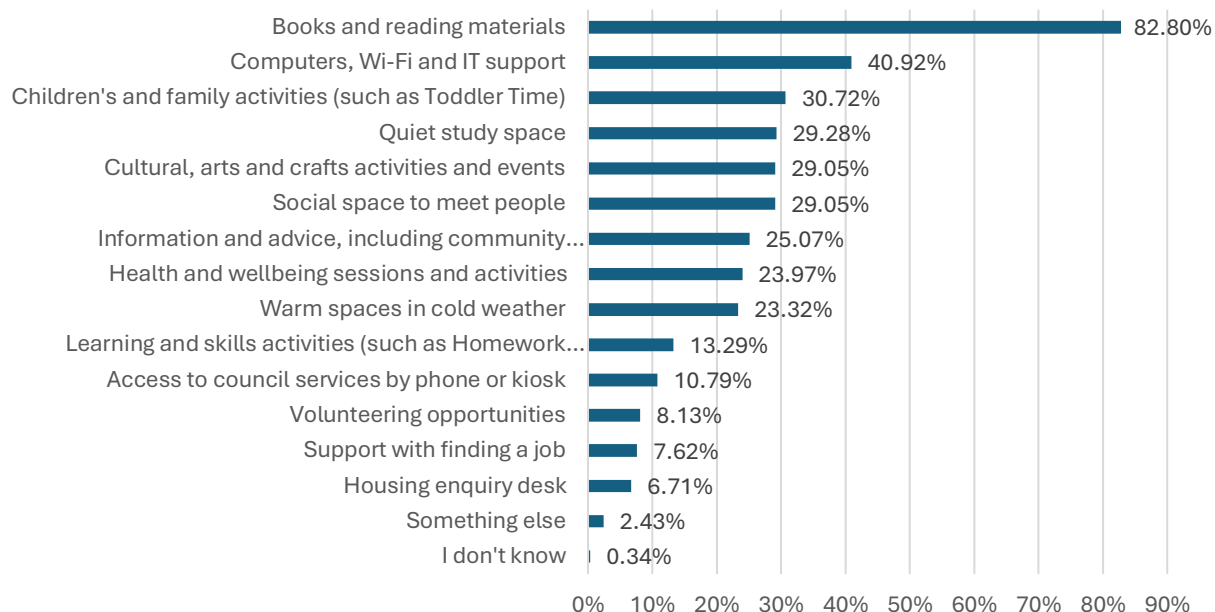
The below data shows the range of libraries accessed by individuals beyond their most-used site.



Q5: Thinking about the public library you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you?

This question was multiple-choice, allowing respondents to select what they valued most in their primary library. There was a total of 4,732 responses to the question, with the largest proportion answering 'books and reading materials' (82.80%), then followed by 'computers, wi-fi and IT support' at 40.92%.

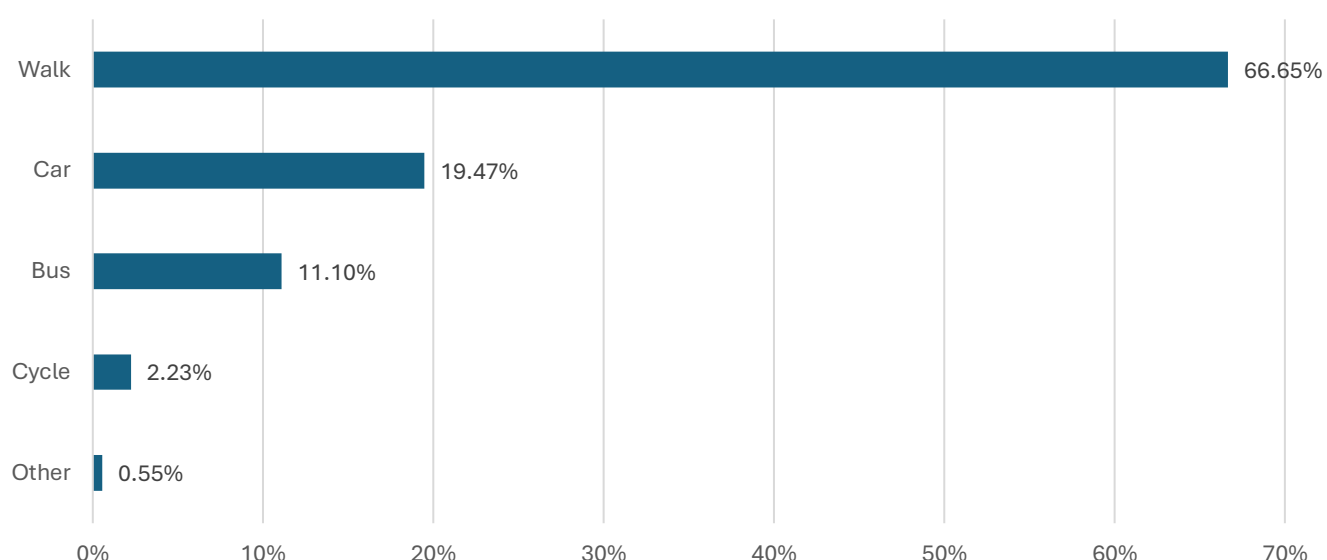
Q5: Thinking about the public library you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you?



Q6: When you visit a library, how do you usually get there?

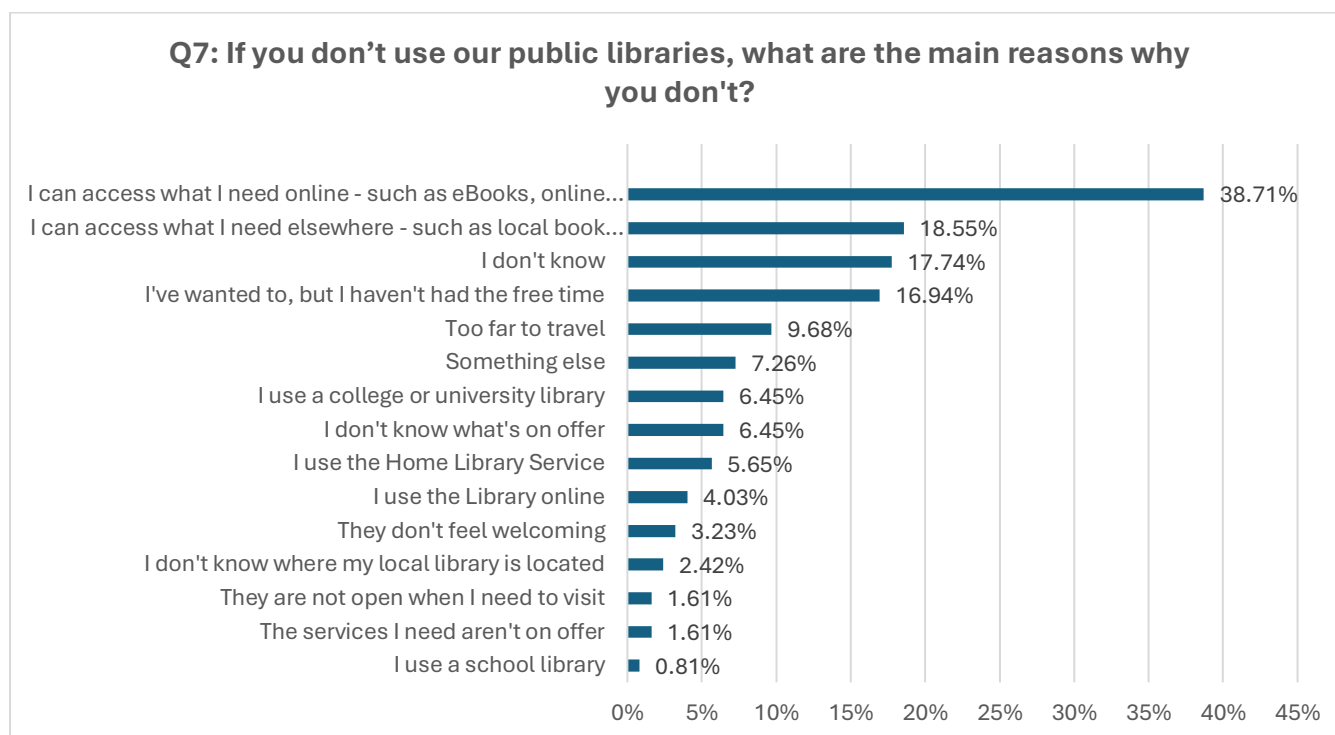
Respondents indicated their usual method of travel when visiting libraries. A total of 4,756 respondents (95.33%) answered this question, with the data reflecting accessibility and transport preferences, with walking (at 66.65%) and driving (at 19.47%) being the most common answers chosen.

Q6: When you visit a library, how do you usually get there?



Q7: If you don't use our public libraries, what are the main reasons why you don't?

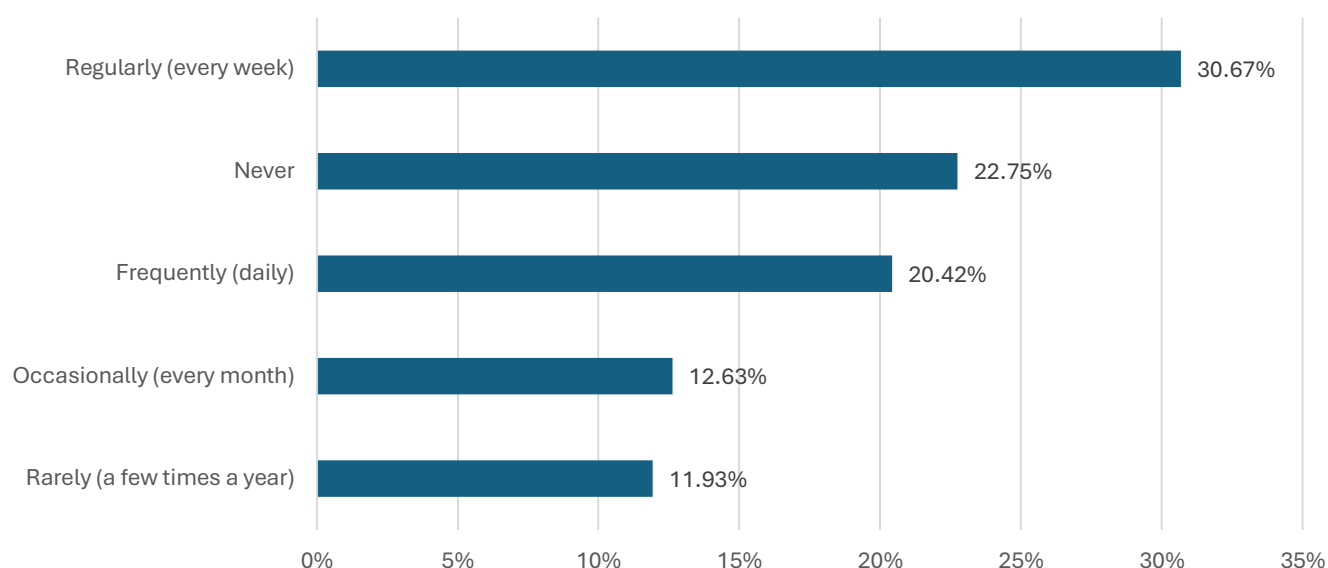
This question targeted non-users and aimed to understand barriers to library engagement and out of a total of 4,989,128 (2.6%) provided an answer to the question. Many respondents made multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option.



Q8: How often do you visit a community centre in Leicester?

Respondents were asked how frequently they visited public libraries in Leicester. Out of the 4,909 respondents (98.4% of the total), 30.67% said they use a community centre every week. In contrast 22.75% reported never using one, while 12.63% said they occasionally do, and 11.93% said they rarely do.

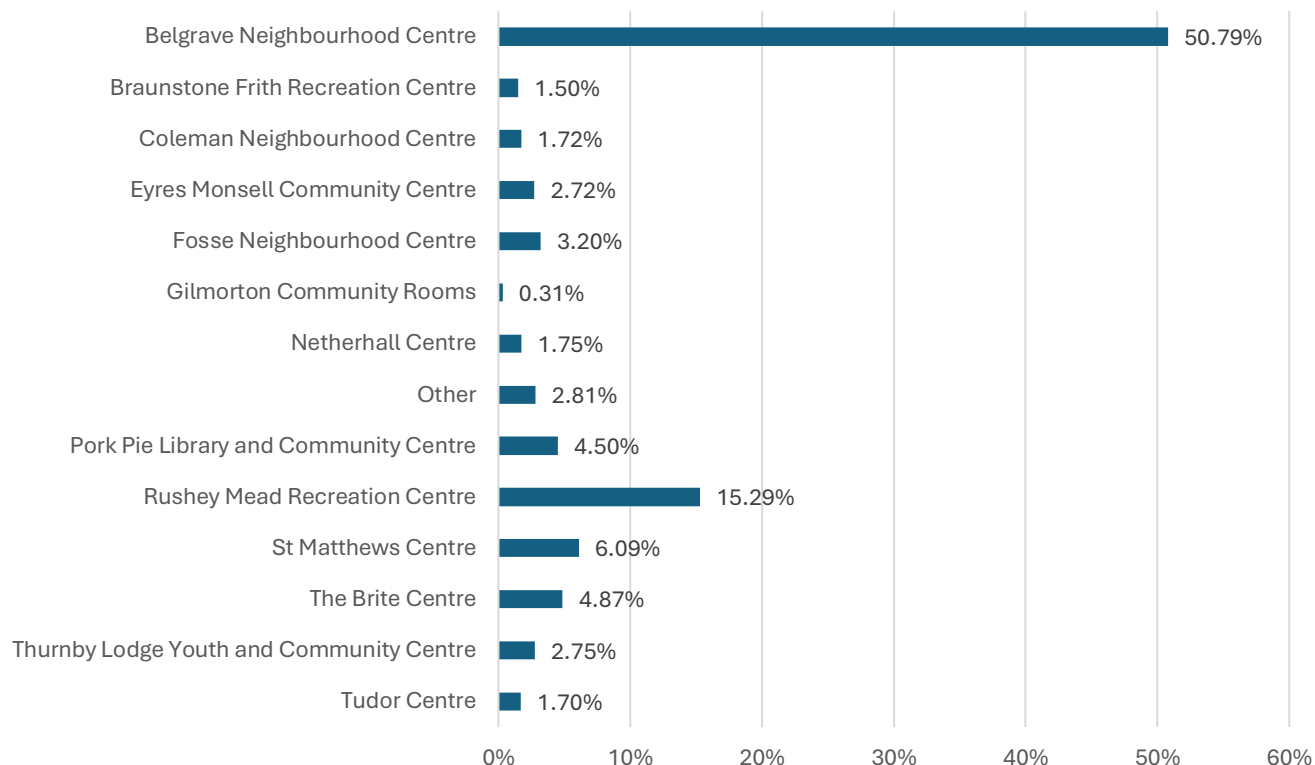
Q8: How often do you visit a community centre in Leicester?



Q9: Which community centre do you visit most often?

A total of 3,640 respondents (72.96%) answered this question. The chart below highlights the community centres most frequently used by respondents.

Q9: Which community centre do you visit most often?



The below table shows cross provision of use across our community centre sites.

Cross provision of use across community centre sites

% visiting both centres	Belgrave	Braunstone Frith	Brite Centre	Coleman	Eyres Monsell	Fosse	Gilmorton	Netherhall	Other	Pork Pie Library	Rushey Mead	St. Matthews	Thurnby Lodge	Tudor Centre
# visited most often	1827	54	175	62	98	115	11	63	132	162	550	219	99	61
Belgrave		1.4%	2.2%	1.7%	0.4%	1.9%	0.2%	1.3%	0.5%	1.3%	31.2%	4.0%	1.3%	0.6%
Braunstone Frith	5.6%		16.7%	1.9%	3.7%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
Brite Centre	8.0%	6.9%		1.1%	3.4%	22.3%	0.6%	1.7%	2.3%	12.6%	4.0%	8.0%	1.1%	1.7%
Coleman	8.1%	0.0%	4.8%		1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	8.1%	8.1%	0.0%
Eyres Monsell	3.1%	2.0%	5.1%	2.0%		2.0%	1.0%	1.0%	4.1%	20.4%	1.0%	6.1%	4.1%	1.0%
Fosse	2.6%	3.5%	19.1%	0.0%	0.9%		0.9%	0.9%	4.3%	7.0%	1.7%	1.7%	0.0%	7.0%
Gilmorton	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	27.3%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Netherhall	6.3%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		1.6%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	23.8%	0.0%
Other	6.1%	0.8%	5.3%	0.0%	1.5%	3.0%	0.0%	1.5%		3.8%	6.1%	3.8%	2.3%	0.0%
Pork Pie Library	4.3%	1.9%	5.6%	0.0%	10.5%	3.1%	1.2%	0.6%	1.9%		1.2%	3.1%	3.1%	1.2%
Rushey Mead	50.5%	0.5%	1.1%	2.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	1.6%	0.4%	0.4%		1.5%	0.5%	1.6%
St. Matthews	14.6%	2.3%	3.7%	5.9%	2.7%	5.9%	0.5%	3.7%	1.8%	5.5%	4.6%		7.3%	2.7%
Thurnby Lodge	6.1%	0.0%	4.0%	12.1%	3.0%	4.0%	2.0%	14.1%	3.0%	1.0%	3.0%	14.1%		0.0%
Tudor Centre	4.9%	3.3%	11.5%	0.0%	1.6%	3.3%	0.0%	1.6%	3.3%	1.6%	0.0%	11.5%	1.6%	

The table should be read from left to right on a row by row basis where column 1 is the most visited community centre as identified by the respondent e.g. 50.5% of people who use Rushey Mead Recreation Centre most often also use Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

‘Other’ community centres include rooms at places of worship, schools, VCSE facilities and County based community centres.

The below table shows, by community centre most visited, the % of visitors who also visit other community centres. For example, 36.7% of respondents who identified Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre as the community centre they visit most often also use other community centres in the City.

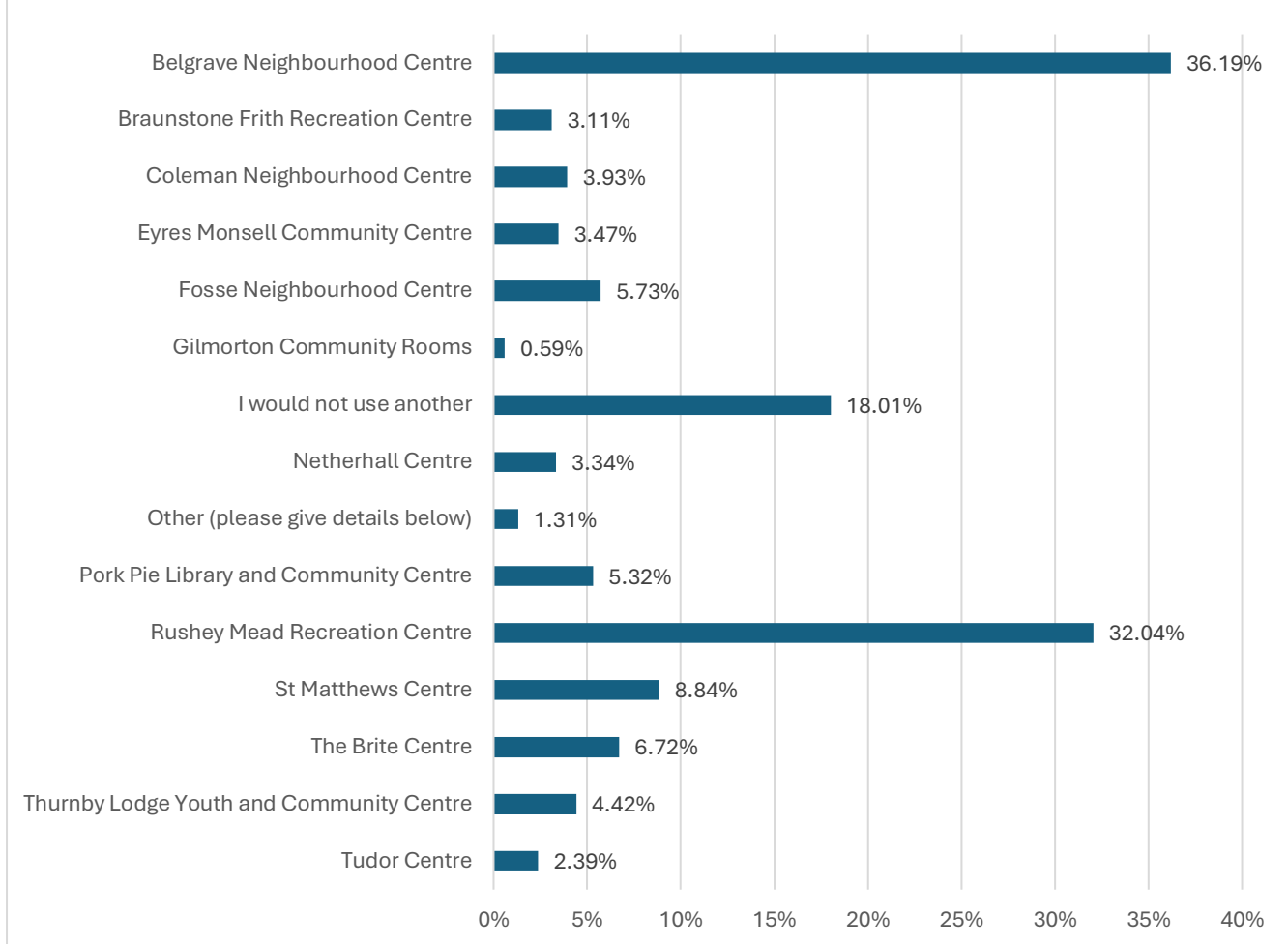
CC Most Visited	% Visiting Other CCs
Belgrave	36.7%
Braunstone Frith	46.3%
BRITE	50.3%
Coleman	35.5%
Eyres Monsell	44.9%
Fosse	47.8%
Gilmorton	45.5%
Netherhall	44.4%
Other	31.1%
Pork Pie Library	35.2%
Rushey Mead	55.5%
St Matthews	48.4%
Thurnby Lodge	56.6%
Tudor Centre	42.6%

Q10: Which other community centres do you use?

This was a multiple-choice question and allowed respondents to select any additional community centres they visit. Out of 4,989 responses, 2238 (44.86%) answered this question. This shows that a high number of community centre users do use alternate community centre sites.

The below data shows the range of community centres accessed by individuals beyond their most-used site.

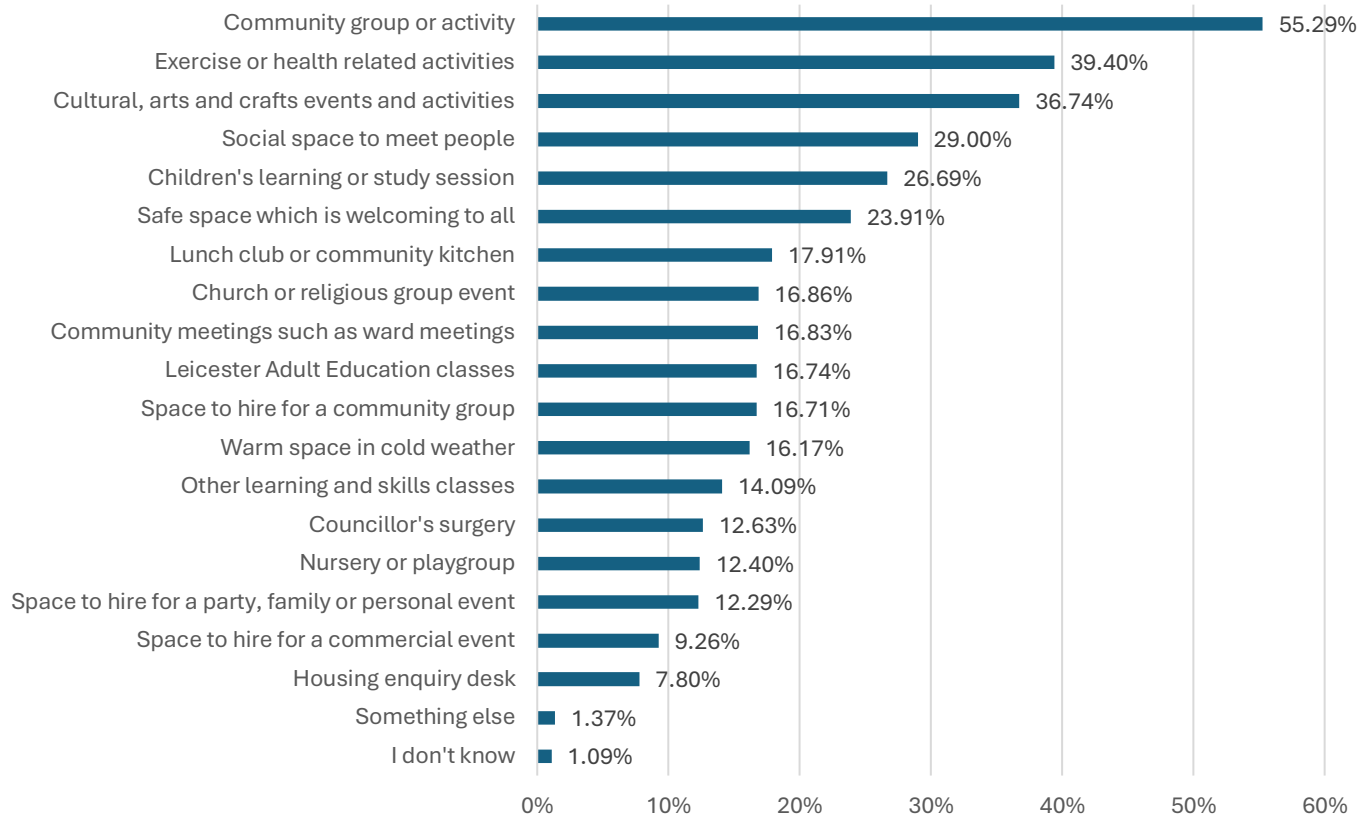
Q10: Which other community centres do you use?



Q11: Thinking about the community centre you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you?

This multiple-choice question captured what people value in community centres. Out of 4,989 total responses, 3,512 (70.39%) answered, with the most common answer community group or activities (55.29%), exercise or health related activities (39.40%), and Cultural, arts and crafts events and activities (36.74%).

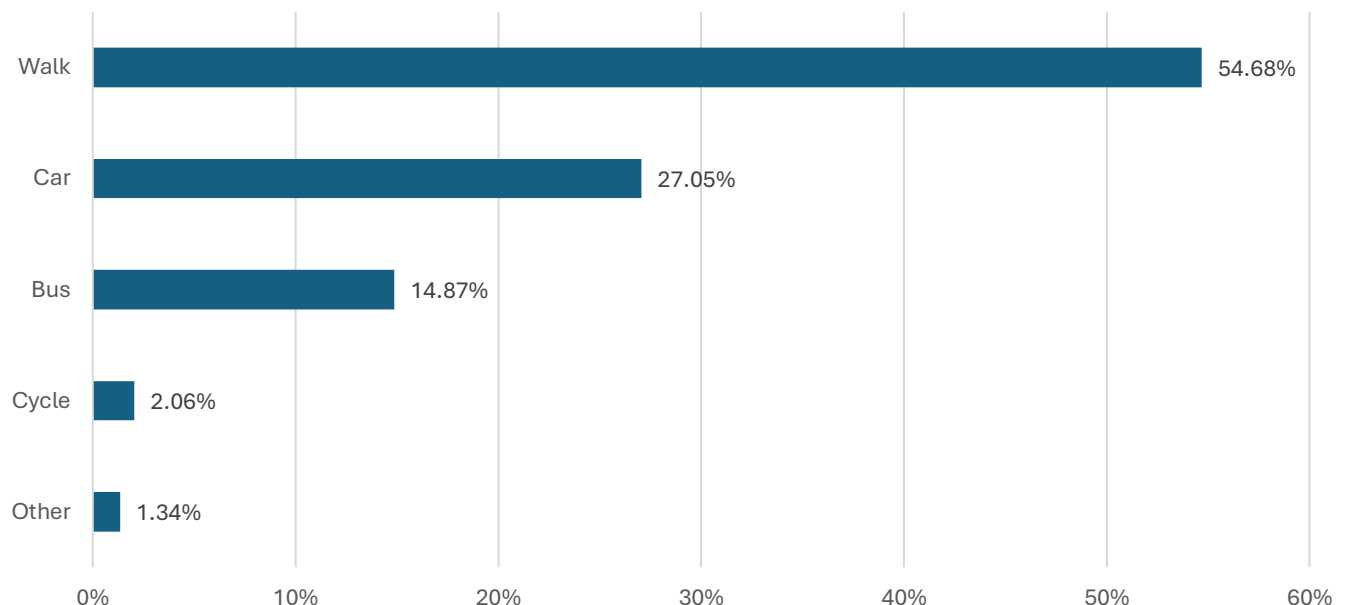
Q11: Thinking about the community centre you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you?



Q12: When you visit a community centre, how do you usually get there?

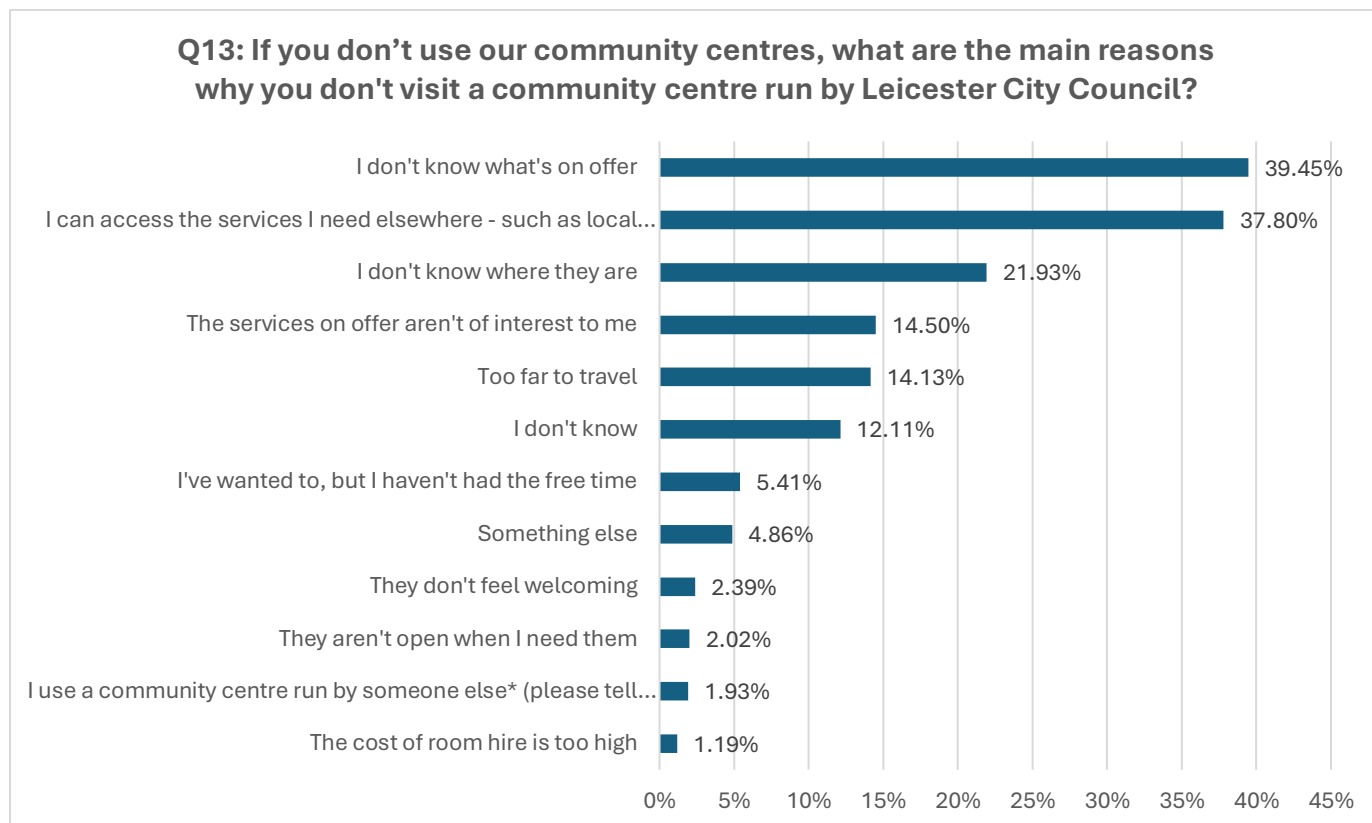
This question asked respondents how they travel to community centres. Of the 4,989 total responses, 3,590 people (71.96%) answered. Walking was the most common mode of travel (54.68%), followed by driving (27.05%) and bus travel (14.87%). A smaller proportion reported cycling (2.06%).

Q12: When you visit a community centre, how do you usually get there?



Q13: If you don't use our community centres, what are the main reasons why you don't visit a community centre run by Leicester City Council?

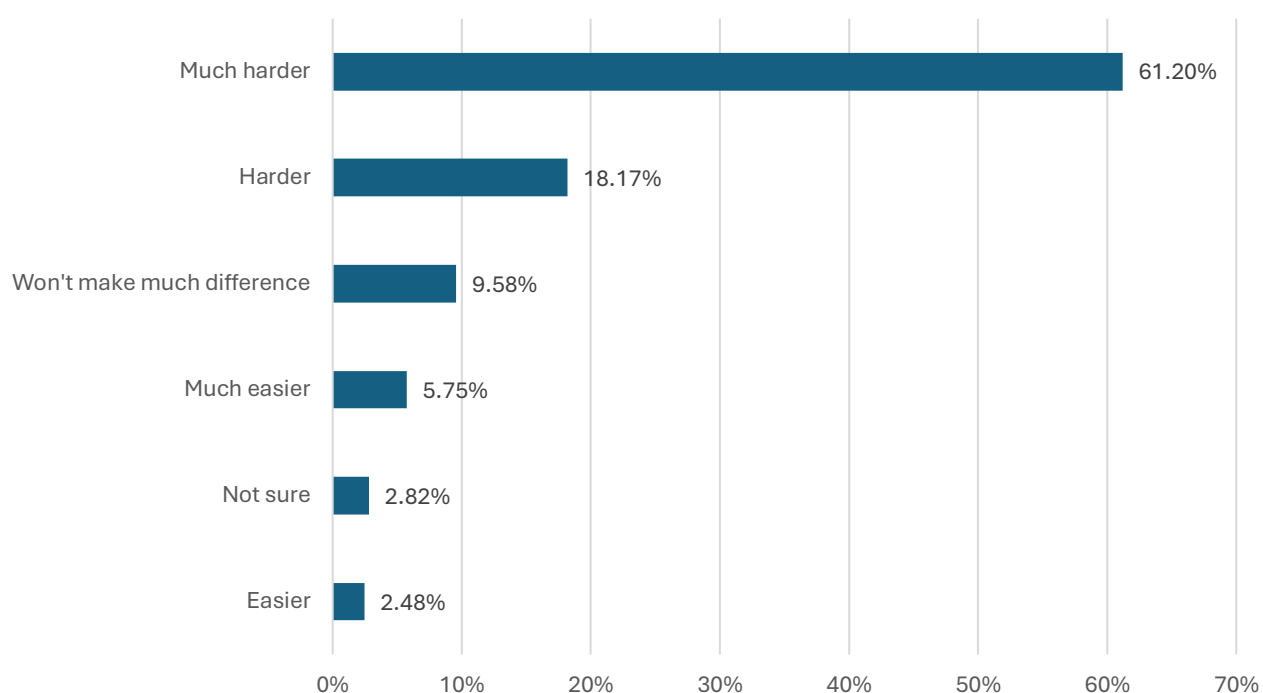
This multiple-choice question aimed to understand why non-users do not visit community centres. A total of 1,101 respondents (21.9 %) out of 4,989 answered this question. The most cited reasons were “I don't know what's on offer” (39.45%) and “I can access the services I need elsewhere” (37.80%).



Q14a: What impact would the proposed changes have on your ability to visit a library?

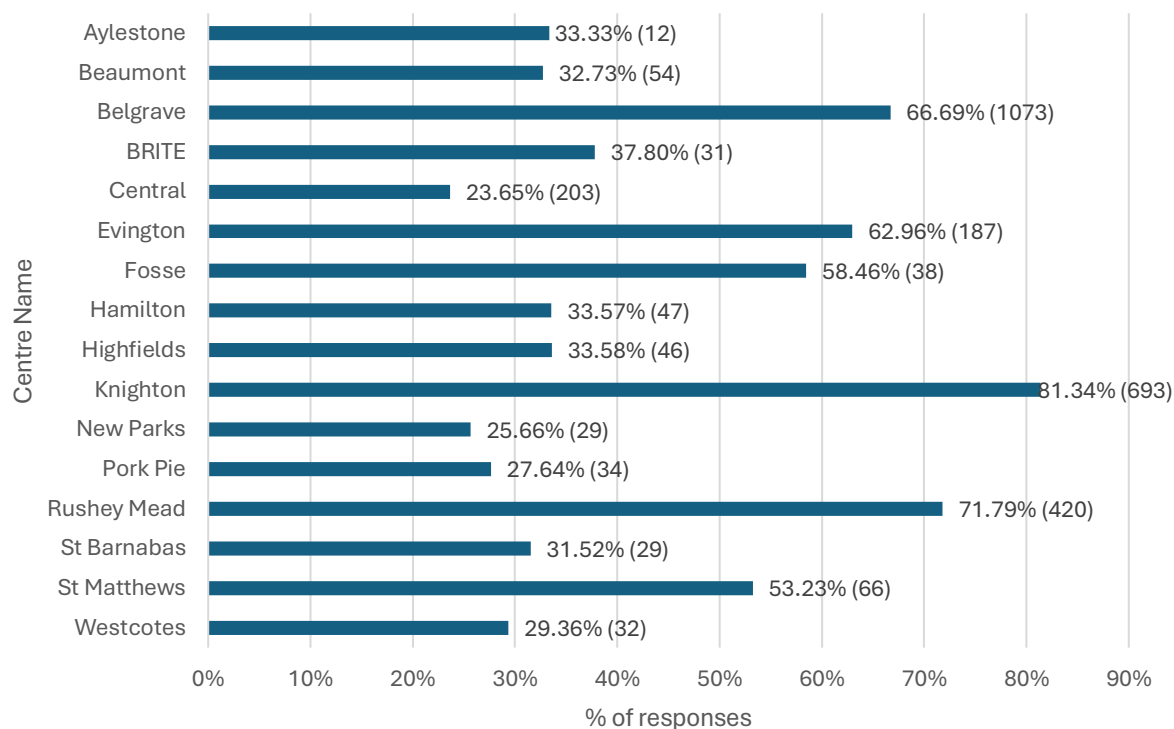
Out of 4,989 respondents, 4,658 (96.8%) answered this question. Most felt the proposed changes would negatively affect access to services, with 61.2% saying “much harder” and 18.2% saying “harder.” 9.6% said it “won't make much difference,” while 8.2% thought it would be easier or much easier. 2.8% were not sure.

Q14a: What impact would the proposed changes have your ability to visit a library?



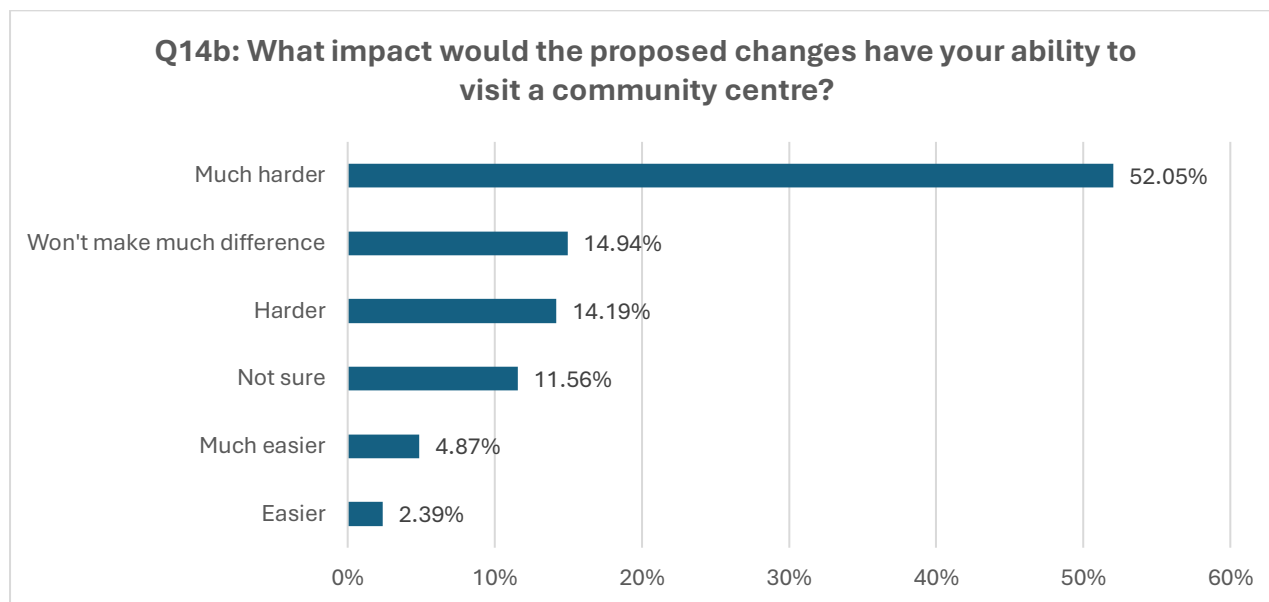
From those who answered, “much harder,” the chart below shows the breakdown by primary library selected, with Knighton (81.34%), Rushey Mead (71.79%), Belgrave Library (66.69%) and Evington Library (62.96%) being the most affected.

'Much Harder' Responses by Library

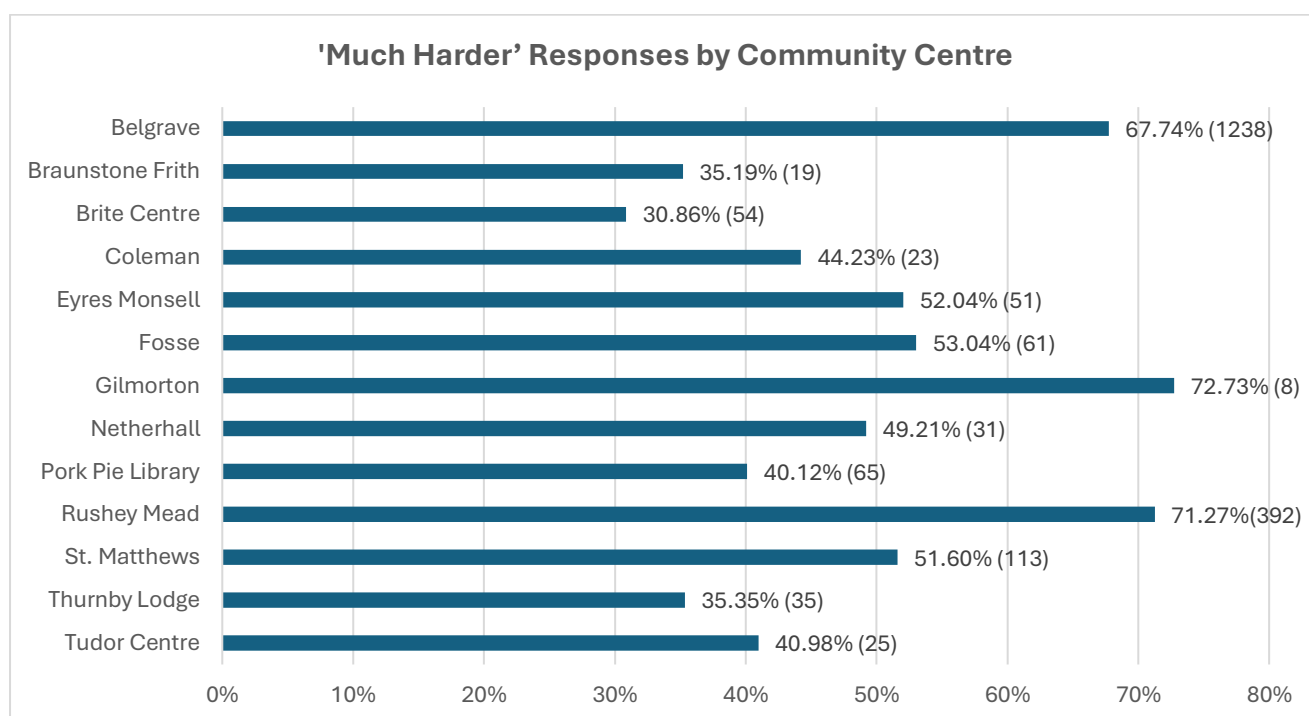


Q14b: What impact would the proposed changes have on your ability to visit a community centre?

Out of 4,989 respondents, 4,517 (95.4%) answered this question. Most felt the proposed changes would negatively affect access to services, with 52.05% saying “much harder”, 14.94% said it “won’t make much difference,” and 14.19% saying “harder,” while 7.26% thought it would be easier or much easier. 11.56% were not sure.

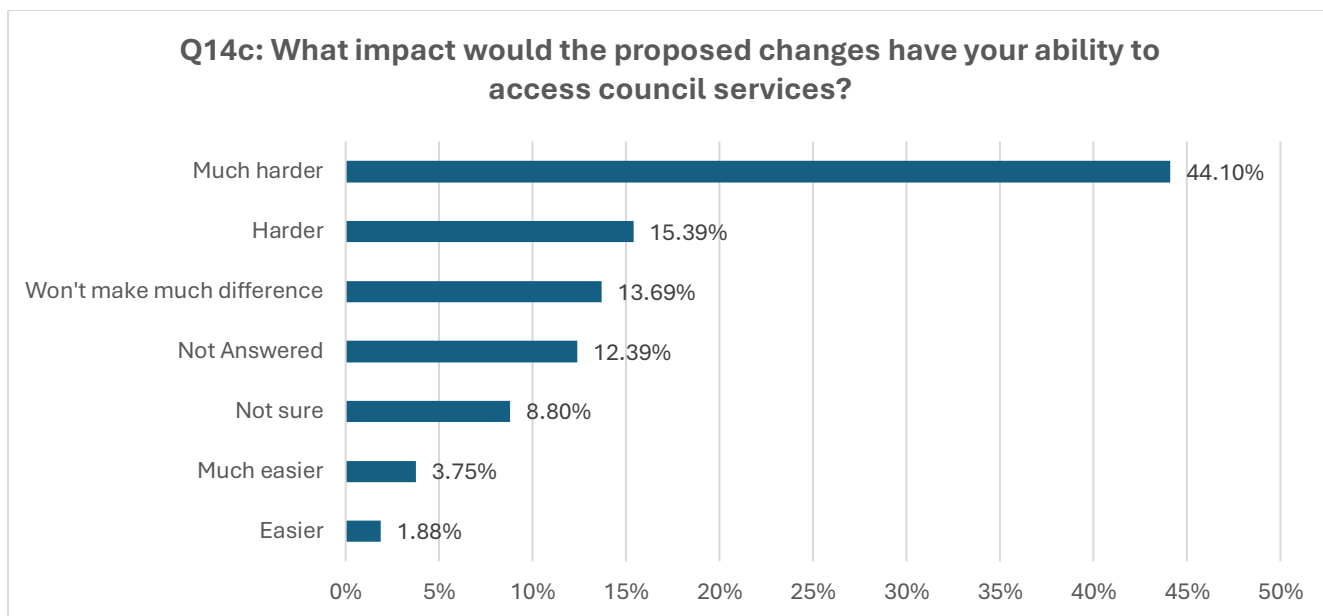


From those who answered, “much harder,” the chart below shows the breakdown by primary community centre selected, with Gilmorton (72.73%), Rushey Mead (71.27%), and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (67.74%) proportionally being the most affected.



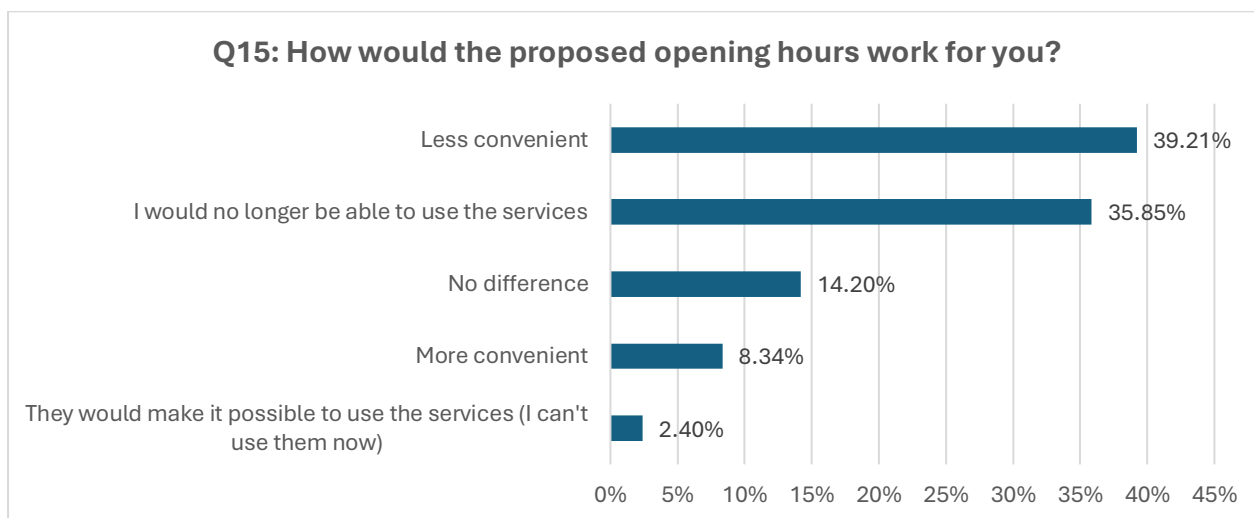
Q14c: What impact would the proposed changes have on your ability to access council services?

Out of 4,989 respondents, 4,371 (95.6%) answered this question. Most felt the proposed changes would negatively affect access to services, with 44.10% saying “much harder” and 15.39% saying “harder.” 13.69% said it “won’t make much difference,” while 5.63% thought it would be easier or much easier. 8.80% were not sure.



Q15: How would the proposed opening hours work for you?

In this multiple-choice question, respondents were asked how the proposed opening hours would affect them. Of the 4,989 people invited to respond, 4,644 answered. The majority said it would be "less convenient" (39.2%), followed closely by those who said, "they would no longer be able to use the service" (35.85%). Meanwhile, 14.2% said it would "make no difference", 8.34% said it would be "more convenient", and 2.4% said it would "make it possible to use the service".



In addition to the multiple choice question above respondents were asked to provide any other comments about the proposals for opening hours. A total of 664 (13.31%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents including statements relating to support for, or disagreement with the proposal.

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response Categories	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Benefits to proposed opening hours	14	2.11%
Comment about Self-Access	42	6.33%
No benefits to proposed opening hours	412	62.05%
Other comment	33	4.97%
Proposed opening hours will make no difference either way	13	1.96%
Suggested change to opening hours	150	22.59%
Total	664	

The responses about the proposed opening hours can be broken down further as follows:

Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage of respondents
Convenient opening hours	27	4.07%
Inconvenient opening hours	149	22.44%
Other comment	33	4.97%
Positive benefit not given	413	62.20%
Self-Access – negative	20	3.01%
Self-Access – positive	22	3.31%
Total	664	

A selection of the responses made is listed below:

“The longer opening hours the better of course. But it’ll be better to have fewer hours than no library at all.”

“Cutting opening hours would inevitably make libraries less convenient to anyone who works full time during the week, like I do.”

“I feel the timings on Saturday should increase”

“should not reduce evening hours because it is most busy use for students for revision and studies”

“More options for library plus self access is better”

“Satisfied, Thank You”

“Close 1 day in the week for longer opening at weekend”

“I would like the proposed library to still open on Sunday”

“sunday should be non working day for staff”

“No options for children to come for homework after school or any social hours for our mental health being”

Q16: Tell us about any positive benefits?

A total of 1,472 (29.50%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents citing a wide range of benefits but also stating there were no positive benefits.

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response Categories	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Current services benefit me	387	26.29%
Don't know	4	0.27%
More convenient opening hours	18	1.22%
Other Comment	20	1.36%
Positive benefit not given	919	62.43%
Positive view of Community Asset Transfer and/or Community Managed Libraries	42	2.85%
Positive view of Self-Access	36	2.45%
Supportive of co-location of services	12	0.82%
Understanding of budget pressures	34	2.31%
Total	1472	

A selection of the responses made is listed below:

“Access to more services is a plus”

“Development and investment in multi-service centres sounds like a great way to improve efficiency and create a better offering for local residents. I like the idea of introducing self-service opening hours outside of staffed opening hours and the proposed times (8am - 8pm) sound like an additional

convenience to extend access. I would like to know that computer use includes access to printing / scanning facilities?”

“The library changes are fine.”

“Streamlining services. Community groups can run libraries well- happens in the county”

“Giving community groups the opportunity to run centres and libraries that would otherwise close.”

“I am not averse to a community-run libraries as long as learning from other such systems e.g. in the county, is integrated.

“The positive is that you are trying to keep these open which is good for the people.”

“Self-access is a great way to increase availability for people who work and can only study in the evenings or early mornings (outside of working hours).”

“Libraries are essential pillars of a community, with benefits to a variety of different people for different reasons. It’s no longer a place just about books, it’s a network, a hub, a gathering place, an educational experience, and a place for social wellbeing”

Q16: Tell us about any negative effects?

A total of 1984 (39.77%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents citing a wide range of negative benefits.

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response Categories	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Accessibility & transport issues	117	5.90%
Digital exclusion	18	0.91%
Educational impact	48	2.42%
General dissatisfaction	253	12.75%
Health & wellbeing concerns	463	23.34%
Impact on children & families	206	10.38%
Loss of community cohesion & inclusion	125	6.30%
Loss of jobs	66	3.33%
Loss of service	534	26.92%
No negative effects	36	1.81%
Opening hours not suitable	118	5.90%
Total	1984	

A selection of the responses made is listed below:

“Limits access times due to reduced opening. May be more crowded, more noise not needed. Bad behavior would increase due to lack of staff, which in turn would put off people coming again.”

“I am concerned about the potential impact on the city's less fortunate residents.”

“It will mean the elderly are more isolated, cold with no support network and friends”

“My children will no longer be able to access library books.”

“I would miss using the library. I get nearly all my reading material from the library. I use the computers for education and to get jobs, as I don't own one”

“It is very sad and concerning that vital libraries and Community Centre services used by the elderly and pensioners as well as the younger generation are being taken away. Health & Well-being is very important for all, which Community Centres are providing. Most of the events in Community Centres are financed by the public who are attended fitness classes and other various events. Please make a difference by saving the last of these services. I and others will be eternally grateful, as these places are helping our social and mental health. We have worked hard all our lives and now you are taking away our social happiness.”

“This currently is a local community facility in a relatively deprived area. To take this away will reduce community engagement and participation. If sold to a private company and or a community group not representing the whole community it will be a loss for the majority of local residents.”

“Currently open until 7.00 during the week which means I can visit after work, and if not I visit on Sunday- if the opening times change I will be unable to do this.”

“You are removing buildings used by the community and it will detrimentally affect the community especially the elderly. Those with limited mobility use all these building in their local area. Those from lower socio-economic background require library services. Removing these services will have terrible consequence's for young and old”

“i will not get access to study support”

Q17: New solutions; please add any suggestions you would like us to consider?

A total of 1752 (35.12%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. Respondents made a wide range of innovative solutions and ideas.

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response Categories	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Change activities/support provided at our centres	52	2.97%

Change what council budgets are spent on	88	5.02%
Co-location of services	30	1.71%
Community Asset Transfer or Community Managed Libraries	58	3.31%
Don't know	51	2.91%
Greater partnership working	13	0.74%
Improve promotion of services and buildings	16	0.91%
Improvement of current services	33	1.88%
Income generation ideas	242	13.81%
Increase or implement Self-Access hours	41	2.34%
Increase volunteering opportunities	103	5.88%
Not answered	26	1.48%
Other	177	10.10%
Reconfigure proposed opening hours	218	12.44%
Rejection of current proposals	581	33.16%
Reduce staff at centres	19	1.08%
Review Book Bus routes	4	0.23%
Total	1752	

The types of comments which have been categorised as 'Other' are generally comments on services that do not form part of this public consultation.

A selection of the responses made is listed below:

"A better children's section would be amazing. Maybe some play equipment. Encouragement for the younger generation to use the libraries would be amazing rather than buying cheap books from the works etc. We recently visited Scarborough library (North Yorkshire) with some relatives and their recent update we were so impressed. It was so busy and lots of people using it and children in there. Please look at what they have done!"

"Investing good services to neighbourhood centres and having more access and longer and good service provided by the libraries to help children and family develop"

"One option could be to combine the library and community centres so facilities can be shared for activities. Another option would be to charge nominal fees to everyone using the library. If the local residents are using the library for other activities then maybe they can contribute a nominal fee to help fund the library."

"Centralising services makes a lot of sense to me - fewer libraries open the same hours with good resource availability."

“Co locating as many voluntary and community services as possible in libraries alongside the independent access would provide greater safety to users. Clarity around services available at different times and the continued employment of professional librarians wherever possible is key to the service changes having as little negative impact as possible. The switch from professional to voluntary service needs to be managed carefully and the cost savings may not be as significant as anticipated.”

“Make it more attractive for community organisations to manage spaces. Alongside a long lease, the opportunity should be incentivised. Councils in other parts of the country offer vcs support and revenue grant funding to help the group's get started.”

“Get more of the community involved where possible. I would be happy to dedicate some of my Saturdays when not at work or evenings to help with admin, staffing, anything else.”

“Greater partnership working with schools & universities, arts organisations and science & technology companies to provide library services via their premises.”

“Promote the facilities and libraries. This way a strong bonded community can be built. Add events in these areas it will bring people in. Add charity events. Educate the locals about issues such as anti-social behaviour and climate change. Bring schools in to be educated and show that facilities and libraries are here if they are needed.”

“Exploring alternative funding streams: including sponsorship deals; crowdfunding; and partnering with philanthropic organisations and charities.”

“We would be willing to pay 10% more in room hire charges for a better maintained Centre. With Grants available for extending the main building for storage facilities that are badly needed. We have lots of Groups with little room for storing equipment.”

Q18: Are you part of a community group or organisation who might be interested in taking on the running of a library or community centre?

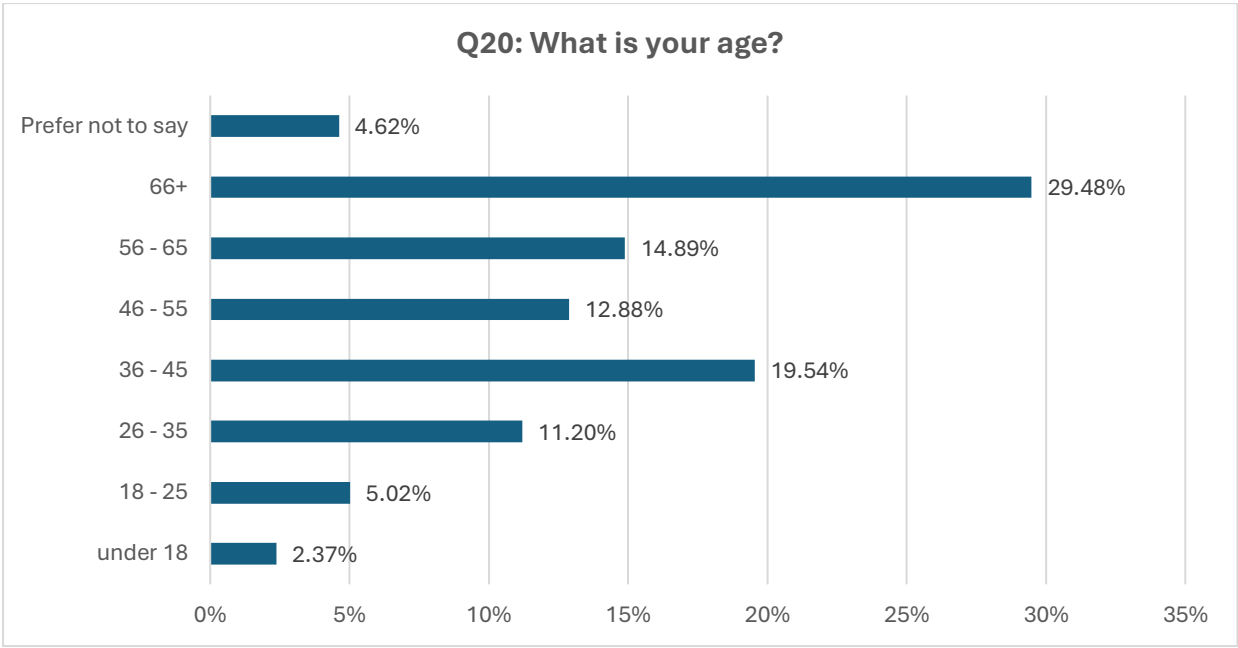
Respondents were asked whether they were answering on behalf of a community group or organisation who might be interested in taking on the running of a library or community. Out of the 3,946 (79.09%) respondents, 267 answered yes.

Q19: What is your home postcode?

Of the 4,989 responses submitted to the main survey, 4,225 postcodes were provided in total. This included 78 (1.85%) invalid postcodes, 231 (5.47%) partial postcodes, and 3,916 (92.69%) usable postcodes. A map showing responses by usable postcode can be found on page 49.

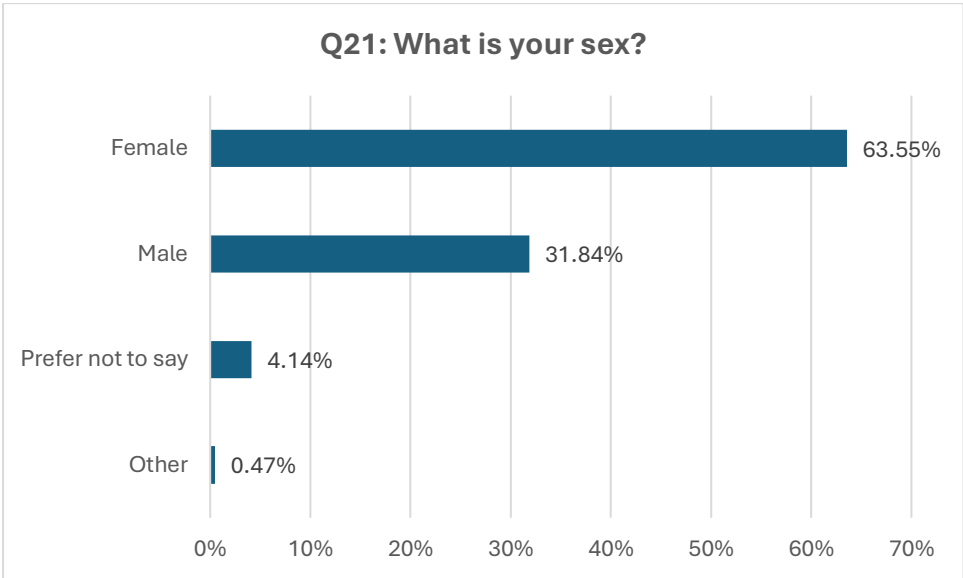
Q20: What is your age?

Respondents were asked to indicate their age by selecting from set age bands. The largest proportion were aged 66 and over (29.48%), followed by 36–45 (19.54%). Smaller groups included those under 18 (2.37%) and 18–25 (5.02%), while 4.62% preferred not to say.



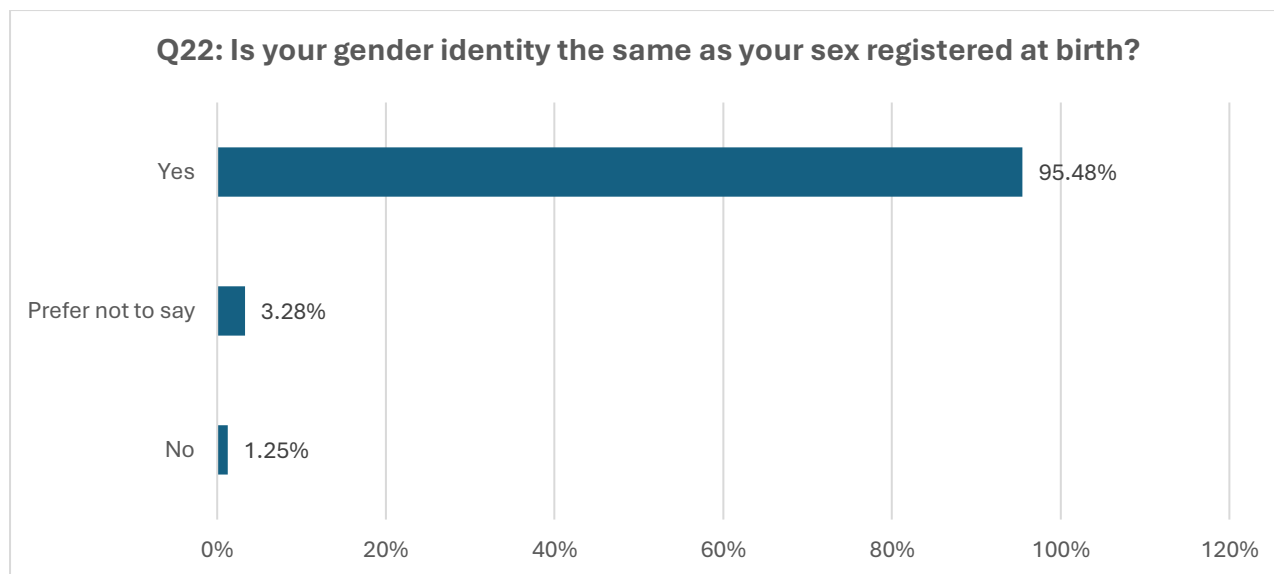
Q21: What is your sex?

Respondents were asked to indicate their sex by selecting from the provided options. There were a total of 4,513 respondents, with the largest proportion choosing ‘Female’ (63.5%), followed by ‘Men’ (31.8%) and ‘Other’ (0.5%) and 4.1% preferring no to say.



Q22: Is your gender identity the same as your sex registered at birth?

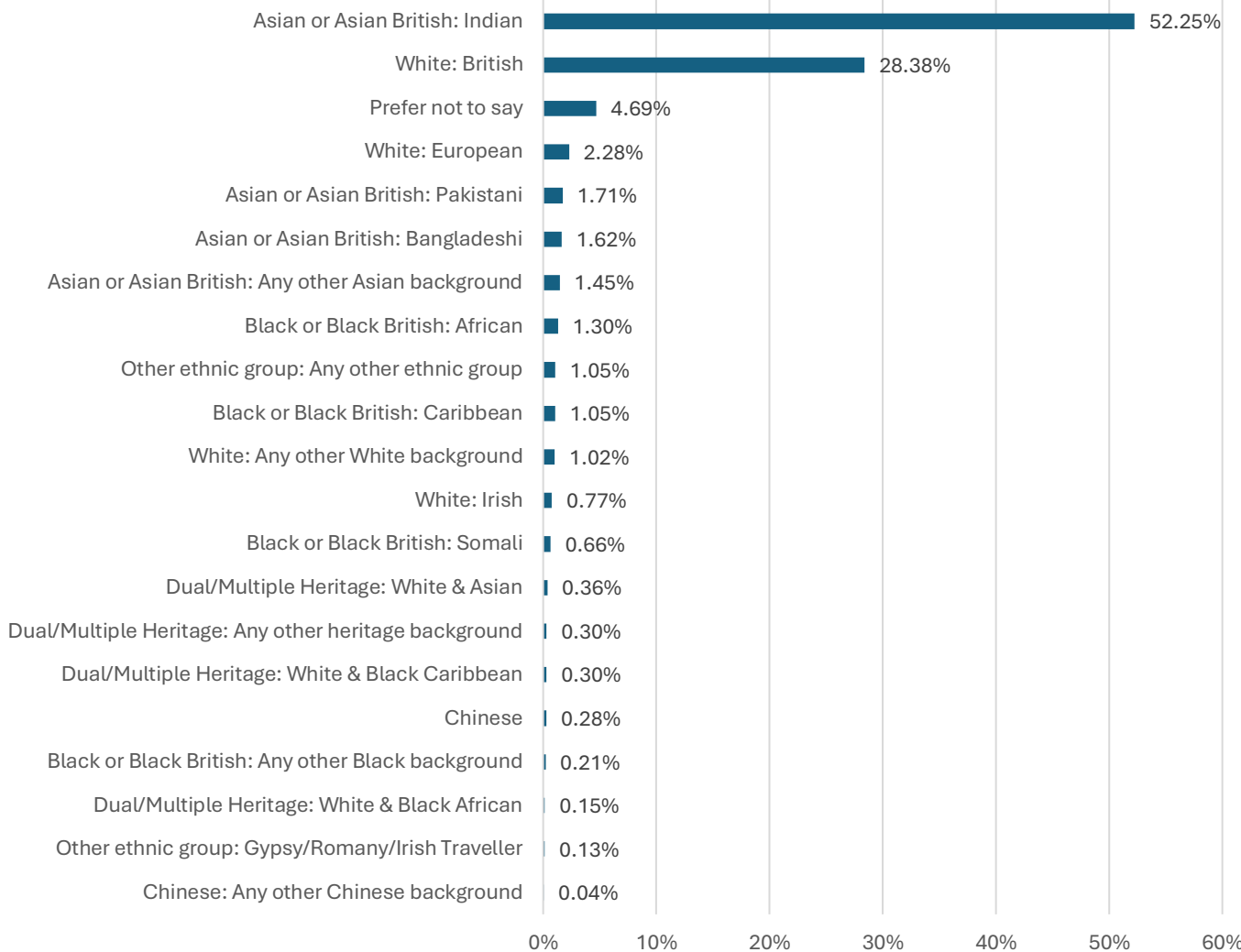
Respondents were asked whether their gender identity is the same as their sex registered at birth, with a total of 3,293 answers, with the largest proportion choosing 'Yes' (95.48%).



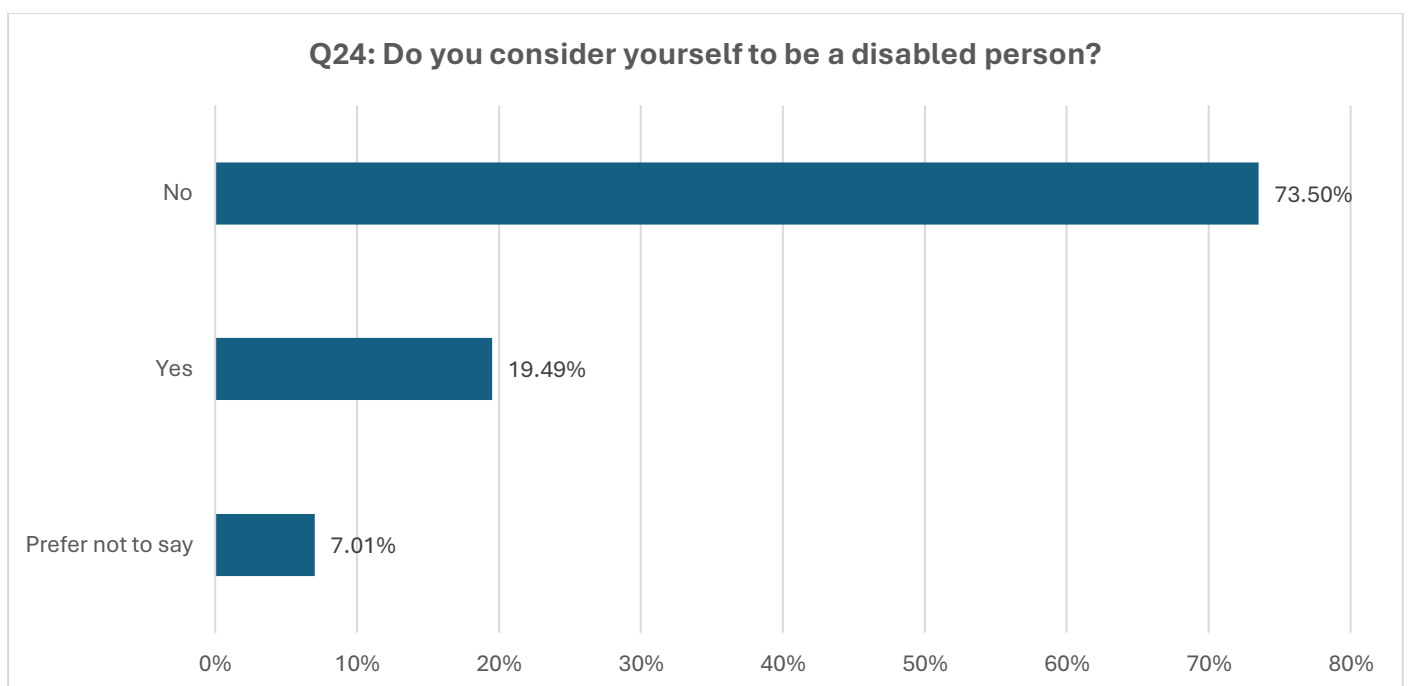
Q23: What is your ethnic background?

Respondents were asked to describe their ethnic background from a range of options. The largest proportion identified as Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi (52.3%), followed by White: British (28.4%). A variety of other ethnic groups were represented in smaller numbers, and 4.7% of respondents chose not to disclose their background.

Q23: What is your ethnic background?



Q24: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

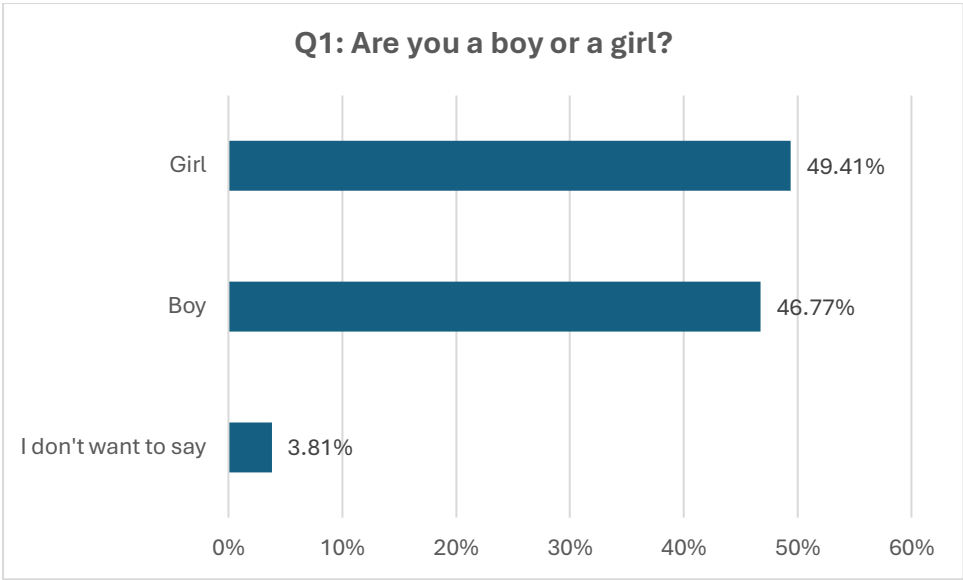


Views and comments - (young people survey consultation)

This section provides a summary of the feedback received in response to the young people’s survey consultation questions, 1,366 responses were received. For reference, a copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix b of this document. The following outlines the responses to each question:

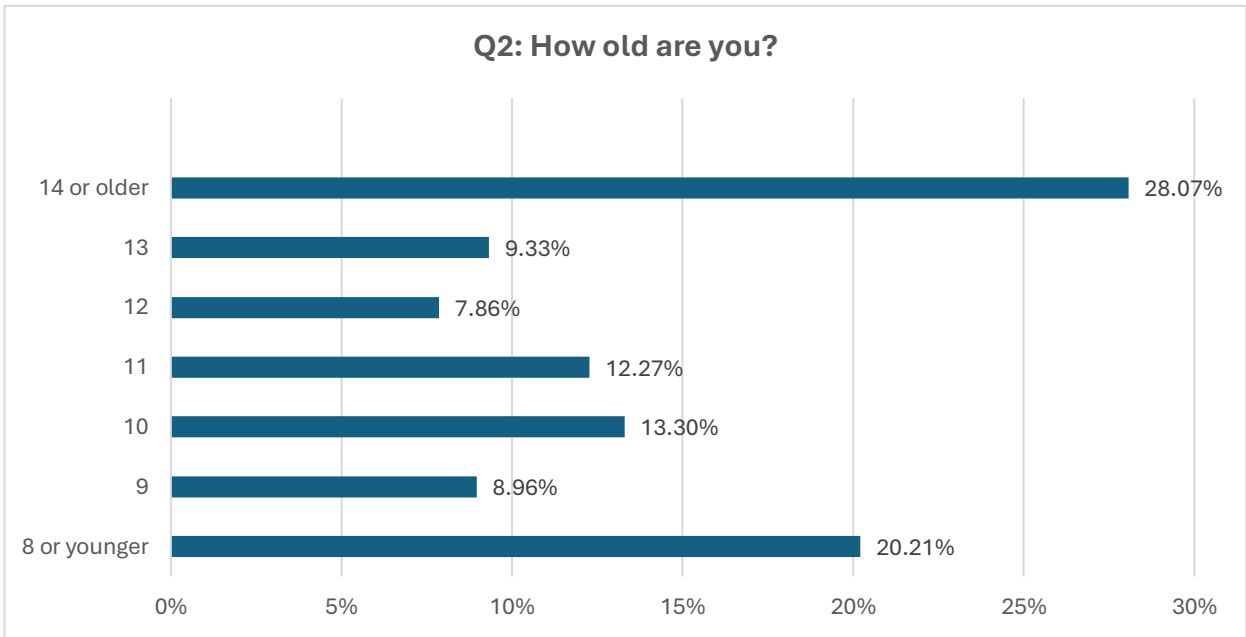
Q1: Are you a boy or a girl?

Respondents were asked to indicate their gender, and of the 1,364 (99.85%) responses, 49.41% identified as girls, 46.77% as boys, and 3.81% selected “I don’t want to say”.



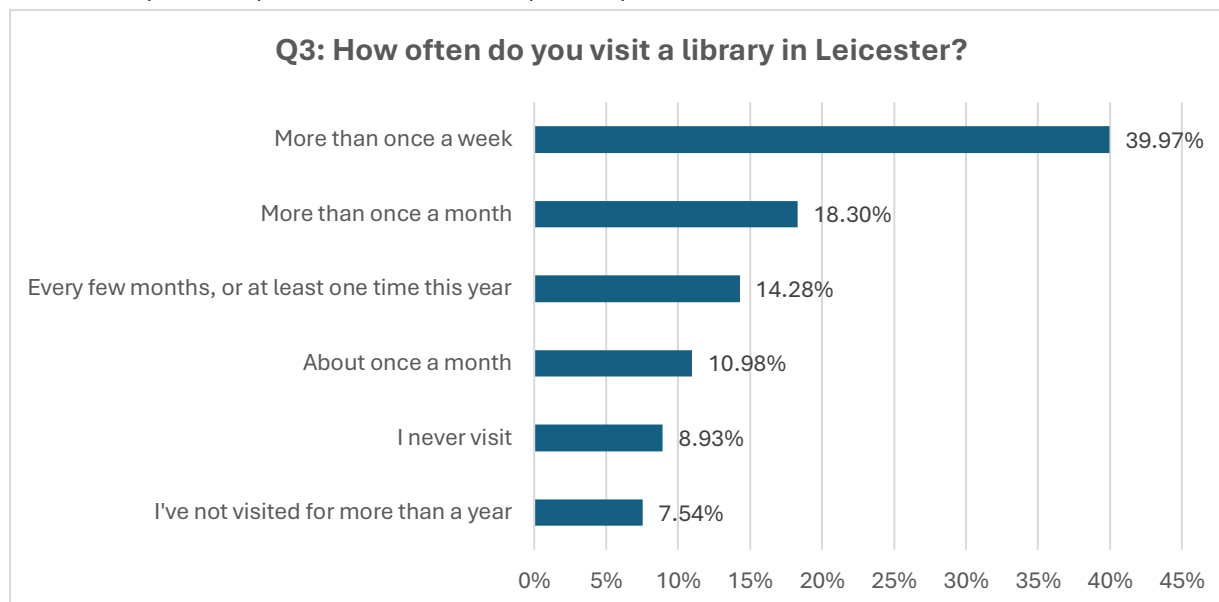
Q2: How old are you?

Respondents were asked to indicate their age from the provided options. The majority of respondents were aged 9–11 years (34.53%), followed by 14 or older (28.07%), then 8 or younger (20.21%) and 12–13 years (17.19%).



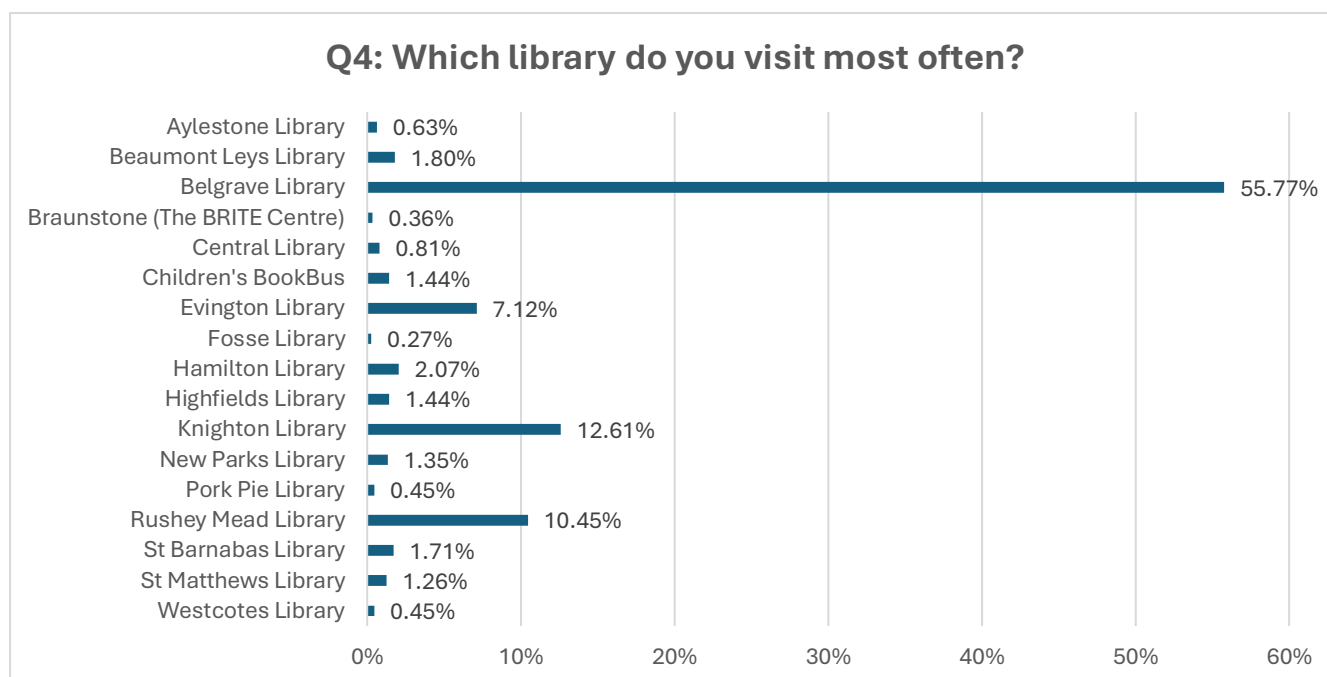
Q3: How often do you visit a library in Leicester?

Most young people who reported visiting a library said they do so "more than once a week" (39.97%). This was followed by "more than once a month" (18.30%), "every few months" (14.28%), "about once a month" (10.98%), and "I never visit" (8.93%).



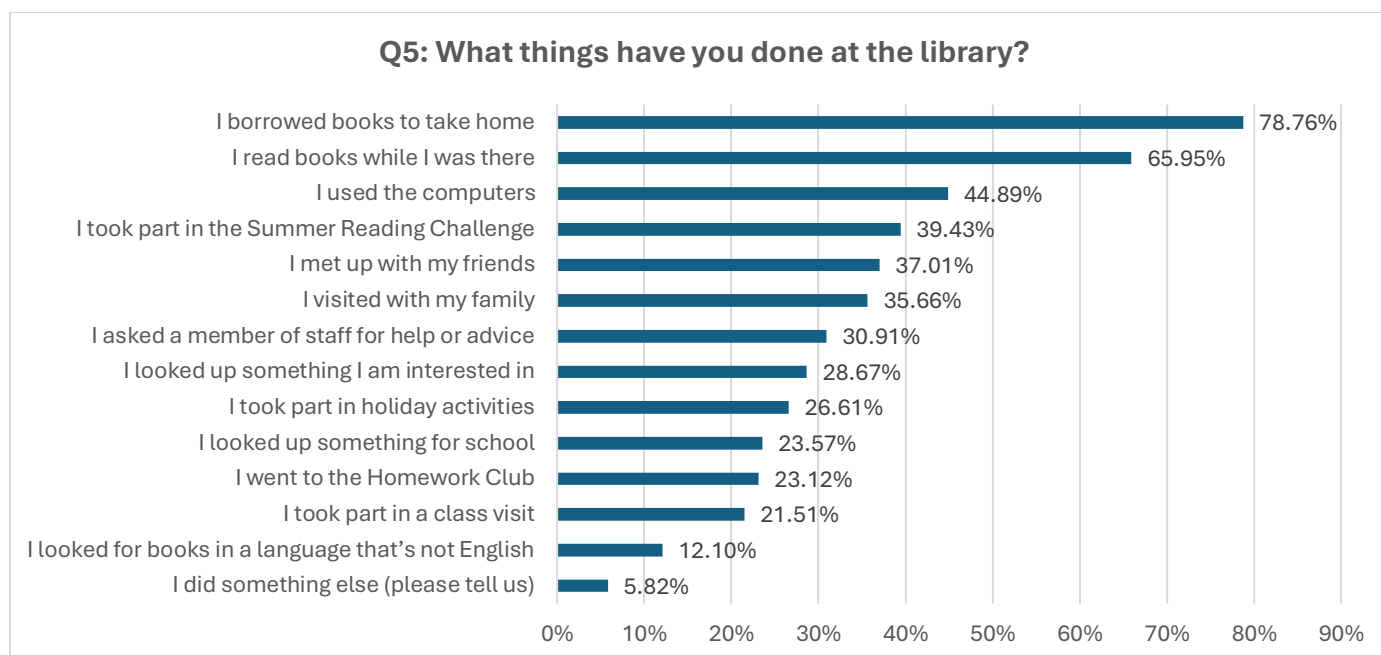
Q4: Which library do you visit most often?

Respondents were asked to identify the library they visit most frequently. Out of 1,366 responses, 1,137 (83.24%) provided an answer. The graph below illustrates the distribution of library usage among young people.



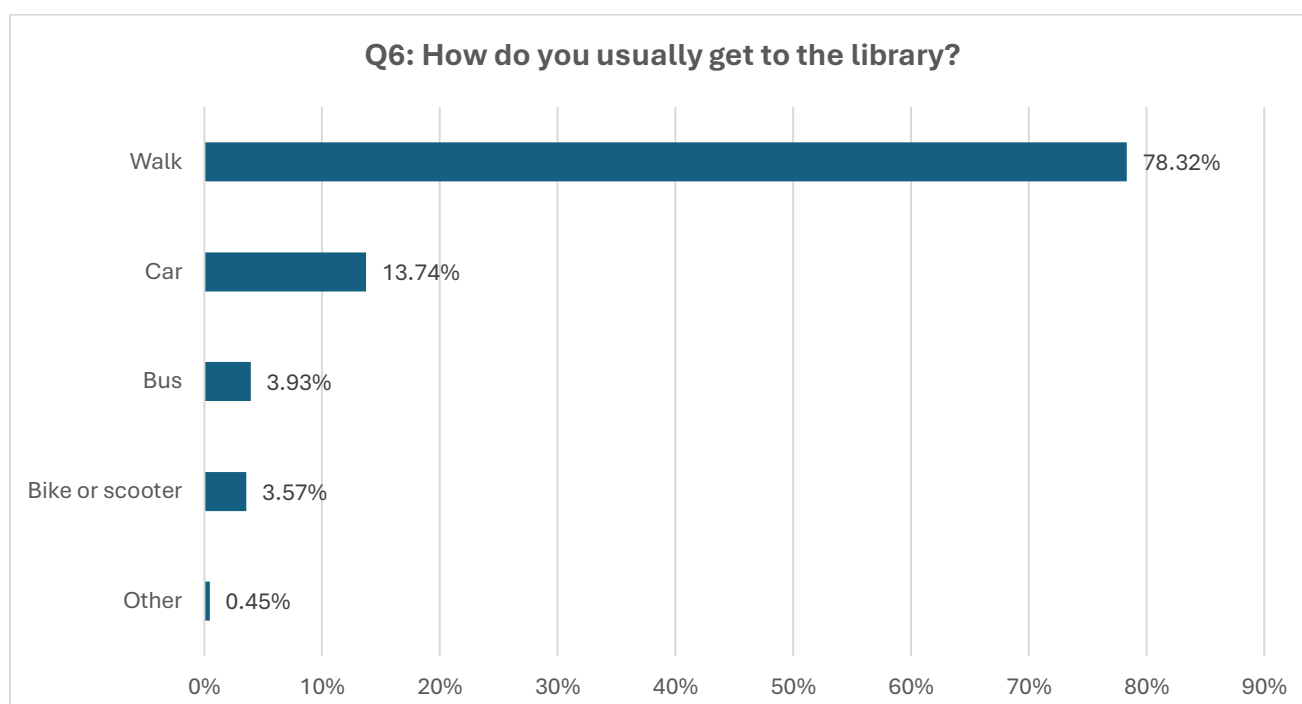
Q5: What things have you done at the library?

Respondents were asked about their ways of using Leicester libraries. Of the 1,366 total responses, 1,119 (81.92%) answered this question. The graph below illustrates the variety of uses reported.



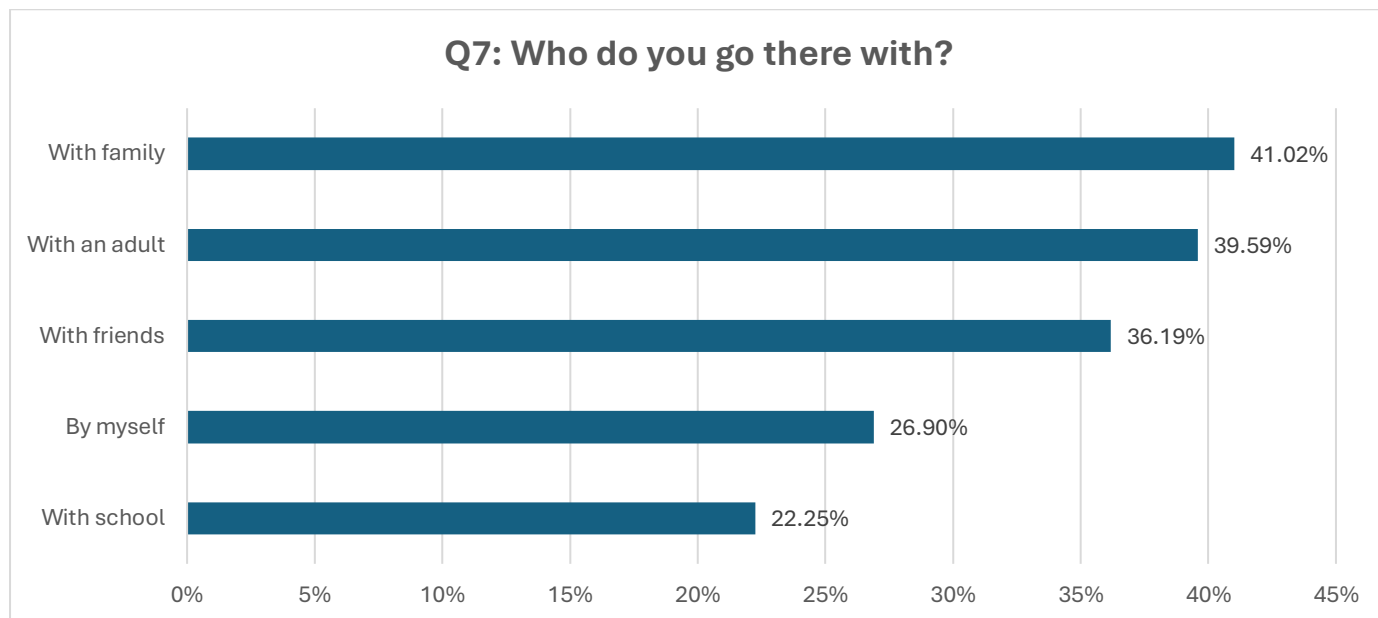
Q6: How do you usually get to the library?

Young people were asked how they usually travel to the library if they use one. Out of the 1,121 (82.06%) who answered, the majority of respondents said they walk (78.32%), followed by those who travel by car (13.74%). Smaller proportions reported using the bus (3.93%), cycling (3.57%), or other modes of transport (0.45%).



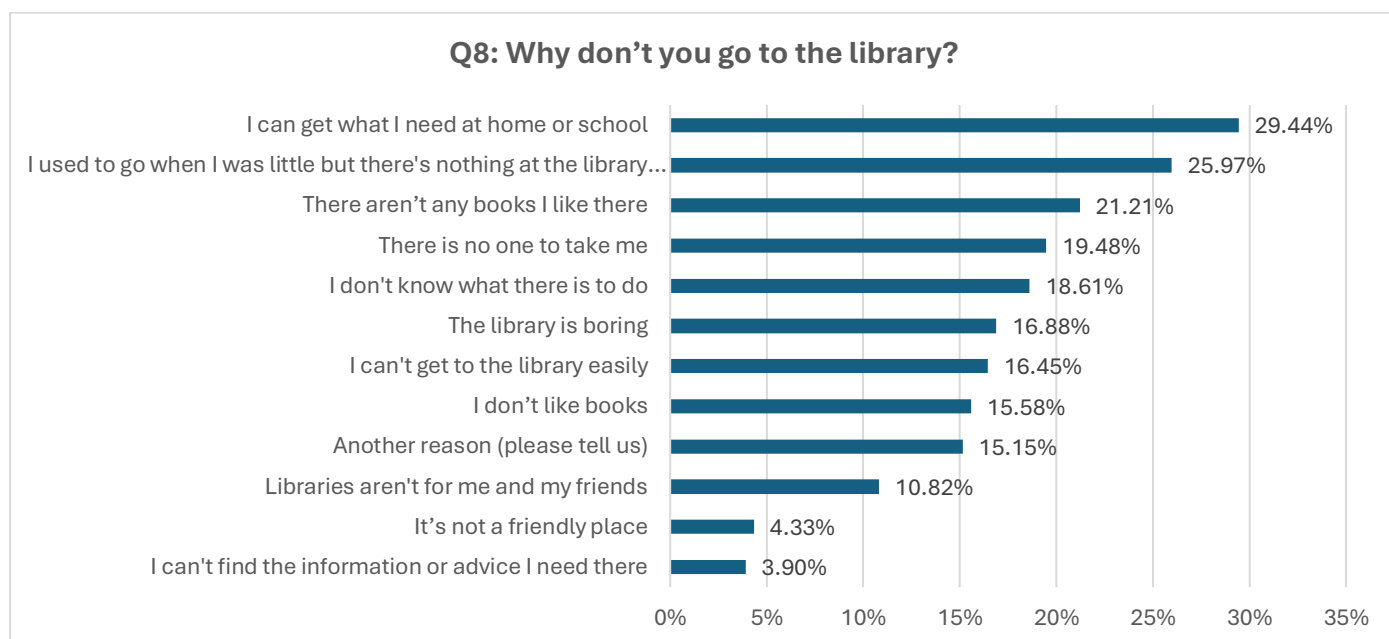
Q7: Who do you go there with?

Respondents were asked who they usually go to the library with. Out 1,119 (81.92%) responses, the most common answer was "with family" (41.02%), followed by "with an adult" (39.59%), "with friends" (36.19%), "by myself" (26.90%) and "with school" (22.25%).



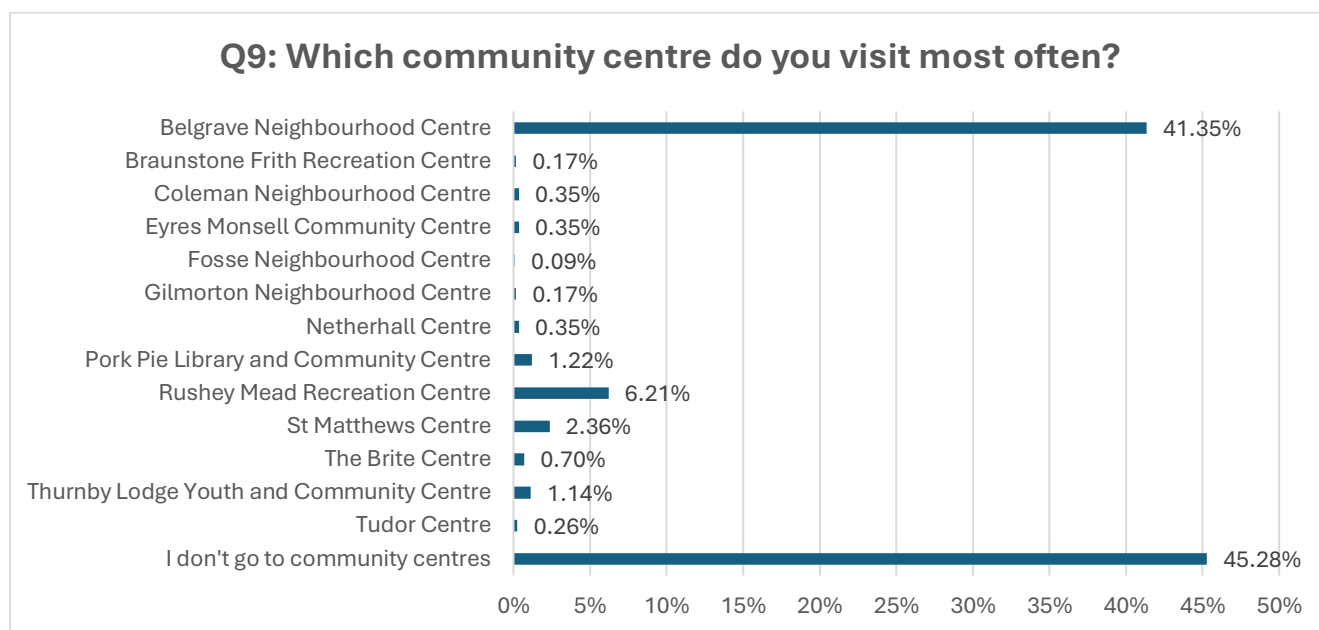
Q8: Why don't you go to the library?

Out of the 231 respondents who said they do not visit the library, the most frequent reasons given were "I can get what I need at home or school" (29.44%), "there's nothing at the library for me anymore" (25.97%), and "There aren't any books I like there" (21.21%).



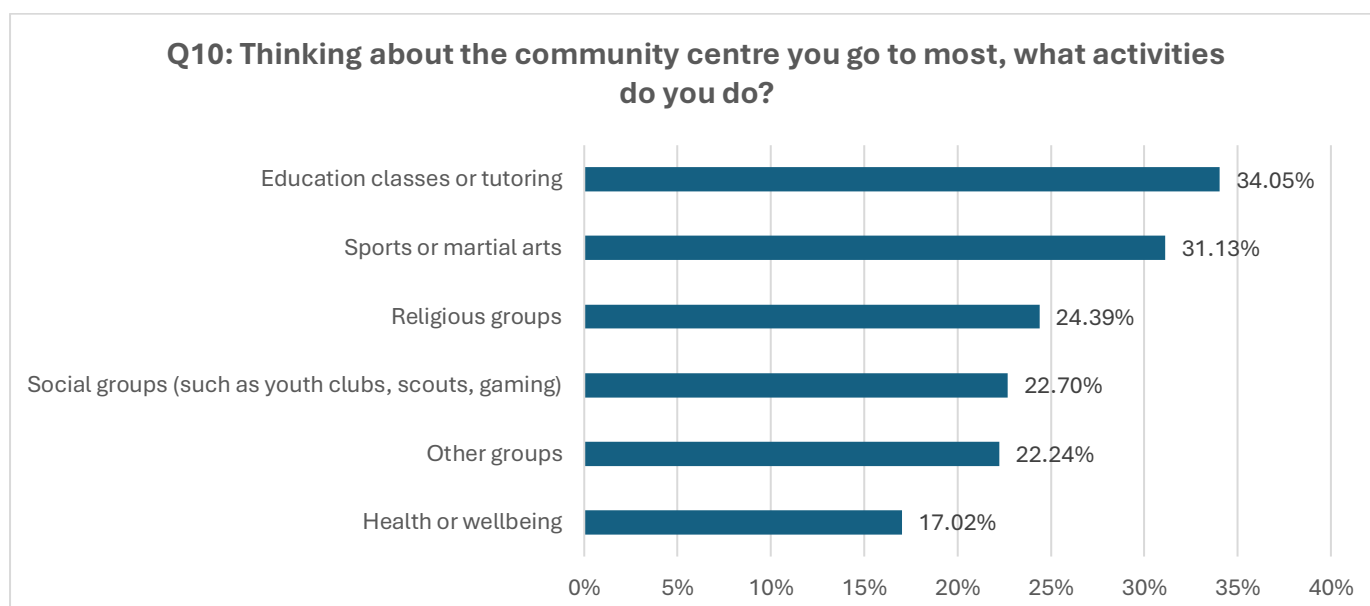
Q9: Which community centre do you visit most often?

Young people were asked to name the community centre they visit most frequently. Of the 1,366 respondents, 1,099 (80.45%) answered this question. The below graph shows the young people's usage across the city.



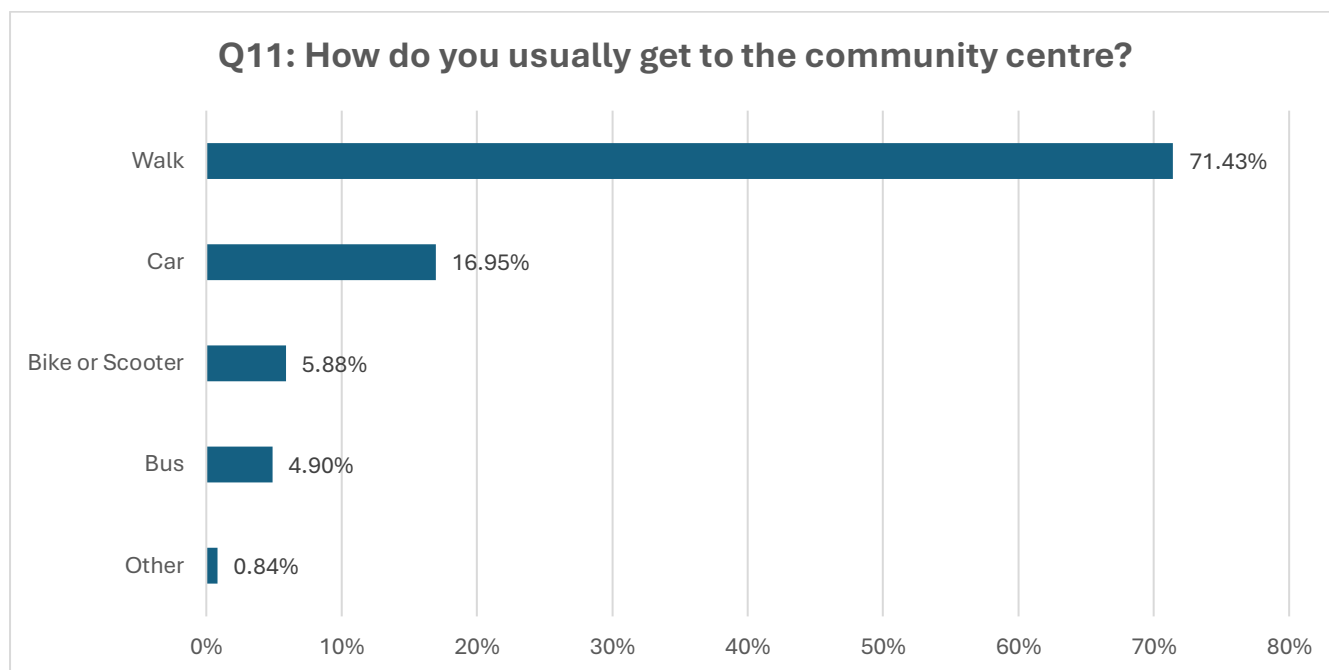
Q10: Thinking about the community centre you go to most, what activities do you do?

Respondents were asked about the types of activities they take part in at their most-visited community centre. Out of 1,366 responses, 652 (47.73%) answered this question. The most common activity reported was "education classes or tutoring" (34.1%), followed by "sports or martial arts" (31.1%), "religious groups" (24.4%), "social groups (such as youth clubs, scouts, gaming)" (22.7%), "other groups" (22.2%), and "health or wellbeing" activities (17.0%).



Q11: How do you usually get to the community centre?

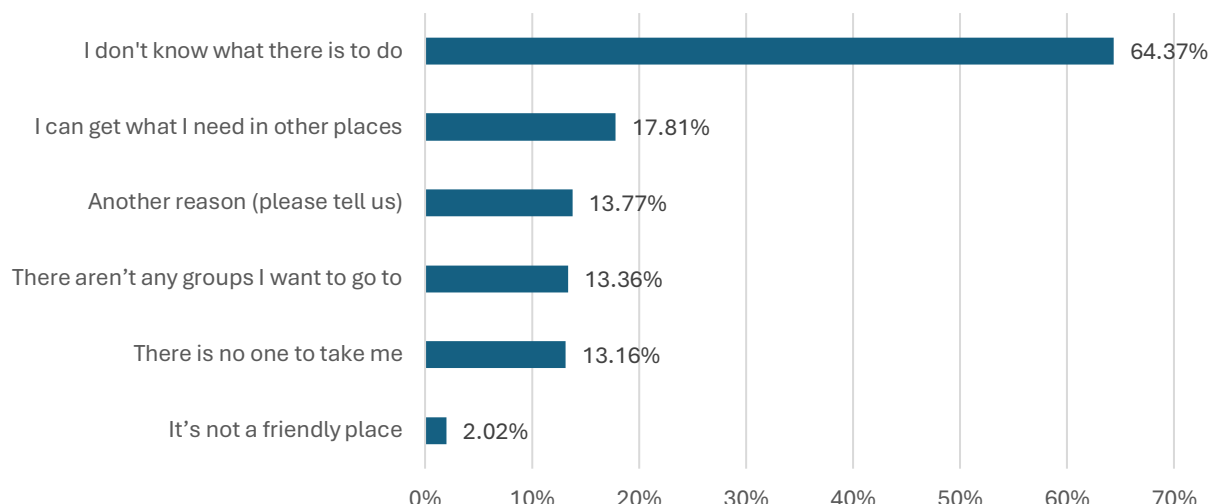
This question asked how young people usually travel to the community centre they attend. Out of 1,366 responses, 714 (52.27%) answered. The majority said they walk (71.43%), while others said they travel by car (17%) or bus (4.9%). A small number cycle (5.9%) or use other forms of transport (0.8%).



Q12: Why don't you go to a community centre?

Respondents who said they don't attend a community centre were asked to give their reasons. Out of 1,366 responses 514 (37.63%) answered. The most common reasons were "I don't know what's there is to do" (64.3%), "I can get what I need in other places" (17.8%), There aren't groups I want to go to" (13.4%) and "there is no one to take me" (13.2%). Others mentioned that "it is not a friendly place" (2%).

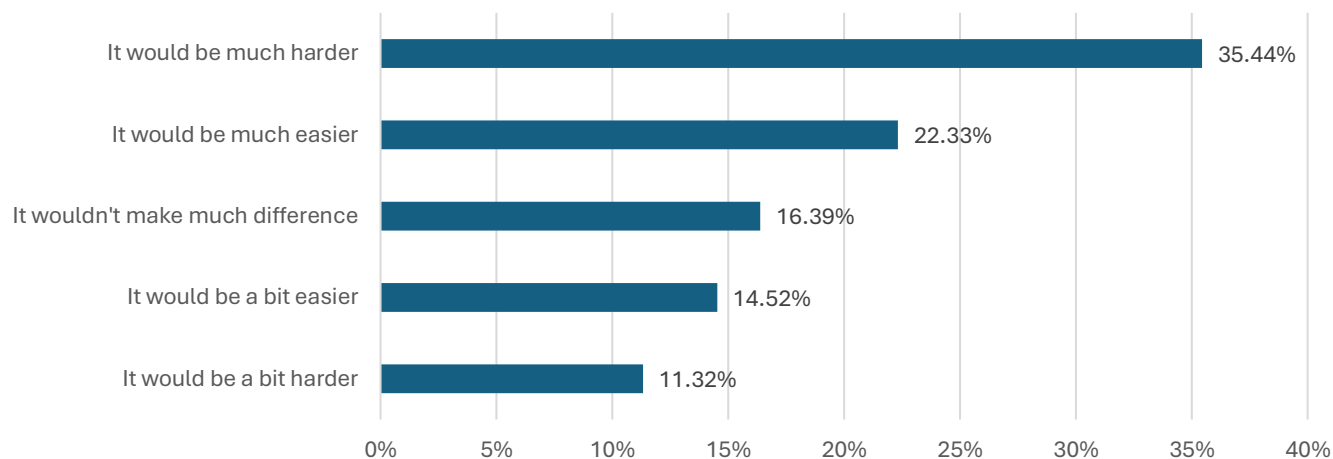
Q12: Why don't you go to a community centre



Q13: How do you think our ideas would affect you visiting a library?

Young people were asked how the proposed changes would influence their likelihood of visiting a library. Out of 1,366 respondents, 1,281 (93.8%) answered this question. The most common response was "It would be much harder" (35.4%), followed by "It would be much easier" (22.3%), "It wouldn't make much difference" (16.4%), "It would be a bit easier" (14.5%), and "It would be a bit harder" (11.3%).

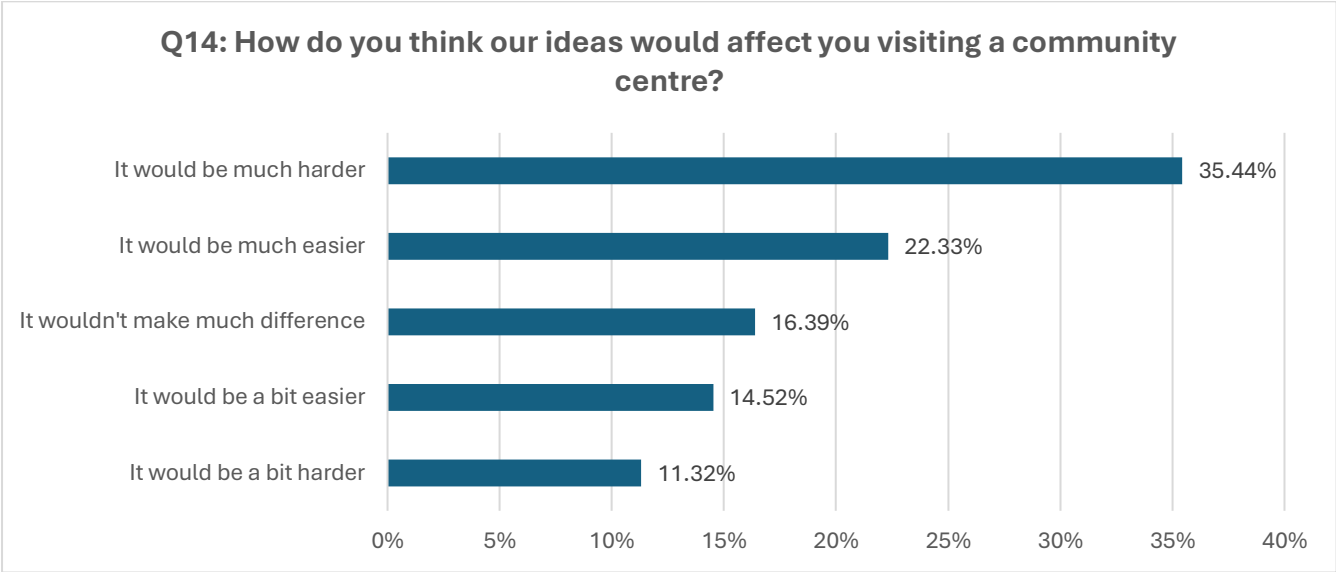
Q13: How do you think our ideas would affect you visiting a library?



Q14: How do you think our ideas would affect you visiting a community centre?

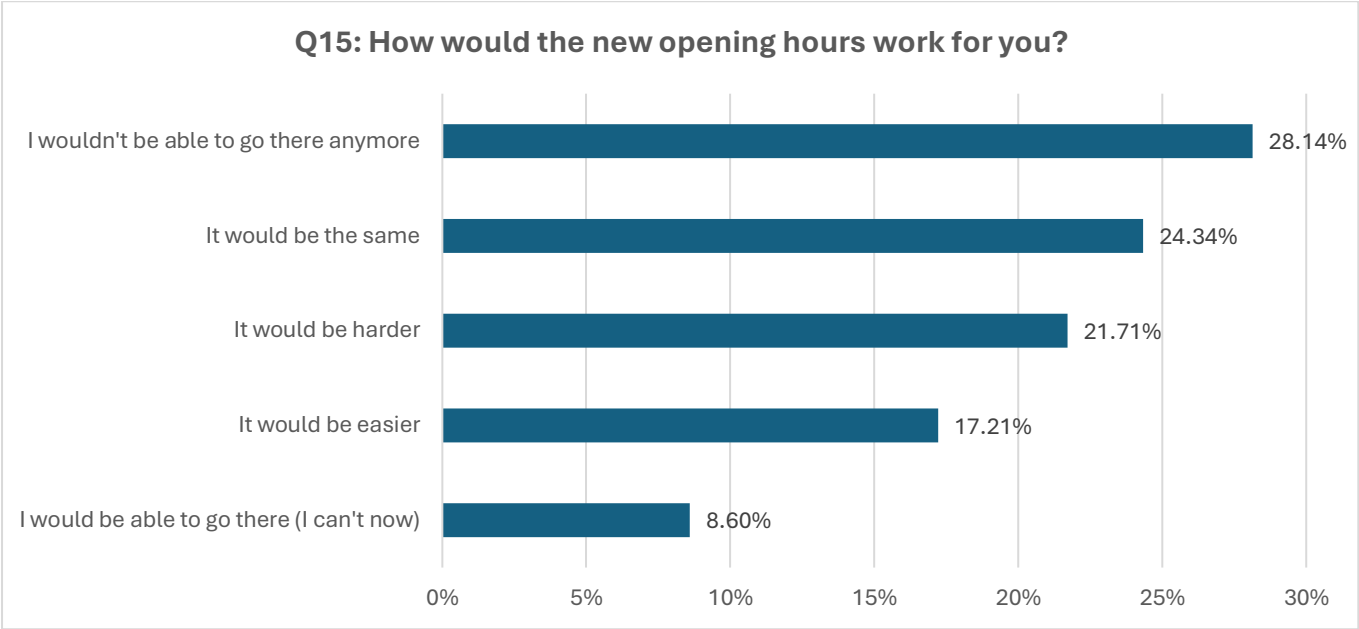
Young people were asked how the proposed changes would influence their likelihood of visiting a library. Out of 1,366 respondents, 1,264 (93.7%) answered this question. The most common response was "It would be much harder" (35.44%), followed by ""It would be much easier" (22.33%), It wouldn't

make much difference" (16.39%), "It would be a bit easier" (14.52%), and "It would be a bit harder" (11.32%).



Q15: How would the new opening hours work for you?

In this multiple-choice question, young people were asked how the proposed opening hours would affect their ability to use the service, with a total of 1,290 responses. The largest group (28.1%) said “I would no longer be able to use the service”, followed by “it would be the same” (24.34%), “it would be harder” (21.7%), “it would be easier” (17.2%) and 8.6% said the new hours would make it possible for them to use the service when they couldn’t before.



Q16: What are your thoughts on the ideas you've just read about? Do you have any other ideas about the future of our libraries and community centres?

A total of 654 (47.88%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. Respondents shared a wide range of thoughts and ideas.

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response Categories	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Activities and Programmes	57	8.72%
Books and Reading	68	10.40%
Digital Access and Technology	11	1.68%
Education, Skills and Careers	76	11.62%
Health and Wellbeing	13	1.99%
Loss of Building & Facilities	181	27.68%
No Answer Given	64	9.79%
Opening Hours and Access	69	10.55%
Other	30	4.59%
Positive comment about proposals	35	5.35%
Staff and Support	38	5.81%
Transport and Location	12	1.83%
Total	654	

A selection of the responses made is listed below:

“do not cut study support”

“The library was a sanctuary for me and my dad when he and mum adopted me. It continues to be”

“Keep the hours same, do not have different hours of opening as it would be confusing to remember. Homework Study and using books for work is important to me.”

“The library is a safe place for me to meet my friends, learn and do homework with Study Support. I feel you should keep the opening times same for everyday because easy to remember. We cannot use self service late at night or early morning as we are children and cannot get to library late or too early in the morning.”

“I think you should look to spend more for investments rather than cut costs. A one off fee for every person in Leicester of £10 would raise the money and extra. That's just 2 weeks pocket money for me.”

“The library is at the heart of our community. Childminders go there on a daily basis, it's a fun trip after school and sociable”

“Opening hours later so working parents can take there children”

“Encourage more secondary school students to go to the library!! (No, not the summer reading challenge, that’s for younger children) I know so many people who would benefit from going to their local library but they have no clue on how to work the systems at all. It would also relieve some pressure on their schools library that are constantly being bombarded with students!”

“needs better sofas and more respect to kids because they need to be aloud to have hot drinks . I strongly believe that there is nothing to do and if this does not get fixed i will be lucking in to legal actions.”

“The community centres/libraries could possibly contain age appropriate activities so a variety of people of different ages can participate and engage in things which they like or prefer to do.”

Submissions

There were further submissions made during the course of the consultation through a range of channels outside of the survey.

These included:

- Friends of Evington
- Friends of Clarendon Park
- Castle Branch Labour Party
- Rusheyfields Residents Association
- Shivani Raja MP
- Brits Desi Society
- The Steering Group representing the service users and residents of Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, Rushey Mead Library, and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Milap Group
- New Parks New Friends
- Leicester Digital Partnership

Petitions

There have been 6 petitions received on the proposals for libraries and community centres. They are as follows:

Save Leicester’s Libraries and Community Centres

A total of 6000+ signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

“We, the undersigned, call on Leicester City Council to stop its plans to cut or close our much-loved libraries and community centres. These local facilities are essential to the residents who rely on them for education, social connection, support, and community activities.

We ask the Council to:

- Drop any plans to close or reduce services at Leicester's libraries and community centres
- Invest in these facilities and keep them accessible to all residents
- Work with local communities to find better ways to protect and improve these services”

Petition against closure of Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

A total of 1931 signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

I am a member of the vibrant and close-knit community in Belgrave, a community that stands to be deeply affected by the proposed closure of the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and the reduction of opening hours at our local library. The council's measures target vital community hubs that serve as lifelines to many within our locality.

Our Neighbourhood Centre is more than just a building, it's a space where connections are forged, support is given and received, and a sense of belonging is cultivated. Similarly, our library offers much more than the traditional lending of books: amongst other things, it offers a warm space in the winter, provides advice for those who don't know where to turn, storytelling for young children, library services for schools without libraries, children's activities during school holidays, computer facilities for those without computers, a safe space for doing homework, and a welcoming environment for craft and friendship groups to meet up and socialise.

Statistics indicate that community centres and libraries play a crucial role in supporting education, improving literacy rates, and fostering community cohesion. In addition, the closures and reduction of hours would disproportionately affect the elderly, the young, and the lower-income households who rely heavily on these resources.

We understand the budget constraints every council has to face. However, we believe it is possible to explore alternative cost-cutting measures that do not involve nullifying services that form the bedrock of our community's identity, support, and vitality.

Please stand with us against the council's proposed changes and express your support for keeping our Neighbourhood Centre open and our library accessible for all. Please sign our petition today.

Save Rushey Mead Library and Recreation Centre

A total of 864 signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

We, the undersigned residents and supporters of Rushey Mead, respectfully petition the local council and relevant authorities to reconsider any proposed closure, reduction in services, or repurposing of the Rushey Mead Library and Recreation Centre.

These vital community spaces serve as more than just buildings —they are lifelines for learning, wellbeing, and togetherness. We urge the decision-makers to protect and invest in our library and recreation centre — not take them away.

Please sign and share this petition to show your support for Rushey Mead.

(The wording was also repeated in Gujarati).

Save Knighton Library

A total of 244 signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

We, the undersigned, are opposed to the proposed closure of Knighton Library, which is used by hundreds of people. We call on Leicester Council to:

1. reject the proposed plan to close the Knighton Library
 2. fully consult with local residents on any future proposals
- Reasons against closing this community space

Reasons against closing this community space

- People who are homeschooled go there for books to help them with education and if it closes they will have to unnecessarily spend the money for a book they could have easily borrowed for free
- It is a place where people go to spend their time either to work, study, read or just to relax/have fun
- It is rated 4.5 on 'Google ratings' meaning that lots of people enjoy it and it would be unpleasant to see it close
- It is a great place with kind, hardworking staff that work there every day until around 6 o'clock, staff that would be losing their hard earned jobs and would go unemployed
- It has great facilities including free access to fully working on computers; internet access; a quiet study area where you could read or use your own laptop/device and tables to read
- Has a wide variety of books all for different ages and/or genders, it also has any style of writing or themes
- Also has different activities such as Toddler time on Wednesdays, etc.
- Knighton Library stands out as one of the few truly exceptional libraries in Leicester, offering an impressive collection of books that caters to readers of all ages
- The selection is thoughtfully curated, ensuring that visitors can find a wealth of literary treasures, from timeless classics to contemporary works across various genres
- It was renovated only three years ago
- The closure would influence not only the people but some of the local primary and secondary schools, including: Avenue Primary Sch, St John the Baptist CofE Primary Sch, St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy, Lancaster Academy and Sir Jonathan North Girls' College as they would no longer be able to organise school trips to visit the library.

Keep open the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Library and Annexe

A total of 128 signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

We the undersigned are local residents and/or users and/or volunteers of the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, library and/or Alice Hawkins Community Projects Foodbank in The Annexe. We value the benefits that the FNC brings to our community and request that Leicester City Council keep it open as it is the only Council owned public building in the Fosse Ward which can be used by all residents.

Save Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

A total of 20 signatures were received. The text of the survey reads:

We the undersigned petition the council to stop its plans to cut or close our much-loved libraries and community centres. These local facilities are essential to the residents who rely on them for education, social connection, support, and community activities. We ask the Council to:

- Drop any plans to close or reduce services at Leicester's libraries and community centres
- Invest in these facilities and keep them accessible to all residents
- Work with local communities to find better ways to protect and improve these services

You are signing to support: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

Justification:

We, the undersigned, call on Leicester City Council to stop its plans to cut or close our much-loved libraries and community centres. These local facilities are essential to the residents who rely on them for education, social connection, support, and community activities. We ask the Council to:

- Drop any plans to close or reduce services at Leicester's libraries and community centres
- Invest in these facilities and keep them accessible to all residents
- Work with local communities to find better ways to protect and improve these services

You are signing to support: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

Conclusions

- There was a very high-level of participation in the consultation on proposals for libraries and community centres with 4,989 responses to the main survey, and 1,366 responses to the children and young people's survey. 1,053 people attended the open 12 meetings and 120 people attended the drop-in sessions.
- The high level of participation indicates the consultation was well promoted and that members of the public were well engaged with proposals.
- There was particularly high engagement in three areas of the city: Belgrave ward, Rushey Mead ward and Castle/Knighton wards. This was evidenced by the high percentage of survey responses and the numbers attending open meetings in these wards.
- A high number of respondents use library services regularly, with 69% of all respondents to the main survey visiting a library at least once a week, rising to 90% visiting at least once a month.
- The library services people said were most important to them are Books and reading (83% of all respondents to the main survey); access and support for digital services (41%), children's and family activity programmes (31%), cultural and creativities (29%) and social and meeting spaces (29%). This supports the proposed prioritisation of the four universal offers and the children's promise defined by Libraries Connected.
- Around half of all respondents to the main survey (51%) said they visited a community centre at least once a week. Of these, 51% said their primary community centre was Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, and 15% said their primary community centre was Rushey Mead Recreation centre.
- The community centre services people said were most important to them are community groups or activities (55%), exercise or health related activities (39%), cultural and arts and crafts activities (37%) and a social space to meet people (29%). Whilst fewer people said they regularly used community centres the responses indicate that those who do use them value the centres for social connection, health and wellbeing and the role they play in community cohesion.
- Response to the main survey show there is significant cross usage of libraries by customers, demonstrating some flexibility in use of community libraries. The most commonly used library, other than the primary library of use, is the Central Library. This supports feedback that the Central Library is used to provide a broad range and depth of resources which are available to all city residents, beyond the standard community library offer.
- The feedback shows there is also a high level of cross usage between local community libraries. For example 63% of those who identify Fosse Library as their primary library, also

visit other community libraries, 88% of those who identify Aylestone Library as their primary library also visit other libraries.

- There is a high number of community centre users who visit more than one centres, although this is slightly less common than for library users. For example, 56% of users of Rushey Mead Recreation Centre also use another centre, the majority also using Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.
- Two thirds (67%) of library users who responded to the question said they usually walk to the library with 19% travelling by car. A higher percentage travel by car and by bus to the Central Library.
- Whilst walking remains the most common method of getting to a community centre, a significantly higher percentage travel by car and by bus.
- 61% of those who responded to the question in the main survey said the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to visit a library, with a further 18% saying it would be “harder” for them. However the percentage of respondents who said the proposals would make it “much harder” varied significantly depending on the main library used.
- There was a significantly higher percentage of respondents to both the main and the junior surveys who said that the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to use a library, particularly those who use the libraries proposed for community management (Evington, Knighton and Rushey Mead libraries). Feedback received during the open meetings and drop-in sessions indicated that key concerns were around the feasibility of community groups taking on the libraries, worries about the quality of a community run service, and the reliability of volunteer delivered opening hours. There were widespread concerns that there was limited capacity and insufficient expertise within the local community for a local group to take on the running of the libraries. There was also concern about the longer-term sustainability of a community run library with many people expressing concern that the library could close if a community management group failed in the future.
- Feedback from respondents whose primary libraries were proposed to be run by the council with reduced staff hours was more nuanced. Although fewer people said the proposed hours would make it “much harder” to visit a library this remained a significant concern for many particularly at Belgrave Library. However there were a range of comments and suggestions on the best spread of the staffed opening hours proposed, including concerns about accessing the library in the evenings, early mornings, and at the weekend. 23% of the 664 comments on the proposed opening hours made suggested changes. The feedback has been used to update the proposed opening hours for each library to optimise access to the service.

- A significant percentage (70%) of the users of Belgrave Library responded to both the main and the junior survey stating the library would be “much harder” to visit. However a large number of comments received incorrectly reference the closure of the library, a rumour which had circulated immediately prior to the consultation and which may be reflected in the survey feedback. There were a large number of comments in the surveys, and a consensus at the drop-in session that the library should remain open later on weekday evenings to accommodate the very well attended Homework Help sessions.
- A high percentage (47%) of respondents who use community centres thought the proposals would make it “much harder” for them to visit, although the percentage is lower overall than the same question for libraries.
- The highest percentage of respondents who thought the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit a community centre were users of Rushey Mead Recreation Centre (80%) and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (72%). These two centres attracted significantly more responses than users of other community centres. Responses to the main survey, and feedback from the open meetings at these two centres, demonstrated widespread concerns that Community Asset Transfer could lead to some community groups being marginalised, and the centres being less accessible. There were also concerns that, as both centres are already very well used, a successful CAT organisation would need to displace current activities in order to support their own direct provision. Many respondents indicated they would prefer to increase hire charges and ideas for income generation, to support continued Council management of the centres.
- There was a broader range of responses to proposals for the Community Asset Transfer of the six other community centres. Early interest was received for all of the centres. The key considerations were around continued availability of preferred times and rooms, limiting any increase in room hire charges, sustainability of the community offer and ongoing accountability to the council as landlord to ensure the delivery of contracted outcomes. Reassurance was also sought around the formal process through which community organisations would be assessed and recommendations made.
- The proposal for Fosse Neighbourhood Centre was to withdraw from the building due to the ongoing maintenance and running costs and noting the availability of alternative libraries nearby. 59% of those who said Fosse was their main community centre and 60% of those who said it was their main library said the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. A key concern raised during the open meeting, and through the survey, was a location for the food bank which is currently based in the neighbourhood centre annex. Other concerns raised through the survey included the travel distance to the next nearest library for children and young people, and the loss of the hall used by the community choir.

- The proposal for St Matthews Centre was to relocate the library and services such as Adult Learning and the Housing reception nearby. 54% of respondents to the main survey who used the community centre were concerned the proposals would make it “much harder” to visit. There was good engagement from local user groups at the open meeting, and a key consideration was a reassurance that the relocated services would remain on the St Matthews estate. There was a concern that larger community groups might not be able to be accommodated in an alternative location.
- Overall the response to the consultation was high, and the profile of respondents demonstrates good participation from communities across the city. The demographic profile of respondents to the main survey reflected the makeup of the city, with 49% describing themselves as Asian or Asian British and 27% as White British. Responses were received from all areas of the city, although there were significantly higher returns from Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Knighton and Stonegate. More respondents to the main survey identified their sex as female (64%) than male (32%) or other (0.5%) with the remainder preferring not to say. The junior survey was equally split between boys and girls. 27% of the (adults) responding to the main survey said they were over 66 years old, with next most significant group being those aged 36 – 45 years (18%). In addition to the 4989 adults responding to the main survey, a further 1,366 young people under the age of 16 years responded to the junior survey (28% 14yrs or over and 20% 8yrs or under). 21% of all respondents to the main survey identified as having a disability.
- The findings of the 12 week consultation on proposals for libraries and community centres have been used to update the Equality Impact Assessment and to inform the recommendations which will be put forward the future delivery of neighbourhood services in Leicester city.

Contributors

This report was written by Leicester City Council’s Neighbourhood Services Project team with contributions from specialists across the authority.

Leicester City Council’s GIS Team provided demographic data, mapping and analysis to support the findings.

Leicester City Council’s Communication’s Team helped to develop the public survey. In addition to the publicity and promotion of this project and in the development and distribution of supporting internal and external communications.

Leicester City Council’s Data Team developed scripts which allowed analysis of the qualitative data received through the surveys. This was used to compare results with the Project Team’s analysis.

Leicester City Council’s Standards & Development Team developed a Power BI dashboard to display the quantitative survey responses.

Thank you to all involved for your expertise, input and advice.

Have your say on proposals for libraries and community centres



Overview

Leicester City Council has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964 “to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons” who want to make use of it.

Due to a decade and a half of central government cuts in funding we are not able to maintain the current provision for libraries and community centres, and the budget is proposed to reduce over the next three years by *up to* £2.1million.

A new service model is proposed for libraries and community centres which would operate from 12 multi-service centres and the Central Library. The aim is to provide a service targeted at areas of greater need across the whole city within available resources. The council would no longer run the 12 other centres, including four libraries. Community groups would be invited to run these where appropriate. In addition, the proposal includes reducing staffed opening hours across the remaining 13 centres, reducing staff numbers and lowering how much we spend on books, IT and operating costs.

In 2023 we asked residents and stakeholders how we could modernise our libraries and community centres. We received 2,851 survey responses and heard from 200 people at 12 focus groups. This feedback has been used to inform the new proposals.

We are now seeking your views on the proposed change to the service. Read on for the full details.

Why your views matter

No decisions have been made yet. The feedback from this consultation will be carefully considered before a decision is made about the future of Leicester city’s libraries and community centres.

Please return this survey to any of our libraries or community centres by **Sunday 29 June 2025**.

Alternatively, you can complete the online version of this survey by scanning the code or visiting consultations.leicester.gov.uk

The online survey closes at midnight on Sunday 29 June 2025



How do I get involved?

Please take the time to complete this survey and return it to your local library or community centre.

Our 12-week consultation will involve working with organisations and networks across the city to ensure everyone has the opportunity to engage both online and in person.

We are also holding several open meetings, details of which are below.

If you would like to attend, please email neighbourhoodservices@leicester.gov.uk with your preferred meeting:

Eyres Monsell Community Centre	Tuesday 15 April	3pm - 4.30pm
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Wednesday 23 April	6pm - 7.30pm
Tudor Centre	Tuesday 13 May	2.30pm - 4pm
CHANGE OF VENUE	Wednesday 14 May	6pm - 7.30pm
Soar Valley College (near Rushey Mead Recreation Centre)		
Fosse Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 20 May	6pm - 7.30pm
Avenue Primary School (near Knighton Library)	Wednesday 21 May	6pm - 7.30pm
St Matthews Centre	Thursday 29 May	6pm - 7.30pm
Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	Wednesday 4 June	6pm - 7.30pm
Evington Library	Tuesday 10 June	2.30pm - 4pm
Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 17 June	6pm - 7.30pm
Gilmorton Community Rooms	Thursday 19 June	6pm - 7pm
Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre	Tuesday 24 June	2pm - 3pm

Further information is on our website. Search '**libraries**' or '**community centres**' on leicester.gov.uk

Proposals for libraries and community centres

Multi-service centres would operate as hubs to support wellbeing by integrating a range of services provided by the council and its partners. The Central Library service would continue to deliver a broader offer, serving residents living in all areas.

A reduction in staffed opening hours at retained sites would enable the widest network of facilities to be sustained. 8am to 8pm opening would be supported by the introduction of library self-access systems to extend opening hours at six libraries. Staffed opening hours would be standardised across the network depending on busyness.

Central Library

Providing city-wide provision and open 45 hours per week.

Band 1 multi-service centres

Staffed opening for 40 hours per week

Beaumont Leys Library Hub

Belgrave Library Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

The BRITE Centre Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

Highfields Library Hub

St Barnabas Library Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

Band 2 multi-service centres

Staffed opening for 30 hours per week

Aylestone Library (located in Aylestone Leisure Centre)

Hamilton Library Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

New Parks Centre Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

Pork Pie Library Hub (with additional Self-Access hours)

St Matthews Library (relocated nearby)

Thurnby Lodge Centre Hub (with new self-access library)

Westcotes Library Hub

These facilities would no longer be run by Neighbourhood Services

Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre
Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	Eyres Monsell Community Centre
Evington Library	Gilmorton Community Rooms
Knighton Library	Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
Rushey Mead Library	Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
Tudor Centre	

Where appropriate, community organisations would be supported to develop a business case to take on the running of the above community libraries and community centres.

St Matthews Centre would close due to the condition of the building. The library and services would be re-located nearby.

Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library would close. Our Estates Team have conducted a review of the building, and it would not be put forward for Community Asset Transfer. Other disposal options would be explored.

Where no viable business plan is put forward, buildings would be considered for alternative use by the council. Where this would not be possible, the building would close, and a range of disposal options would be considered.

Additional investment and improvements

Additional investment would support a range of proposals to ensure the service could continue to meet the needs of individuals and communities across the city, including:

- Extending Self-Access after core staffed hours at suitable sites. The self-access system would enable registered customers aged 16 years and over and accompanied children to access the library outside of staffed opening times using their library card. Self-access libraries would be monitored by CCTV and customers would be given an induction in order to use the service.
- Investing £1million to further develop retained buildings as multi-service centres.
- Reviewing the areas visited by the Children's BookBus to focus on covering areas of disadvantage.
- Supporting community groups to take on the running of more services.
- Providing enhanced activity programmes around our 'universal offers' in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together.
- Developing volunteer opportunities to enhance the services we offer and to provide benefits to participants.
- Providing satellite libraries at identified children's centres for additional access to books for children and young families.

- Expanding the Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever they live in the city.

Proposed opening hours

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	Aylestone Library ** ^							-2 staffed
Current staffed	1pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-1pm	-	
Proposed staffed	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-1pm	8am-1pm	+2 self-access
	Beaumont Leys Library ^							-9.5 staffed
Current staffed	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-5pm	9.30pm-1pm	-	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Belgrave Library* ^							-15 staffed
Current staffed	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+26 self-access
	BRITE Centre * ^							-17.75 staffed
Current staffed	9am-8.30pm	9am-7.30pm	9am-8pm	9am-7.45pm	9am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+24 self-access
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times *Self-access introduced for library members **Self-access is currently in use during Aylestone Leisure Centre opening hours								

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	Central Library							
Current staffed	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	9am-4pm	-	-7.5 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
	Hamilton Library * ^							
Current staffed	10am-2pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	-10 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+22 self-access
	Highfields Library *							
Current staffed	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	10am-4pm	-	-11 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	New Parks Library * ^							
Current staffed	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	-	-10 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+22 self-access
	Pork Pie Library * ^							
Current staffed	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-1pm	-	-15 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	-	-	+22 self-access
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times								
*Self-access introduced for library members								

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	St Barnabas Library *							
Current staffed	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	-9.5 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	-	-	
	St Matthews (Centre would be closed and the library relocated nearby)							
Current staffed	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	-44 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Thurnby Lodge Community Centre ^ (Proposed new library service)							
Current staffed	1pm-10pm	9.30am-10pm	1pm-10pm	12.30pm-7pm	3.30-10pm	-	-	-13.5 staffed
Proposed staffed	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Westcotes Library							
Current staffed	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	-21 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times								
*Self-access introduced for library members								

Introduction

This survey has the following sections:

About you [below](#)

About our libraries [below](#)

About community centres [page 12](#)

How the proposals would affect you and others [page 15](#)

Space for additional feedback and your ideas for the library service [page 16](#)

About you

For us to properly understand your views about the proposals we need to know a little about you and how you currently use our services.

I am completing this survey as a... *select all that apply*

- ☐ local resident
- ☐ Leicester City Council employee
- ☐ on behalf of an organisation

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation you will be able to give us the views of the organisation later in the survey.

About our libraries

List of our libraries

Aylestone Library
Beaumont Leys Library
Belgrave Library
Braunstone (The Brite Centre)
Central Library
Children’s BookBus

Evington Library
Fosse Library
Hamilton Library
Highfields Library
Knighton Library
New Parks Library

Pork Pie Library
Rushey Mead Library
St Barnabas Library
St Matthews Library
Westcotes Library

How we will use your personal data

The information you provide in the survey will be kept in accordance with terms of current Data Protection legislation and will only be used for the purpose of monitoring.

Your details will not be passed on to any other individual, organisation or group.

Leicester City Council is the data controller for the information on this form for the purposes of current Data Protection legislation.

Search ‘privacy’ on leicester.gov.uk for details of how we manage personal data.

How often do you visit a public library in Leicester?

Please select one item

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Frequently (daily) | <input type="radio"/> Occasionally (every month) |
| <input type="radio"/> Regularly (every week) | <input type="radio"/> Rarely (a few times a year) |
| | <input type="radio"/> Never Go to page 11 |

How you use your library

Which library do you visit most often? Please pick one

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Aylestone Library | <input type="radio"/> Knighton Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Beaumont Leys Library | <input type="radio"/> New Parks Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Belgrave Library | <input type="radio"/> Pork Pie Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Braunstone (The Brite Centre) | <input type="radio"/> Rushey Mead Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Central Library | <input type="radio"/> St Barnabas Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Children's BookBus | <input type="radio"/> St Matthews Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Evington Library | <input type="radio"/> Westcotes Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Fosse Library | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> Hamilton Library | Other, please add any library not listed |
| <input type="radio"/> Highfields Library | <div></div> |

Which other libraries do you use? Select up to three options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aylestone Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Knighton Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaumont Leys Library | <input type="checkbox"/> New Parks Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belgrave Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Pork Pie Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braunstone (The Brite Centre) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rushey Mead Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Library | <input type="checkbox"/> St Barnabas Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's BookBus | <input type="checkbox"/> St Matthews Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evington Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Westcotes Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fosse Library | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamilton Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Highfields Library | Other, please add any library not listed |

Thinking about the public library you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you? *Select up to three options*

- ☐ Access to council services by phone or kiosk
- ☐ Books and reading materials
- ☐ Children's and family activities (such as Toddler Time)
- ☐ Computers, Wi-Fi and IT support
- ☐ Cultural, arts and crafts activities and events
- ☐ Health and wellbeing sessions and activities
- ☐ Housing enquiry desk
- ☐ Information and advice, including community information
- ☐ Learning and skills activities (such as Homework Help Club)
- ☐ Quiet study space
- ☐ Social space to meet people
- ☐ Support with finding a job
- ☐ Volunteering opportunities
- ☐ Warm spaces in cold weather
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Something else

If something else, please add it here

When you visit a library, how do you usually get there? (Select one option)

Please select only one item

- ☐ Bus
- ☐ Car
- ☐ Cycle
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Other

If you don't use our public libraries

What are the main reasons why you don't visit a public library?

Please select up to three options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can access what I need elsewhere - such as local book shops | <input type="checkbox"/> I use the Library online |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can access what I need online - such as eBooks, online search | <input type="checkbox"/> I've wanted to, but I haven't had the free time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know what's on offer | <input type="checkbox"/> The services I need aren't on offer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know where my local library is located | <input type="checkbox"/> They are not open when I need to visit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I use a college or university library | <input type="checkbox"/> They don't feel welcoming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I use a school library | <input type="checkbox"/> Too far to travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I use the Home Library Service | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Something else |

If something else, please give details

About our community centres

List of our community centres

Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre
The Brite Centre
Coleman Neighbourhood Centre
Eyres Monsell Community Centre
Fosse Neighbourhood Centre
Gilmorton Community Rooms

Netherhall Centre
Pork Pie Library and Community Centre
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
St Matthews Centre
Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre
Tudor Centre

How often do you visit a community centre in Leicester?

Please select only one item

- ☐ Frequently (daily)
☐ Regularly (every week)
☐ Occasionally (every month)
☐ Rarely (a few times a year)
☐ Never

➡ [Go to page 14](#)

How you use your community centre

Which community centre do you visit most often? *Please pick one*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> Pork Pie Library and Community Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre | <input type="radio"/> Rushey Mead Recreation Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> The Brite Centre | <input type="radio"/> St Matthews Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Coleman Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Eyres Monsell Community Centre | <input type="radio"/> Tudor Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Fosse Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> Gilmorton Community Rooms | Other, please add any community centre not listed |
| <input type="radio"/> Netherhall Centre | |

Which other community centres do you use? Select up to three

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> St Matthews Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Brite Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Tudor Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coleman Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please give details below) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eyres Monsell Community Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> I would not use another |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fosse Neighbourhood Centre | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gilmorton Community Rooms | Please add any community centre not listed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Netherhall Centre | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pork Pie Library and Community Centre | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rushey Mead Recreation Centre | |

Thinking about the community centre you visit most often, what are the most important things on offer there for you? Select up to three options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's learning or study session | <input type="checkbox"/> Space to hire for a commercial event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church or religious group event | <input type="checkbox"/> Space to hire for a community group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community group or activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Space to hire for a party, family or personal event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community meetings such as ward meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Social space to meet people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Councillor's surgery | <input type="checkbox"/> Warm space in cold weather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural, arts and crafts events and activities | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise or health related activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Something else |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing enquiry desk | If something else, please add it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leicester Adult Education classes | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other learning and skills classes | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch club or community kitchen | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery or playgroup | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe space which is welcoming to all | |

When you visit a community centre, how do you usually get there? Select one option

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bus | <input type="radio"/> Walk |
| <input type="radio"/> Car | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> Cycle | |

If you don't use our community centres

What are the main reasons why you don't visit a community centre run by Leicester City Council?

Please select up to three options

- ☐ I can access the services I need elsewhere - such as local charities or library
- ☐ I don't know what's on offer
- ☐ I don't know where they are
- ☐ I've wanted to, but I haven't had the free time
- ☐ I use a community centre run by someone else* (please tell us which one)
- ☐ The cost of room hire is too high
- ☐ The services on offer aren't of interest to me
- ☐ They aren't open when I need them
- ☐ They don't feel welcoming
- ☐ Too far to travel
- ☐ Something else** (please add below)
- ☐ I don't know

*Add the other community centre you use

**If something else, please give details

How the proposals would affect you and others

The proposals are on pages 3-7

What impact would the proposed changes have on your ability to...?

Select one option in each row

	Much easier	Easier	Won't make much difference	Harder	Much harder	Not sure
Visit a library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visit a community centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access council services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please tell us more (optional)

How would the proposed opening hours work for you?

The schedule is on pages 5-7

Please select only one item

- ☐ They would make it possible to use the services (I can't use them now)
- ☐ More convenient
- ☐ No difference
- ☐ Less convenient
- ☐ I would no longer be able to use the services

Add any comments about opening hours (optional)

Please add any further comments about the proposals

If these comments refer to a community group or organisation you can add the name (optional)

Tell us about any positive benefits

Tell us about any negative effects

New solutions

Finally, we know that the best ideas for new ways of working and saving money often come from our communities. We invite you to propose any ideas which could help improve or maintain our services within a reduced budget.

Please add any suggestions you would like us to consider

Are you part of a community group or organisation who might be interested in taking on the running of a library or community centre?

- ☐ Yes - please fill in some details below
- ☐ No ➡ [Go to page 18 Equalities Monitoring](#)

Interested in running a centre

Tell us about your group or organisation and the centre you would be interested in running

Add your contact email

☐ Tick this box to give permission for us to contact you about this matter.

Thank you. With your permission we will contact you in due course if we need to speak to you about this.

Equalities monitoring

The following questions are all optional, but by answering them you are helping us to know the range of people who are responding to our surveys so we can check we are reaching everyone we need to.

What is your home postcode?

Please note: we collect postcode data to gain a better understanding of which parts of the city and county respond to our consultations. We cannot identify individual properties from this information.

Age:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 46 - 55 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18 - 25 | <input type="radio"/> 56 - 65 |
| <input type="radio"/> 26 - 35 | <input type="radio"/> 66+ |
| <input type="radio"/> 36 - 45 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

What is your sex?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to say

If Other, what term do you use to identify your gender?

Is your gender identity the same as your sex registered at birth?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to say

Ethnic background:

Please select only one item

- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Indian
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background
- ☐ Black or Black British: African
- ☐ Black or Black British: Caribbean
- ☐ Black or Black British: Somali
- ☐ Black or Black British: Any other Black background
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Chinese: Any other Chinese background
- ☐ Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Asian
- ☐ Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black African
- ☐ Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black Caribbean
- ☐ Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background
- ☐ White: British
- ☐ White: European
- ☐ White: Irish
- ☐ White: Any other White background
- ☐ Other ethnic group: Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller
- ☐ Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If you said your ethnic group was one of the 'Other' categories, please tell us what this is:

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months. People with HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis (MS) and severe disfigurement are also covered by the Equality Act.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If you have answered 'Yes' to the above, please state the type of impairment that applies to you. People may experience more than one type of impairment; in which case you may need to tick more than one box. If none of the categories apply, please tick 'Other' and state the type of impairment.

Please select all that apply

- ☐ A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- ☐ A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- ☐ A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- ☐ A social / communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome / other autistic spectrum disorder
- ☐ A learning difficulty or disability
- ☐ Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- ☐ Deaf or have a hearing impairment
- ☐ An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish)
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

If Other, please say

END OF SURVEY

Please return this survey to any of our libraries or community centres by **Sunday 29 June 2025**.

For office use

Young people's survey - libraries and community centres



Tell us what you think about our ideas for changing Leicester's libraries and community centres

We want to hear the views of young people about the city's libraries and community centres.

About you

Tell us a little bit about you.

Are you a boy or a girl? *It's fine if you'd rather not say. Please select only one item*

- ☐ Boy
- ☐ Girl
- ☐ I don't want to say

How old are you? *Please select only one item*

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 8 or younger | <input type="radio"/> 12 |
| <input type="radio"/> 9 | <input type="radio"/> 13 |
| <input type="radio"/> 10 | <input type="radio"/> 14 or older |
| <input type="radio"/> 11 | |

How often do you visit a library in Leicester? *Please select only one item*

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | More than once a week | • Go to the next page |
| <input type="radio"/> | More than once a month | • Go to the next page |
| <input type="radio"/> | About once a month | • Go to the next page |
| <input type="radio"/> | Every few months, or at least one time this year | • Go to the next page |
| <input type="radio"/> | I've not visited for more than a year | • Go to page 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | I never visit | • Go to page 4 |

Your local library

Which library do you visit most often? *Please select only one*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Children's BookBus | <input type="radio"/> Highfields Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Aylestone Library | <input type="radio"/> Knighton Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Beaumont Leys Library | <input type="radio"/> New Parks Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Belgrave Library | <input type="radio"/> Pork Pie Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Braunstone (The BRITE Centre) | <input type="radio"/> Rushey Mead Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Central Library | <input type="radio"/> St Barnabas Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Evington Library | <input type="radio"/> St Matthews Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Fosse Library | <input type="radio"/> Westcotes Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Hamilton Library | |

If you visit a library that's not on the list, you can add it here

What things have you done at the library? *Tick all the ones you've done*

- ☐ I borrowed books to take home
- ☐ I used the computers
- ☐ I read books while I was there
- ☐ I went to the Homework Club
- ☐ I took part in the Summer Reading Challenge
- ☐ I took part in holiday activities
- ☐ I met up with my friends
- ☐ I looked up something for school
- ☐ I looked up something I am interested in
- ☐ I looked for books in a language that's not English
- ☐ I asked a member of staff for help or advice
- ☐ I visited with my family
- ☐ I took part in a class visit
- ☐ I did something else (please tell us on the next page)

Add anything else you've done at a library

How do you usually get to the library? *Please select only one*

- ☐ Bike or scooter
- ☐ Bus
- ☐ Car
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Other

Who do you go there with? *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ By myself
- ☐ With an adult
- ☐ With family
- ☐ With friends
- ☐ With school

Now go to page 5 - Council run community centres

Why you don't go to the library

Tick any reasons why you don't go to the library

- ☐ I don't know what there is to do
- ☐ There aren't any books I like there
- ☐ I don't like books
- ☐ I can get what I need at home or school
- ☐ The library is boring
- ☐ I used to go when I was little but there's nothing at the library for me any more
- ☐ It's not a friendly place
- ☐ I can't get to the library easily
- ☐ There is no one to take me
- ☐ Libraries aren't for me and my friends
- ☐ I can't find the information or advice I need there
- ☐ Another reason (please tell us)

If there's another reason, you can add it here

Now go to the next page - Council run community centres

V Council run community centres

Ti A community centre is where clubs are held such as scouts, dancing, sports, and music.

[Which community centre do you visit most often? *Please select only one*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> Pork Pie Library and Community Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre | |
| <input type="radio"/> The Brite Centre | <input type="radio"/> Rushey Mead Recreation Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Coleman Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> St Matthews Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Eyres Monsell Community Centre | <input type="radio"/> Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Fosse Neighbourhood Centre | |
| <input type="radio"/> Gilmorton Neighbourhood Centre | <input type="radio"/> Tudor Centre |
| <input type="radio"/> Netherhall Centre | <input type="radio"/> I don't go to community centres |

Now go to page 6

[If the community centre is not on the list you can add it here

If What you do there

Thinking about the community centre you go to most, what activities do you do? *Tick all the things you do there*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education classes or tutoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Social groups (such as youth clubs, scouts, gaming) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health or wellbeing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports or martial arts |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other groups |

How do you usually get to the community centre? *Tick the one you do most often*

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bike or scooter | <input type="radio"/> Car | <input type="radio"/> Othe |
| <input type="radio"/> Bus | <input type="radio"/> Walk | |

Now go to page 7

N

If you don't go to a community centre

Why don't you go to a community centre? *Tick any that apply*

- ☐ I don't know what there is to do
- ☐ There aren't any groups I want to go to
- ☐ It's not a friendly place
- ☐ There is no one to take me
- ☐ I can get what I need in other places
- ☐ Another reason (please tell us)

If there's another reason, you can add it here

Now go to the next page

Our ideas for changing Leicester's libraries and community centres

Changes need to be made to save up to £2.1 million. We need to use our money wisely to provide important services for everyone. Read about our ideas below.

More services in one place

The council would run fewer libraries and community centres but they would be better, with more things that people need. For example, the Brite Centre has a library, a café, and spaces for clubs and activities in one place.

Opening hours

Our opening hours would change, but centres would be open at the busiest times so you would still be able to visit with family or with your school.

Some centres would offer self-access, so you would be able to visit with an adult even when there are no staff in the building. The proposed opening hours are on pages 9-11.

Some centres would no longer be run by the council

They might be run by a community group instead. If the community does not take over the building, it could close. These centres are:

- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre
- Coleman Neighbourhood Centre
- Eyres Monsell Community Centre
- Evington Library
- Gilmorton Community Rooms
- Knighton Library
- Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- Rushey Mead Library
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Tudor Centre

The library at **St Matthews Centre** would move nearby.

Fosse Neighbourhood Centre would close and would not be put forward to be run by the community.

Improvements and investments

We would invest money to improve the services we still run, such as:

- Self-access systems to extend hours at some libraries for ages 16+.
- Spend £1 million to improve the service.
- Change the Children's BookBus route to visit areas that need it most.
- Improve online library services.
- Help community groups run some services.
- Offer more volunteer opportunities.
- Add book collections to some children's centres.
- Expand the Home Library Service to deliver books to people unable to leave home.

How do you think our ideas would affect you?

Visiting a library

Please select only one item

- ☐ It would be much easier
- ☐ It would be a bit easier
- ☐ It wouldn't make much difference
- ☐ It would be a bit harder
- ☐ It would be much harder

Visiting a community centre

Please select only one item

- ☐ It would be much easier
- ☐ It would be a bit easier
- ☐ It wouldn't make much difference
- ☐ It would be a bit harder
- ☐ It would be much harder

Proposals for libraries and community centres 2025

Proposed opening hours

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	Aylestone Library ** ^							-2 staffed
Current staffed	1pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-1pm	-	
Proposed staffed	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-7pm	8am-1pm	8am-1pm	+2 self-access
	Beaumont Leys Library ^							-9.5 staffed
Current staffed	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-6.30pm	9am-5pm	9.30pm-1pm	-	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Belgrave Library* ^							-15 staffed
Current staffed	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+26 self-access
	BRITE Centre * ^							-17.75 staffed
Current staffed	9am-8.30pm	9am-7.30pm	9am-8pm	9am-7.45pm	9am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+24 self-access
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times *Self-access introduced for library members **Self-access is currently in use during Aylestone Leisure Centre opening hours								

Proposals for libraries and community centres 2025

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	Central Library							
Current staffed	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	9am-4pm	-	-7.5 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
	Hamilton Library * ^							
Current staffed	10am-2pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	2pm-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	-10 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+22 self-access
	Highfields Library *							
Current staffed	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	9am-6pm	10am-4pm	-	-11 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	New Parks Library * ^							
Current staffed	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-1pm	-	-10 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	N/A	-	+22 self-access
	Pork Pie Library * ^							
Current staffed	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-7pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	10am-1pm	-	-15 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	-	-	+22 self-access
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times								
*Self-access introduced for library members								

Proposals for libraries and community centres 2025

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Proposed change
	St Barnabas Library *							
Current staffed	9.30am-5pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-7pm	9.30am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	-9.5 staffed
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	2pm-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	-	
Proposed self-access	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	-	-	+26 self-access
	St Matthews (Centre would be closed and the library relocated nearby)							-44 staffed
Current staffed	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	
Proposed staffed	10am-5pm	1pm-5pm	10am-6pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Thurnby Lodge Community Centre ^ (Proposed new library service)							-13.5 staffed
Current staffed	1pm-10pm	9.30am-10pm	1pm-10pm	12.30pm-7pm	3.30-10pm	-	-	
Proposed staffed	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-5pm	10am-6pm	10am-2pm	-	
	Westcotes Library							-21 staffed
Current staffed	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-7pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-4pm	12pm-4pm	
Proposed staffed	10am-6pm	1pm-5pm	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	-	10am-2pm	-	
^Inducted community groups would still have access at their current times								
*Self-access introduced for library members								

How would the new opening hours work for you? *Please select only one item*

- ☐ I would be able to go there (I can't now)
- ☐ It would be easier
- ☐ It would be the same
- ☐ It would be harder
- ☐ I wouldn't be able to go there anymore

Your thoughts

We believe the best ideas often come from the people who live here. That's why Leicester City Council is asking for your thoughts.

What are your thoughts on the ideas you've just read about? Do you have any other ideas about the future of our libraries and community centres?

Add any thoughts or ideas here

Please return this survey to any of our libraries or community centres by **Sunday 29 June 2025**.

Alternatively, you can complete the online version of this survey by scanning the code or visiting consultations.leicester.gov.uk

The online survey closes at midnight on Sunday 29 June 2025



Appendix C – Open public meeting notes

Tuesday 15th April: Open Meeting at Eyres Monsell Community Centre. Attended by 46 people.

Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster & Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services)

Points Raised	Response
Why are you closing? Are you thinking about closing?	We are consulting on transfers of the centre to the community not closure. New Parks Community Centre is an example of where Community Asset Transfer works really well and brings benefits to the local community.
It's key for this area to keep the building open. How do we go about doing this?	The community can come together to support the building. Local people can do this by forming a committee with reps from each group who use centre to develop a bid to take on the running of the centre. We've done a lot of CATs successfully. The Council would commission third party support for interested organisations to develop their business cases. Interested organisations must demonstrate they can deliver genuine community benefits - this is key to the business case.
The council has paid a private company a lot of money to do this piece of work, this seems a waste of money. All closures seem to be biased to certain parts of the city.	Reassurance was given that the proposals are not biased for or against any parts of the city but are based on strategic principles and geographical coverage. You can read the background and evidence in the reports which are published on the website which show this.
Pork Pie – Service user is a bit concerned about the reduction in opening hours. Inconsistent opening hours may drive people away. The half-day opening hours will be an issue on a Tuesday due to the toddler time. Worry that Children, Young People & Family Centres are also going to close. It feels like vulnerable people are being targeted.	Your comments on the draft opening hours are important – please fill in a survey and make the points about opening hours. We will review all comments before making recommendations on timetables for each site. This is a consultation on a set of proposals – nothing has been decided. Our budget report for this year shows a large proportion of the Council's spending is within children's services along with adult social care, across the whole of the city, supporting the most vulnerable people in our city.
Pork Pie Library – this group hires space for 300 children and pays room hire charges of £1000. The reduction of hours will impact the rental income.	Comment taken and noted for consideration.
Are there any plans to deliver these (open meeting) sessions at a more accessible time? How do CATs work, who has to lead?	We have arranged 12 meetings across the city in the afternoons and evenings. These are open to all.

	CAT can work in many different ways. We have developed a process for offering CAT lease opportunities with support from an independent organisation to help groups develop a business plan. Business plans are assessed against a published set of criteria. We have successfully transferred 11 buildings over the past 10 years using this model. At this stage we're simply trying to understand interest in the local area.
I imagine it's not cheap to run a building of this size. Where does the money come from? The Knitting & Book groups will not be able to run a building.	Finances are a big part of it. Often the lead organisation has something to offer which generates income, for example a community dance group. Income from hiring organisations is also important. If there is a formal CAT opportunity published there would be a good period of time for groups to develop their business plans with support from a commissioned infrastructure organisation. Building Packs are available with details of the key costs for each centre.
Lee you were the lead in getting the library started here, will it continue?	I wouldn't want to pre-empt the outcome of any potential CAT process. But I see no reason why it couldn't continue if a community organisation were to take on the running of the centre. Once the business plan was agreed there would be stipulations in the lease on performance and we would check annually that the organisations are complying with their business case.
We run a dance school here, but there is no way we could run the facility, we don't charge for our classes.	There is no one size fits all. Groups operate in different ways and have different ambitions.
It might be re-assuring for us to know what the stipulations for a CAT are. Is it written down anywhere?	If and when we get to the point of a CAT process there would be a published set of criteria which interested organisations would have to base their business plan on. The criteria we use would include consideration of existing community centre users, as well as the approach to attracting new groups.
What happens with repairs?	There are different models for CAT leases; one principal is the council won't handover liabilities. Condition surveys would be made available so that groups are aware of any potential future costs for repairs and maintenance.
I was born here and lived my life here. It's a forgotten estate. Eyres Monsell has nothing. It doesn't have access to nearby business. Think very seriously about doing this to a forgotten estate.	I see where you're coming from. A lot of outer estates feel the same. It's about getting it right for communities that's why we're not proposing a closure programme.
Questionnaire had wrong date for the meeting on it	The date has now been corrected

Regarding the proposed opening hours: Band 1 (40 hours) - nothing this side of the town, Band 2 (30 hours) – these are all on this side of the city	Whilst staffed hours are proposed to reduce but we are proposing to put in self-access systems where feasible, which would extend opening hours in some libraries. The proposed bands reflect the current business of each site. The Pork Pie is less busy compared with other libraries across the city and has a self-access system for community groups.
How does Self Access work? I worry about how people could abuse it. We use the community room and open space at the Pork Pie Library.	I believe your group uses the open library space under a self-access arrangement after the Pork Pie Library closes. We will take this back as part of the consultation feedback.
There are some issues with ASB and children/young people in the area. Self-Access could cause more problems?	Self- access has worked well in other places. People need to be inducted and signed up to use it. There is CCTV monitoring in the event of any issues. We have had two libraries operating self-access for the last 2 years, which has been well received.
The estate is deteriorating over the years. People are being shoved onto the estate who shouldn't be here e.g. alcoholics, drug users. We shouldn't waste money on cycle lanes etc. Why have the Youth Centres been closed?	Bike lanes have been funded through a central government scheme. The funding is a ring-fenced one-off capital spend and can only be spent for this purpose. There have to be some very difficult decisions on services due to 15 years of government austerity.
The council spent money on the bus stops and then the buses stopped.	The bus companies changed the bus routes but they are private companies.
What if we can't find a group (to take on the running of the centre)? Or if a group who is interested but can't (afford to) take the building on. I run a charity, it's so hard to find the money. Would there be grants available to support groups?	We would have a problem if no one came forward to take on the buildings and difficult decisions would have to be made in that case. That's why we would provide time and support for community organisations to get organised.
I'm impressed with some of the plans which may happen. But when you lose somewhere it's gone. Promises have been made before. How can we trust you?	That's why we are proposing to support groups to keep buildings open.
No cause to trust any government. Might be better to focus on winning the trust as an observation. What has happened if groups can't be found, in the past?	All buildings that have been put forward in the past have been transferred. That's because we have provided plenty of time and support for organisations to develop realistic business plans.
No matter what we say or do, will it have to be taken over by the community?	No decisions have been made at this time. All responses will be collated and analysed.

Wednesday 23rd April: Open Meeting at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Attended by 400 people. Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster, Sean Atterbury (Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services) and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

An interpreter was present.

Points Raised	Response
A representative of current service users read a statement. She said that the centre is a lifeline and a second home to the community. Why is it being put up for closure?	This is not a programme of building closures. We are proposing to transfer the centre to be run by the community.
Many service users from Rushey Mead could not attend this meeting due to accessibility issues.	Comment taken and noted
[In reference to the proposals] How did you come to this conclusion?	No conclusions have been made; this is a consultation on a set of proposals. The current proposals are to offer the community centre up for community asset transfer, this has been done before across the city and has been shown to work.
The centre helps with service users physical and mental wellbeing - what will happen when it closes?	To reiterate, this is not a programme of closures, the current proposal is to offer the centre up for community running. We know how important this building is, and we are not looking to close it.
Worries about the children's nursery not being able to operate. You say, 'this has been shown to work in other areas of the city,' Belgrave is not like other parts of the city – it is unique. We want more from the council, not less.	comment taken and noted
We want the council to run the building as it is, because if it closes it will increase antisocial behaviour.	To reiterate, this is not a programme of closures.
If nobody comes forward what is your plan for the centre?	The council will look at other options for the building.
The neighbourhood centre generates a profit, doesn't it? Why would you give the building to the community if it is generating a profit?	It is common sense to say that if we were making profit on the building, we would be using that to subsidise other areas of the community such as the library and children's centre. Unfortunately, the neighbourhood centre is very costly to run.
There is a reduction in staffed hours for a library (Belgrave Library) that is extremely community focused. We are not happy with the change in library opening hours currently proposed. You say CAT has worked in other places of the city; can we have examples of this.	Re library hours – please complete the consultation form and express this. There will also be a self-access option that has worked well in other libraries. We will put examples of community ran buildings throughout the city on the website. We cannot answer what is happening with the police office at this stage and it would be reviewed when/if a community group takes on the centre.

<p>If CAT were to happen, we would want a 3–5-year phased programme of hand over.</p> <p>What happens to the police station if this community centre closes?</p>	
<p>What cuts have been made to the management structure to save money?</p>	<p>We underwent a similar programme a number of years ago and it led to significant back-office staff reductions, but managers are still essential to coordinate frontline services.</p>
<p>Do you have a development manager in this centre and if so, what business plan do you have in place?</p>	<p>We have a business plan for the whole of the service. Development managers have an area wide remit.</p>
<p>The BNC should be run by the council only. That is the only proposal we will be considering. If no viable proposal comes forward, then what will LCC do about this centre?</p>	<p>No decisions have been taken - this is only a consultation.</p>
<p>Community groups are volunteers – are you expecting volunteers to run this centre?</p>	<p>There is no one-size-fits-all approach. A building of this size would be more likely to be taken on by a larger community group and could make the centre more sustainable. For example, New Parks Community Centre has a nursery and a dance school, and the profits from these have helped to make the centre sustainable and significantly expanded the services.</p>
<p>Will it be any community group, or will it be a Belgrave community group?</p>	<p>The council does not just hand over a community building. There is a set of criteria for Community a set Transfer, and if a group were to take over the building, they would need to evidence how they would support the existing community groups. Additionally, once a year, the council would review the building's activities against their business plan, and the group could be removed if they do not comply, to safeguard the community asset.</p>
<p>Is this just a lip service or an actual consultation?</p>	<p>This is a genuine, legal, and moral 12-week consultation. At the end of which, the information gathered from the open meetings and consultation documentation will be compiled. This will then be used to create a set of recommendations, which will be considered by the executive for the final decisions.</p>

Tuesday 13th May: Open Meeting at the Tudor Centre. Attended by 46 people. Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster & Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services)

Points Raised	Response
We've been down this avenue before. Biggest concerns is the finance and the long-term stability. VAL (Voluntary Action Leicester) are very good at helping communities. But my concern is, the people here need to know how much it costs to run the building. Can we have printed consultation sheets please?	Building packs are available online which shows the running costs of all buildings. Printed surveys available.
Why have you not come to the meeting with the figures and why haven't local residents been informed. Could you have not notified people via leaflets?	It would not be cost effective to do a leaflet to every household in the city. The figures are published on the consultation website.
Are the costs online all of the costs for running the building? The council needs to provide assurance to community that the centre is not closing but changing management?	Building packs are online. Not a closure programme. We want to find suitable groups to take over the running of the building
What are the 12 multi service centres? Could this centre not be used as an MSC?	Proposed MSCs verbally listed. Explanation of key principles given – statutory library provision is prioritised. Beaumont Leys Library (nearest) is proposed to be retained as an MSC.
What happens if no suitable organisation is found? What happens to the centre?	The council would provide time and support for community organisations to develop a business plan. We are a long way off this point. If a decision was taken and no suitable community organisation came forward then the Council would look at alternate use and ultimately could be sold.
What is the level of interest in the building?	There are no decisions and no formal CAT opportunity. We are in a consultation period currently, during which some interest has already been shown.
How will you prioritise which organisation gets a centre?	An explanation of the CAT (Community Asset Transfer) process was given which includes published criteria against which a business case is scored. Based on this a recommendation would be made to the executive.
In the time you're preparing the lease, in 18 months, what happens to the building, will the building close?	No, it will remain open and run by the council
Nothing happens in the community centre now. Will the new group have to take current users on? Promised the community it would be a community bar, which didn't happen.	Building packs show that this is currently a busy centre, with a good base for a community organisation to develop usage and income.
Is there a pattern to which sort of community groups take on centres?	No, wide range of groups have taken on sites.

Could you tell us who runs those centres which have transferred?	Examples include New Parks Community Centre run by Team Hub and the African Caribbean Centre run by the African Heritage Alliance.
If no local organisation currently exists, could smaller organisations come together to take the building on? What support would the council offer?	Yes. Description of council support given in the past – the council would commission support from a third party organisation such as VAL or Locality.
Will the community groups that happen in the building continue whilst this process happens?	Yes
I've worked with Cllr Dempster for many years. This is a community building and as your local councillor I am banging the drum for the community. The false rumours need to stop. Have your say by filling in the consultation.	
If you can't do leaflets can you do social media?	Already been done along with all other sorts of promotion
Can you confirm the timescales and process again?	As an indication: 3 months consultation; at least 3 months for officers to produce analysis report with recommendations to the executive; there would then have to be a public scrutiny meeting and a formal decision taken by the executive. Estimate around Jan to get to this point. If there were to be a CAT process this would start some months after a formal decision.
Scrutiny is not fit for purpose. This is lip service. You say it's not a closure programme, been through this before. It's all pantomime	
Could you not make this building a multi-service centre? We need more things in this area. Will we have any say in which community group takes on the building?	An explanation of key principles given along with an explanation of how the CAT process works.
I run a community group; would they get support from the council? It's really hard to run, need to apply for grants, who is going to support groups/CICs.	The council would commission third party support such as Voluntary Action Leicester.
We are only interested in Mowmacre. Other local estates already have nothing. How do you decide how much the rent is?	Not one size fits all, it depends on the building and the group
Will the council publish what terms are required of them?	Yes, if a decision is taken to transfer the building
What responsibilities remain with the council if the building is leased?	Not one size fits all, it depends on the contract.
Yes or no answer; is there in the proposal a way the council will continue to run the service?	Yes

The council used to give peppercorn rent to groups. Would you consider doing it for this community?	Yes if appropriate following a decision
Is it open for businesses to apply?	CAT policy requires applicants to be community organisations, in the broadest sense. The scoring is weighted towards community benefits.
Been here a decade, a lot of people use the centre, live just down the road. What is happening with Border drive, can this be sold? Can you take a little bit less money?	(Outside of the scope of this consultation)

Wednesday 14th May: Open Meeting at the Soar Valley College. Attended by 240 people. Panel:

Cllr Vi Dempster, Sean Atterbury (Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services) and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services). An interpreter was present. (The venue was relocated from Rushey Mead Recreation Centre at the request of Councillors and community members)

Points Raised	Response
Confirmation was requested as to whether Rushey Mead and Belgrave neighbourhood Centre will be closing.	We are not proposing that they close, but are instead looking to consult on the potential for community-led management of these buildings
Clarification requested as to whether LCC can be trusted - following the previous consultation on relocation of the library.	
Point made on LCC being 'under-handed' relating to the consultation process and lack of information on the "consultation criteria."	
Information was requested on the running costs of the facilities under consultation. Also information was requested on the availability of accounts regarding council tax collected from the ward and what this was spent on.	Information on the running costs of Neighbourhood Services facilities is published on the consultation website.
Clarity was requested for the rationale for the proposal to offer Rushey Mead Recreation Centre as the current footfall is 27,000 visitors per year.	This is a citywide consultation and we need to ensure our services are fit for the future for the whole city. Footfall is not the only consideration.
Does LCC have a predetermined position as to what position they want the consultation to reach?	This is simply a consultation at this point, no assumptions or decisions have been made. We want to hear as many views as possible to inform the eventual recommendations.
What reassurances will there be for long standing community groups?	If a community group takes over the running of a building, they will be required to produce a business plan which demonstrates how they would accommodate existing community groups to continue operating as well as new groups.
Chi and Chat' sessions are led by an Ex-librarian at Rushey Mead Library. These sessions have highlighted the needs of	If a community group wanted to take over the running of a building, they would need to produce a business plan to show how they would deliver benefits for the

vulnerable service users. What provisions will be made for these groups?	wider community. They would need to show how existing community groups would continue operating.
Why is money being invested in Haymarket Centre (city centre) when resources could be used for smaller, less expensive buildings and venues?	The Haymarket generates a large income for the council which can be re-invested into services.
Special Needs group for people with disabilities - Group leader highlighted the need for centres to remain the same. Requested support for members to complete the consultation form.	All centre staff will be happy to help residents complete a survey.
A member of the public proposed that translation services were not required as everyone present could understand. A show of hands was requested (in Gujarati and English). There was unanimous agreement for the language translator to be dismissed. Views expressed included – time consuming, and all information not relayed.	
Community Centres and libraries, reduce the impact on social and mental health services – Closure of services will have a greater impact on people benefiting from the support.	This is not a closure programme.
How will LCC ensure that the services continue to run properly if they are run by a community organisation?	All community groups wishing to take over the running of a building will be supported in developing a business plan for evaluation. Once a group is selected, they would enter into a lease agreement outlining their terms and responsibilities. This would be routinely monitored by the Council.

Tuesday 20th May: Open Meeting at Fosse Neighbourhood Centre. Attended by 24 people. Panel:
 Cllr Vi Dempster, Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services) and Kathryn Ellis (Head of Strategic Property)

Points Raised	Response
Labour have given up on providing public services. What will happen in two years' time?	We are trying to protect services by ensuring they're fit for the future.
Chair of Woodgate Residents' Association and Director of the foodbank: We would like to explore Community Asset Transfer (CAT) options. If not feasible, how can the council support groups currently running in this ward? Why do other wards seem to be favoured?	We want to keep local services in this ward. This is currently a consultation, and no decisions have been made. If this building does close in the future, we would explore alternative solutions working with the groups.
The cost of this building and its maintenance – have you looked into grants? What's the breakdown between maintenance and capital spend?	Capital funding is usually restricted to specific purposes. The ongoing costs are related to the age and character of the building.

Staff member at Fosse NC: The building's location is a problem. Could the library move to a smaller, more visible building?	If this building was sold there would then be a capital receipt that could reinvested.
Is leafleting being done locally (to promote the consultation)?	We use using multiple advertising streams, but leafleting is no cost effective as this would have to be done across the whole of the city.
Long-time resident: This building is ineffective as a library. Could it become more of a community hub? Could Mead Academy's library be opened to the public? It needs to be more of a community hub than it currently is.	We've contacted Mead Academy Trust and discussions are ongoing. Their priority is safeguarding pupils so that is not a straight-forward option to allow the general public access to the school.
We have been here before. We have to do more to advertise the building as the local people don't know it is here. It is not a very welcoming building. A library needs to be more than just books. Fosse ward is a very deprived area, and we don't have many services based here. Seeing people face-to-face is important to the community. Could the building be decoupled from its listed status? Could it be run by a consortium? The foodbank is mostly used by people who live in the Fosse area and are struggling. Extending hours into the evening would make it more suitable.	We're reviewing how the building could be better used and how to preserve local services (such as the food bank).
As a director of a non-profit, we own a similar building in the local area. We are not spending anywhere near that figure for our building. We have lots of tenants and they cover the cost of interior maintenance How are you arriving to that amount?	That amount is not exclusively maintenance, it is the total running cost which includes staffing. Staffing is by far the highest cost for the building. It is also very expensive to run due to the age and size of the building, for example heating costs and ongoing repairs.
How can we keep track of the updates for the consultation?	After the consultation closes there will be a period of several months where a report is written. You can leave your emails with officers, but it will be publicly shared once a findings and recommendations report is available.
This building is located in a very disadvantaged area of the city, especially in the immediate area outside the building. It is important that this building stays where it is. It needs revitalising and adapting. How can we achieve that? I cannot see who would purchase it and there is a worry that it would be derelict and would increase the issues to the local area. Can we create a working group with senior officers to come to a conclusion that everyone agrees with and is beneficial to the local residents.	We would need to take further legal advice on the proposition of a working group. As soon as the consultation finishes, I would like to meet with ward councillors on how we could move forward.

Consider trial hiring of this room (the main hall) over a six-month period?	This room is available for hire, and we do have groups that use it. We have a choir and a bowling group. We advertise it monthly.
Currently have a labour run council and labour government. What is the council doing to pressure the government for more money?	The Mayor and Executive continue to lobby for fairer funding but the council need to be seen to be managing their own financial difficulties.
Why isn't this library being considered to be community run?	The building is not viable for community running. The condition survey estimates £2.6 million needs to be spent on maintenance over the next 10 years. This would be transferring a burden to a group and is not feasible for a community organisation.
Is it 1 million to repair now and 1.6 over the next 10 years?	Yes correct
I have used several of the centres over the last 17 years. I used to use Central Library. I use the Brite centre a lot now. People who live in the area need to work together. UNITE trade union are starting a campaign for fair funding for local governments. Last year, we asked the Mayor if he was going to accept austerity and he said he would be fighting for better funding. Volunteers working in libraries should be in addition to, and not replacing, paid officers. We have advised not to give out paper copies and complete online. We need to push the consultation.	Paper consultations are available at every site if needed and online completion is encouraged where possible.
You can't replace trained librarians with volunteers. People rely on this building when it's cold at home in the winter.	
Question about consultation. Is it just kicking the problem into the long grass, why are you not pressuring central government?	Central government won't just give out more money, we need to show we're trying to improve our budget position.
Are the 2.1m savings from the Neighbourhood Services budget or council budget.	From the Neighbourhood services budget, the key word is up to 2.1m as the amount of savings achieved will depend on the decisions taken following the consultation.
Moving to a smaller building is a possibility, West End Neighbourhood centre has recently shut and groups have been displaced. The rooms in Fosse could definitely be used more and hired out. Fosse being in the community is crucial, ASB and knife crime initiatives run from here. I did not know rooms were available for rent.	This building has 250k a year running costs. The income received from room hire will not offset these costs. A mixed redevelopment model was looked at; mixed housing and community space for example. Room hire is advertised online and in the Western Park Gazette which goes through every door in three local wards including Fosse.

Volunteer at the food bank: first time I've been in the building. No one knows this building is here, no one knows what the building contains	We advertise in the Western Park Gazette. Unfortunately, this is not making any difference to room hires currently.
It's sad the building has been left to deteriorate to where it is. The advert in the Western Park Gazette is too small and difficult to read	The half page advert is fine and has been checked for accessibility.
You keep saying this is a local consultation, no decisions have been made. Once you've collated all the information. At the point of decision, are you prepared to look at efficiencies and let businesses come in to help run sites.	It is a genuine and open consultation. We will look at every response and any recommendations on efficiencies where possible.
Is there a reason to have to keep the whole building running in terms of energy, can't you power off the building rooms which aren't being used.	Doing this can have a detrimental effect on the building due to cold and damp which in turn adds to the maintenance costs.
Woodgate Centre is so busy, Packed to the rafters. Flexibility of hours is an issue, this building shuts at 5, needs to be open in the evening. Could we do a one off capital project to allow self-access into the building, generate more income? 100 families a week at the food bank, if we lost the food bank, is it just not moving the cost to wherever it goes?	Fosse Centre is open till 9mon Wednesday evenings and until 6pm on other evenings. Self-access is not feasible for Fosse building due to the size and security issues of restricting access.
Not everyone has a phone, not everyone has broadband. Why not put a poster on the door saying you can hire rooms? The building has 4 sides it needs more than one notice board.	There is a board outside. Comment noted and will be passed to the officers.
Rushey Mead User - Recreation centre - where will people go when all the centres are closed?	Leaving aside the Fosse building, this is not a closure programme. 11 examples of CATs working successfully. It is a model that works across the city.

Wednesday 21st May: Open Meeting at Avenue Primary School. Attended by 122 people. Panel:

Cllr Vi Dempster, Sean Atterbury (Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services) and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services). The date and venue were changed at the request of Councillors and community members.

Points Raised	Response
If you have to save 7.2 million, surely Knighton Library cannot be that significant. How much does Knighton library cost?	7.2 million is an overall savings target across the Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services division. Libraries and community centres need to save up to 2.1 million. Knighton library costs £150,000 a year to run.

What will happen to the staff at Knighton Library within these proposals?	Staff work on a city-wide basis and therefore are required to work flexibly across all Neighbourhood Services sites. This would be reflected in any potential staff process, but we are not at that point as no decisions have been taken about the service.
Knighton Library is very well used, if this were a business proposal, it would shut if other shops that were failing. Why are you proposing to close a well-used library?	We are not proposing to close the library, we are planning to re-model the service, whilst protecting what's important to the community.
How were the libraries which are being considered for community management chosen? Did you monitor visitor information, child usage, etc?	We have published a secondary research report which shows service usage information. We need to prioritise buildings with a wide service area which can accommodate multi-services.
If Knighton Library is handed over to community management, the burden on that group to raise funds would be immense, what mechanism does LCC have if the group fail, how do we hold LCC accountable if this fails, would it close if the group fail?	The community handover wouldn't happen overnight – LCC would support groups to become a constituted, legal body. There would also be commissioned support. There would be consideration around fund raising, looking at appropriate training, knowledge and experience. There would possibly be some financial assistance e.g. for provision of books and IT. Theoretically, the Library would go back to LCC if the group failed to manage the library.
What will happen to the library when it closes?	This is not a closure programme; this is a consultation on proposals to manage services differently.
If a group takes over, you will take away vital fundraising time and efforts from other groups already fundraising. Libraries are essential services, LCC need to fund them.	This is a consultation, and all concerns and responses will be considered.
(Friends of Clarendon Park) We're not putting ourselves forward to run Knighton Library – it's too complicated and too large for us to take on. Have any other community groups come forward, and if so, who are they? We'd be happy to work with others, but we wouldn't want to run it independently. Also, the building packs mention running costs of £23,000 – is that the amount community groups are expected to cover?	<p>The biggest cost associated with running a building like this is staffing. LCC would still be involved in providing support, particularly around technical aspects and specialist knowledge of the book stock. We would also continue to manage the IT systems.</p> <p>In terms of which community groups have come forward, we would need their permission before sharing their details.</p>
What will happen to the homeless people if Knighton library closes, where will they go for a warm space?	This is a factor that is being considered as part of the consultation process.
When is the Equality Impact Assessments being done and when will it be published. It's also disappointing to see there are no BSL interpreters here.	There is a draft equality impact assessment document, and it is only a draft because we are in a consultation. The document is published on the consultation website and will be updated once the consultation findings have been analysed and before a decision is taken.

Has a feasibility assessment taken place in this specific context? On the volunteering basis, in the county 1/5 are of retirement age, in castle ward it is more than 1/20.	Not as this stage, we are only at the beginning of the consultation process.
You are defunding and devaluating the libraries. Talk to the people who run those libraries. Volunteers are few and far between.	
Why is Knighton library being closed and not another place?	We do not want to close a library. We are in a consultation at this point in time and we are asking the community how we can move forward to save money.
Are you going to liaise with local schools as part of the EIA?	We have briefed local schools on the consultation and asked for their support in engaging local families.
When you've studied the community libraries, how many have sought subscriptions from businesses?	Funding comes from a range of different sources- capital investments, lots of different opportunities available.
We need to know who comes forward to run the library.	
Can you tell me three years ago why you spent 100K on the library. You now need to save £150k. Why did you do Library Plus?	We cannot hand over a liability. The building was refurbished in 2021, and it looks really good. This is a benefit no matter who runs the library and would give community groups a better chance. The ongoing maintenance of that site is extremely low due to the work done. These are benefits for everyone.
If a group did come forward, how could we hold them accountable? How can we make sure that is not paid for example? That homeless people can still enter. – Do we get a vote on which community group take over our library?	We've transferred 11 community centres to date. There would be a robust process that LCC follows where groups would need to develop a business plan and if successful that would be built that into the lease. There would also be a service level agreement in place. We would operate with an open and transparent process - if groups didn't meet the criteria, they wouldn't be considered.

Thursday 29th May: Open Meeting at St Matthews Centre. Attended by 57 people. Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster, Cllr Mohammed Dawood and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
St Matthews Big Local. Why is no one from housing here?	A District Manager from Housing is present. We are currently consulting on the future of the service. Once a decision has been made with regard to the operation of the service within the centre, Housing and EBS will conduct their own separate pieces of work for the building.
You've said no decision has been made, yet you keep highlighting how expensive this	We've already used a significant portion of our reserves. While we are actively engaging with central

building is. If that's the key issue, why haven't you considered accessing the £2 billion in reserves held by the Labour government?	government to secure additional funding, part of that process requires us to demonstrate how we're making savings locally. Our focus is on ensuring that services remain sustainable in the long term.
The position seems to be that this building is no longer feasible—but how 'local' is the proposed relocation of services? This isn't just a library; it's a full community hub. Will the new building be able to accommodate the wide range of community groups currently using this space?	We are proposing that the services move to another location within the St Matthews estate. We have gained commitment from Adult Learning and from Housing to relocate their services with the library. We note the point around wider community space and use.+
We use this building on a weekly basis. From our perspective, we're thinking about our place here and what the future holds for this space. It's concerning to hear that the building is considered beyond repair—it gives the impression that a decision has already been made, even though we're being told this is still a consultation.	We are currently only in a consultation period; no decisions have been made. However the medium to long term condition of the building cannot be ignored.
You've said that this building is too expensive to run. If the services are being relocated to a cheaper site, can you confirm whether the level and quality of services will remain the same in the new location?	If the decision is made to relocate, then we would be looking to keep the services in the local area, including the library, adult learning and housing advice.
We know this estate and there is no space for another sports hall in this community.	No, there is nowhere else in the estate that could house a sports centre. We are talking about the Neighbourhood Services that are on offer currently in the centre. The Sports Hall closed two years ago due to RAAC concrete in the ceiling.
Can you clarify where the services will be relocated to? You've said that it's too costly to run this building—but have you explored the option of partnering with local businesses or seeking sponsorship to help cover the costs?	The proposal would be to retain the library service on this estate.
This is the heart of the community; it's about more than the money. This is the best location for the service.	
<p>Thank you for holding this consultation. You mentioned engaging with central government—we, as a local community, would like to support that effort. How can we get involved?</p> <p>Would it not have been more transparent to conduct this consultation through an independent third party?</p>	<p>A draft Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been developed and is publicly available on the website. It is a living document that will continue to evolve as the consultation progresses.</p> <p>The engagement work which we undertook in 2023 was conducted by an independent organisation called Activist. We have used this work to inform the proposals we are currently consulting on.</p>

<p>Have you conducted an impact assessment on what relocating these services would mean for users?</p> <p>And has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed—and if so, is it available to the public?</p>	
<p>How will you report your findings back to us?</p>	<p>We have held drop-in sessions, open meetings, and a range of stakeholder conversations. Following this, there will be a findings report and an updated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). These documents will be published on our website ahead of any decision and we update residents, customers and stakeholders through the usual channels.</p> <p>We will be using all the evidence we gather to support recommendations for an executive decision.</p>
<p>The main problem is the cost of running this building. What would make the council keep the services here and not move them?</p>	<p>We are trying to be as efficient as possible given our current financial situation. Our aim is to protect the services. The issue is the medium to long term sustainability of this building which is not fit for the future.</p>
<p>You are not looking to CAT the building. How did you decide this? It feels like the needs of the people who use the building have not been considered.</p>	<p>We cannot transfer buildings that are in poor condition to the community to manage. Our Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy, which is available online, does not permit the transfer of buildings with liabilities. This very large building has been assessed and is considered a liability.</p>
<p>Have you done any impact analysis?</p>	<p>Yes, we have published a draft EIA, it's a live document that will be evolving.</p>
<p>Is it just the RAAC that we are concerned about, or is there other problems with the building?</p>	<p>No need for people to worry about the building. The building is safe to use except for the Sports Hall which is out of bounds. The issue is the medium to long term sustainability of the building.</p>
<p>Somalia community association use centre 3 times a week - This centre is a lifeline, this building is not listed as suitable to be given to the community, why? Sports Hall has been closed for 2 years, but we've not been told anything about it, why? Where would the library be relocated to? Would there be any opportunity for the community to run this building?</p>	<p>We want to keep the services in this estate where possible.</p> <p>We need to collaborate with the community to make sure services are kept local.</p> <p>We can't hand over a building assessed as a liability to a community group.</p>
<p>We are talking about moving services from this building to somewhere else, so a decision has been made. This is happening because the building is unsafe, how unsafe is the building, does it affect the flats attached to it? What is the severity of the danger?</p>	<p>Please be reassured the council are not putting anyone at risk. The whole building was surveyed for RAAC and this was found to be present only in the sports hall which has been put out of bounds.</p>

	Cllr Dempster agreed to raise with the council's housing and estates divisions first thing in the morning and arrange for appropriate messaging to residents about the whole building, including connected flats and shops underneath.
Can you tell us what else is wrong with the building? We would like to take on the building, without the sports hall.	<p>Put this in your consultation form, we will take this into account.</p> <p>We can't transfer a building assessed as a liability to a community group.</p> <p>Building is too expensive to offer out as a CAT, however as no decision has been made please complete the survey.</p> <p>Cllr Dawood said the consultation is on proposals and no decision has been taken. I will take on the RAAC issue as your local Cllr.</p>
Is RAAC in this part of the building?	No
Does it affect tenants under the sports hall if you were to close the building? Would it affect the businesses connected to the building? We've invested a lot into the business, we were not notified about the RAAC.	<p>Assessment of the building has been done, all safe. This is a proposal for the community centre at this stage, we need people to engage with the consultation.</p> <p>This is not a meeting about RAAC, this is not about risk and RAAC it's about this building. It costs us 300k per year to run, officers are proposing to relocate services within this estate.</p>
What is responsible for the high costs of running this building?	All figures are published online in Building Packs, costs for last 3 financial years. Made up of staffing, running costs, repairs (which will get worse), income doesn't cover it. Net running cost is large (300k per year).
This is the heart of the community. The risk is when the youth of the area have nowhere to go and meet.	Officers are suggesting that we can move services within the community
What is the size of the building?	Its online in the building packs, Gross internal area (m2): 2,255
Life has been going down the drain since austerity. I've noticed the estate; this is just seen as further austerity. The credibility is based on the independence of the consultation.	You can re-organise things to protect services that matter the most to people. Other than Fosse NC, this is not a closure programme. This is a programme to try and re-organise services as far we can to meet the need of communities. At the same time we need to save money and make services sustainable for the future.
Pre-school - in terms of relocating service users, does that include us?	If a decision was made to move out of the community centre, we would want to work with all the service users as best we can to ensure services can continue. Lee will talk to individual groups.

	Cllr Dawood – This consultation is far more comprehensive than anything we have done before. We are engaging with you; we can't determine the outcome yet. It's to our credit that we've used our reserves properly, other councils in the country have not
I came into the community 2 years ago; it's everything we want. The news it's worrying. We have to work with the local government. If you're going to move the services, you should at least have an idea of where you want to move to? I'm not asking for a concrete answer just ideas of where, so we can prepare ourselves.	Explained why we can't do this at this stage. It is a 12 week consultation and no decisions have been made. We are consulting on proposals to relocate the library and services elsewhere on the estate.

Wednesday 4th June: Open Meeting at Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre. Attended by 18 people.

Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
Would you have to rectify the outside of the building as well, before a CAT could happen? Do the council have to make it fit for purpose before the handover?	The council cannot hand over a liability. We would need to ensure the building is to a certain standard, this would not include cosmetic things such as the wooden cladding though.
Does the city council know how much it would cost to repair the whole building?	We have done condition surveys, but these would need to be updated prior to any CAT process.
Will the council be responsible for the upkeep of the building until the transfer?	Yes
Are you looking to handover to one group or could it be multiple? Is there a possibility that the building will be kept under council control?	If a number of groups come together and form a legal entity then it would be fine for that group to bid if a CAT process happens.
Can we share our group details with others in the room who might want to join together to put a bid in?	Yes, please use time after the meeting to do this.
You need to be clear about what's included so groups know, is the ball court included?	The 'red line' site currently includes the ball court however if a decision were taken then the CAT footprint would be assessed.
Children growing up on this estate need somewhere to go. If this building goes they won't.	This is why we would want to make sure a community group takes the building on for the benefit of local residents.
Are there any grants available to help with funding?	The Council would not provide a programme of grants for community groups taking on the lease of building, however there are a wide range of grant opportunities available through different agencies for community organisations to consider.
Has the ball court already been taken over?	I will get clarification on what's happening with the ball court.

I'm a bit puzzled, what happens if no one comes forward to take it on?	If no group came forward, the council would look at other re-purposing options. If the council couldn't repurpose the building it would be disposed of.
If it does close, how long before it's vandalised?	This is why we would want a community group to take on the building, and if this were not possible an alternative use for the building.
How many consultation forms have you received so far?	We've had a very high response to date - around 3500 to date
What sort of condition is the building in, does it need work doing to it?	The building pack outlines the maintenance costs but if a decision were taken to offer it up for community running, then a condition survey would be undertaken at that point. We cannot hand over a liability and need to evidence it is suitable for a community group to take over.
What would happen to existing groups if a community group took over the building?	If a community group took over the running of the building, the terms of the lease would require them to protect the interests of the current groups using it.
We would like to continue using the back room, while the pre-school retains use of the rest of the building	Anyone who is interested in the possibility of running the building can send in a tentative expression of interest.
What happens if no community groups come forward?	By way of reassurance, to date with previous CAT opportunities we have not been in a position where no community groups have come forward to run a building.
This centre is used a lot Monday to Friday. It would be hard for a group to come in and build a business plan around these hours. Is there any tolerance for not supporting current groups?	A group that doesn't commit to supporting existing users would not score highly when assessed against other community organisations.
How long is the proposed lease for a new group?	Our standard CAT lease is a 5-year initial lease.
If a community group takes on the building, what will happen with the ball court? Will it become part of the group's responsibility, or will it continue to be managed by the council?	The ball court is currently part of the footprint of the building. We will clarify that and post it outside/inside the building once there is an update on the ball court development.
The youth centre across the road was closed. There is nothing for the youths in the local area. For example, if the youth wanted to use the football court in the evening, they currently couldn't. You need to add a library to this area.	
Has there been any expressions of interest?	For all the buildings across the city being proposed for CAT, there has been early interest.

Tuesday 10th June: Open Meeting at Evington Library. Attended by 39 people. Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
In terms of the consultation process, can you explain it again please?	We are now in a 12 week consultation which will end on 29 th June. A findings and recommendations report will be produced which will be looked at by the Executive, Scrutiny and possibly full Council. A decision is not likely until early 2026.
What support would be provided for Community Managed Libraries (CML)? Would the summer reading challenge for example still be available?	The council would commission support for community groups to get together and develop their plans from a support organisation such as Voluntary Action Leicester. There would be a service level agreement with any community organisation which would detail the deliverables. This would include things like the SRC.
Will the council still maintain the building financially?	<p>There is a huge range of options in terms of how a CML runs, depending on the ambition of the community. We would expect at the least the council would support the provision of book stock, IT services and front line training as well as providing strategic support.</p> <p>On the one hand an organisation may take on the lease of the building, on the other they may just want to take on the management and staffing of the service.</p>
<p>Could staff be retained for a few years and transition to volunteers over the period, a hybrid solution?</p> <p>Could we create a local group, to work with the council, on how this could move forwards? We understand the financial pressures, but a bit more needs to be given by the council. I don't think a group as it stands would it be able to do this at present.</p>	We want groups to come forward and tell us what they can do. We can then work with them.
I've visited services in Bristol and Manchester, we will be missing the expertise of professional librarians. This is a cost cutting exercise, we should be prepared to oppose this. Will you provide professional librarians for us?	We would provide significant support. Amongst the support would be book stock and support from the librarians who select this, day to day operational support to volunteers, core support for groups to develop a sustainable plan.
Evington is not in the proposed plan of retained council multi service centres, could other local libraries have hours reduced and Evington kept on by the council. Seems unfair.	Reductions in hours at all retained multi-service centres is already proposed. We will look at all suggestions and ideas - please complete a survey with your ideas.
The library book fund would be reduced based on the withdrawal from library sites. If the libraries were to be retained would the book fund not reduce?	There is always a knock-on effect to budget depending on the proposals. It would move the budgetary pressure somewhere else.

How quickly will the minutes of this meeting be out?	Notes and key points from this meeting will be published in the findings report.
<p>Lots of children aren't in the school system yet. We come to the library multiple times a week. I didn't know about this; how do we reach children who aren't in the school system yet?</p> <p>What impact will completing the survey have on the outcome?</p> <p>Are leaflets available in the local community?</p>	<p>Lee - I'm happy to come out and talk to as many groups as possible.</p> <p>Posters can be printed for you, ask library staff -you are welcome to distribute these too places where young families go locally.</p>
Where do we find the consultation for young people?	Lady to speak to Michael at the end of the meeting.
I have read the labour government's Pathways to Work. There is a lot of talk moving people from benefits to volunteer positions. If this were to happen with libraries, there is no support for volunteers to run a library, especially those with disabilities.	Elsewhere in the county and in other local authorities, there are many examples of community-run libraries. We are currently consulting on how we might take on a community-run library model. The support we expect to provide includes book stock, IT provision, and some assistance towards building running costs. We would also offer practical support, such as helping groups become legally constituted and providing training for day-to-day management and operations.
What would happen if you didn't find a group to run this library?	The process is to consult and invite groups to express interest in the building. If none come forward, the council explores other uses, and if still none are found, the building may be put up for sale. However, this has never happened before.
Are the options in the consultation definite?	No, nothing is definite. No decisions have been made. We are in a 12-week consultation on possible options.
If there are multiple bidders for a building. Would the council encourage collaboration between multiple community groups?	Yes, absolutely. That is a very sensible way forward. In the CAT Policy, there is consideration for collaborative groups. We can only lease to one legal entity though.
What is the expected lifespan of a community-run library model given our varying levels of expertise? What happens in two to three years' time if there are further cuts and the group is expected to take on even more responsibilities?	We cannot predict the position we will be in 3-5 years down the line. In good faith, what we are saying is we want to build a sustainable model that will last a long time.
Is it possible for a community group taking this on to have a guaranteed period during which no changes are made? I see librarians as a tremendous asset and will be fighting to retain as many as possible. Their support is invaluable.	We are currently in a consultation period. No decision has been, or can be, made before the consultation ends. Only after that can considerations like those mentioned.

Thank you for having the consultation and listening to these views. During this consultation will we be keeping the current 40 hours a week staffed hours?	What is important is that consultation is a long-process, and nothing is going to happen overnight. There will be no changes until after a decision is made.
I am concerned about children's literacy and would like to know what arrangements were made to enable parents to attend this meeting	We have held 12 open meetings across the city, scheduled at various times to enable as many people as possible to attend in afternoons and evenings.
You've mentioned that 'yes you will provide support.' What money will be saved? Is it just the staffing costs that will be saved?	The service is a predominantly a staffed service and our highest cost is around staffing.

Tuesday 17th June: Open Meeting at Coleman Neighbourhood Centre. Attended by 26 people.

Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
Thanks for the clarification on the process. I've been asked by constituents, will this building be offered to a religious group, the community feel this would not be beneficial. It needs to be open to all and not just a specific religious group. Will it be available to every group/club depending on availability? Are block bookings allowed?	<p>An updated policy for Community Asset Transfer is under preparation. It will be more explicit that the transfer of community buildings under the policy cannot permit the primary purpose to be as a place of worship. Religious groups can bid for a building but it can't be converted primarily into a place of worship. The legal contract would include the approved business plan and would be vital to ensure the transfer goes smoothly. This need to be suitable for the specific community.</p> <p>Under the council's Community Asset Transfer policy interested groups must produce a business plan which is assessed against a robust set of criteria. A key criteria is the benefit proposed for the community, for existing groups, and for new groups.</p> <p>The council's standard approach to Community Asset Transfer is to offer a 5 year lease initially with regular annual checks to ensure that the community benefits are being delivered and with break clauses in place.</p>
Statement: From observing a Community Asset Transfer at the African Caribbean Centre, our group could not be thrown out and our hire rates would not be increased during the first year.	
What will happen if no one takes over responsibility of the building?	<p>At this stage, no decisions have been taken - this is a consultation. Part of this is to understand the level of interest.</p> <p>Should the proposals go ahead, and no suitable community business plan was presented, the council</p>

	<p>would look at what else could be delivered from a building before disposal.</p> <p>In the last 10 years we've had very good interest from community groups wanting to run buildings. There is a great appetite for it. We've not been in a position yet where there is no suitable interest in a building. We've successfully transferred 11 buildings to community groups to date.</p>
<p>The consultation says £2.1m needs to be saved. How feasible is it that a community group can make Evington Library sustainable if the council can't? During the process will it be 18 months where we won't have a library?</p>	<p>The library would remain open during any process.</p> <p>It is proposed to retain the most of our libraries under the council, some sites would have a reduction of opening hours but we would introduce self-access at 6 sites. Self-access would extend current opening times and the 2 pilot sites have been very successful.</p> <p>For a Community Managed Library, one size does not fit all. There are many different models across the country. The County have 34 CMLs and they work well. The biggest cost to the council is the staffing, when you take this away, the building costs are low. We have not produced a firm model on how it could work we're looking for interest and ideas during the consultation period.</p> <p>The saving that would be achieved from these proposals is up to £2.1m, however that doesn't mean we would save the full amount. We do have significant budgetary pressures though so we have to do things differently to continue to run a sustainable service.</p>
<p>Cub scout leader, we've been using this centre since 2017. The scout group has grown so much over the years. Due to our charitable status, we get a very fair room rate charges. We don't want to be priced out if a new group takes it over.</p>	<p>If a decision is taken to make the building available for Community Asset Transfer there would be an open and transparent process and opportunity for group to develop a business case which we would assess against robust criteria. We would ask groups to tell us how they would support existing community groups and the room hire charges they would propose.</p>
<p>What will happen about the parking at the site? If more groups come. With the store at the bottom of the hill you can't cross the road easily with people parking selfishly.</p>	<p>There would be no change to the current arrangements – parking is already in place for the users of the centre.</p>
<p>Will the existing users of the centre automatically transfer over? Will prices be put up?</p>	<p>We would ask groups who are putting in a business plan to consider the current groups and we wouldn't let them price the local community out of the building – previously this has been stated for initial years in the lease.</p>

	Groups coming in want to make buildings successful. So pricing groups out would not work for them.
6 existing groups here. If they were to put themselves forward would the team help them prepare the business plan? Can you clarify the timeline for the next steps?	<p>People can express their ideas in their consultation form.</p> <p>With previous groups we have commissioned 3rd party organisations to help support groups develop their business – for example we have commissioned Voluntary Action Leicester to support groups in the past. The council can't directly support groups as we would be assessing their business plans.</p> <p>The consultation closes on 29th June. The Project Team will analyse all of the responses. We will create a findings summary report with recommendations. It will then go to Scrutiny and to the Executive, and therefore a decision is not likely to be taken before Jan 2026.</p> <p>We can't engage with groups at the moment, as a decision hasn't been made. However if a group of 6 different organisations wanted to come together and put in an expression of interest in if the building was offered, then they could..</p>
Are you on our side?	<p>The Council has tough financial decisions to make. It would have been easier to do a closure programme. However we're trying to keep as many assets open as possible.</p> <p>The council are trying to protect front line services. I'd like to reassure you that we want to make things work.</p>
These consultation forms can groups come together and do one form as a group?	You can identify yourself as a group or an individual.
We don't want community tensions if the wrong group takes over. What you could do as officers, is give examples of where it has worked?	<p>It's really difficult to get accurate information out to everyone.</p> <p>It's important that we can put updates and information on our notice boards to keep people up to date. Perhaps we could do it this way.</p>
We have a bowling club 10-12 on a Monday, would we keep our slot if a new group comes in? We won't move to a different day as people have other things on.	This is where the business plan would come in, and it's important. We weight the scoring of business plans for community benefit. We would want to protect existing groups where we can. Some flexibility is needed though.
How many groups use this centre currently?	Regularly 5/6 groups with some ad hoc use.
It's really important elderly people have consistency to avoid social isolation.	
Could updates be included in the Evington Echo?	Yes, seems a good idea.

Are we one of the least used community centres?	In terms of usage, this site is one of the least used.
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Thursday 19th June: Open Meeting at Gilmorton Community Rooms. Attended by 21 people.

Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
If enough people come forward from the area to say they want the council to continue running it, what weight would that carry? There is not an option in the consultation proposal for the council to continue running this.	This is a consultation on a set of proposals, which for this building include community asset transfer, everyone can put forward what they think is best though and that might be the council continuing to run it.
I run the food bank on a Friday every week. I have an interest in taking the building over to offer space to other groups for the community, as nothing else is round here. How does it work?	<p>At present this is a consultation and no decision has been taken.</p> <p>Over the past 10 years we've transferred 11 Neighbourhood Services buildings and this gives us a good idea of what would be involved if a decision is taken.</p> <p>A building pack is available online where you can see the costs relevant to community groups to help you consider if this would be feasible for your organisation.</p> <p>If a decision were taken to offer facilities for community running we would commission third party infrastructure support to help organisations to develop their business cases.</p>
A local church is present who are interested in the building also. It would be good for everyone to work together.	
I want to help run groups and I'd like to get involved. How many of these CAT transfers don't make it? Do they have to be self-funding?	Over the past decade we've offered 11 buildings for community asset transfer. All of these are doing well and 5 have completed their first lease period and are looking to take on a further lease. All of these organisations have taken on the repairs and maintenance of the buildings and are fully self-funding.
I live on this close – you make the point that places like this building are a community asset. I'm very much in favour of more community involvement. Finding funding is needed every year though. What happens if no groups come forward? I don't agree with money coming out of the community and then	If and when a decision is made groups can put forward business cases to take over sites. These would need to be sustainable business cases. The council has been using its reserves to ensure services have continued to run, but this cannot be sustained indefinitely.

expecting them to find more. Leicester City Council have reserves which they should use.	
If a community group did take over can they get help with the financials? Can they get help with any grants?	Community Asset Transfer is designed to enable groups to take buildings on for less than market value in return for providing community benefits. The Council would not be providing grants under the proposals. We can signpost to grants as part of ongoing support for groups.
We are a church community, we're not looking for a place to worship, we might not use the building every day, so we want to bring other groups together. Would the lease be just for this building or the next door unit as well?	You can submit a response to the consultation to tell us about your ideas. You could talk about the unit next door in this as part of this. We will look at all feedback under the consultation.
Can you confirm the timeline again please?	The consultation ends on 29 th June 2025. It will then take a few months to analyse and write the findings and recommendations report. We expect a decision in early 2026.
Is there not any youth groups around the area anymore?	
Feedback from residents is that they want to see it open in whatever form. Lots of people are contacting local councillors with ideas. There is a feeling the council make it difficult to book the room currently.	Please let me know if there are any issues with contacting the service to book rooms – we want the centre to be well used.
We want to use the building; we may not be able to pay for the building though?	
Are you in a position to tell us the running costs of this building? I'm still concerned about funding and the sustainability of funding.	This building costs about £12k a year to run. A building pack is online which outlines the key costs relevant to community groups. Community groups could run it cheaper than LCC though, for example registered charities can gain exemptions from Business Rates (NNDR). Before offering a CAT opportunity on a building, we would do a condition survey and make sure it was fit for purpose and make this information available.
What happened at the 2 meetings at Aylestone over the last two years? We've done this meeting twice with Cllr Clarke – about the closure of the shop. Is there still a proposal to demolish the sites? It's still in the local plan. No point on handing out 5 year leases if it's not going to be here.	Those meetings were about a different issue. This is a consultation on neighbourhood services. I can get the details of that meeting and sent it to you. Officers will clarify the latest position with regard to the local plan by contacting the Planning Team.
If no one is able to come forward with a sustainable plan does the building shut?	No decisions have been taken at this time – this is a consultation on proposals for the centre.
You're offering a lease to the community, are you going to help us do it up? The area around these units needs tidying up – it's overgrown and there is rubbish and broken glass which	Cllr Dempster to take away actions to investigate these concerns.

needs cleaning up. A local councillor had reported materials from the roof over the shop had fallen down recently.	Lee undertook to raise with the relevant teams and to report back to Councillors.
How long does it take to review the application forms from community groups?	Past experience tells us the timescales are variable but roughly as follows. If a decision was taken to offer the building for CAT, we would open the opportunity to submit business cases. It is important groups are given time and support to develop their business plans – previously we have given 3 months to submit this, then 2 months to assess the submission. If there is decision to transfer the building there is usually between 6 - 12 months to negotiate a handover.

Tuesday 24th June: Open Meeting at Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre. Attended by 14 people.

Panel: Cllr Vi Dempster and Lee Warner (Head of Neighbourhood Services).

Points Raised	Response
What will happen to the building during the consultation process?	Reassurance was given re operational arrangements while the full consultation is in progress re the use of the building.
Is the building a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) or Leasehold arrangement?	The proposal would be for the community to take on a lease to run the building under the council's Community Asset Transfer policy should that decision be made.
A letter of interest sent by the newly formed Braunstone Frith Community Group. Comparison of the increase in usage of the building, following the takeover the Community Group. Discussion on the [positive] changes to the building following the reorganising of the main room.	Confirmation of receipt of letter of interest.
A discussion was had re the Ball Park arrangements. It was made clear the arrangements are not part of this programme	
A discussion was had regarding Ward Funding applications. Lee agreed to look into this matter.	

Appendix D – Officer lead drop in session meeting notes

Tuesday 8th April: Officer led drop in session at Central Library. Attended by 6 people.

Key points raised were:

- Open up a couple of late evenings till 7pm at Central Library, potentially later start on Saturday.
- Customer lives on Narborough Road but prefers the city library due to range of books.
- Westcotes Library opening hours – Sunday is very busy – retain this, Monday should be 12 to 6pm. Late evenings at 6pm ok.
- Customer uses Central and Knighton libraries interested in community managed libraries. Have we explored moving libraries into community run buildings where they are better located? Could we have book collections in community centres?
- Customer only uses the Central Library. People use the libraries to meet and for book launches. Book launches and writing groups are really important – important that the library is open for these events.
- Customer uses Belgrave Library - Due to being heavily used and in a deprived area, the library operating hours should not be reduced. The library is valued by local people who enjoy the level of access they currently have. A key concern was that younger people would struggle if homework clubs were limited or reduced due to proposed earlier closing times. During a conversation with young people, they had said that self-access would not be good enough for them as they rely on staff support.
- Customer uses Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre - People from the local area will not go elsewhere. Local people feel at home at BNC and rely on it. So many community activities take place there such as Diwali celebrations. Hire rates are affordable – more so than elsewhere – and this needs to remain the case. If anyone else were to take on the running of the BNC, they should respect the community who use it and live nearby. Feels the building should not be impacted, and that if anything, more investment should be made in the building.
- Customer uses Rushey Mead Library - It should not be transferred for anyone else to run and should not have reduced opening hours. The building is important for older people – where else would they go?

Thursday 10th April: Officer led drop in session at Hamilton Library. Attended by 4 people.

Key points raised were:

- Local councillor - Lighting not working on Netherhall ball court. Interest in taking on the centre in the community.
- Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre user had concerns around the vandalism of the building. Question about the current usage of the local Armadale Centre.

- Local resident – Hamilton Library user – most interested in bringing communities together. Residents value the spaces. Self-Access at Hamilton Library valued as a positive.
- Customer understands the council position but feels that libraries particularly should not be transferred to public/community management. Understood that there is a successful model for transferring community services but, as a Hamilton resident who grew up in Belgrave and still has parents there, feels that the BNC is very important and has concerns about lack of funding.

Monday 14th April: Officer led drop in session at Highfields Library. Attended by 9 people.

Key points raised were:

- Customer lives locally to Highfields Library and uses it but also uses Belgrave Library, St Barnabas and Hamilton. The hours for Highfields Library will work for them. Loves the library – use for books. Have family member who uses the room at the back for events. Uses the computers and the location is good because schools are very nearby.
- Customer pleased the library will still be open although reduced a few hours and is supportive of the proposed new library in Thurnby Lodge Community Centre.
- Local customer (retired) living in a nearby street. Doesn't have a computer at home and no smartphone so uses the library computers regularly. Proposed change to opening hours would have no impact on them. Pleased that the council would continue to run Highfields Library. Customer also uses Aylestone Library when they use the leisure centre. Pleased there is very little change at Aylestone library.
- Customer uses library computers every day. Uses the library for books sometimes. "Not happy" about the reduction in opening hours, asked why it is a half day on Friday? However acknowledged that opening hours changes would not have an impact on his library use.
- Customer worried about sustainability of community groups taking on buildings. Think this is a reason for not transferring services. There is a benefit for communities to be involved in the running of services however a degree of support is required e.g. training for library service. Supportive of multi-service approach.
- Customer uses the Highfields and St Barnabas libraries. Initially not happy with new opening hours, but after the approach was explained and budget constraints, was ok with the new hours thereafter. Attends for Jamila's legacy, arts, and crafts, computers and books, brings son. Self-Access is a good idea for St Barnabas as this is close to home.
- Customer uses Highfields library, used to use Central Library, but more convenient at Highfields. Feels decision already made after needs assessment. Not happy with reduction of hours. Attends events for men's health awareness, Jamila's legacy, would like this to continue.
- Customer lives in Highfields and uses library. Sometimes uses Central. Ok with new proposed hours, could manage it. Uses computers, book group and different activities. Would use Central Library on a Saturday as it would be open until 4.

- Customer congratulates Leicester for retaining all libraries to date in contrast to many other authorities. General concern about LCC cuts due to budgets. Uses Highfields Library and happy about diversity of the area and usage of the site.

Wednesday 16th April: Officer led drop in session at Beaumont Leys Library. Attended by 6 people.

Key points raised were:

- Service user of Beaumont Leys Library – Money wasted on things like cycle lanes which are hardly ever used. Routinely see cyclist using footpaths rather than cycle lane. Also, money wasted on the train station. The feeling is that money is being wasted. Attends a writer's group and arts groups at Beaumont Leys Library. The centre could be used for even more for different things i.e. interest groups and other activities. Concerns around the expectation that everything is done online. Have had issues accessing IT courses. Currently paid staff staffs the library. Staff do the job properly and correctly. Concern with community libraries is that it can go one of two ways – really well and a great success or it can just fall off. People can lose interest if they're doing it out of their good will. Other commitments might get in the way. Really happy with Beaumont Leys Library. Staff are great and very supportive. Retired in 2015 and used Beaumont Leys Library extensively. Nice and warm in the winter. Staff at library have been incredibly helpful – concerned that this will be lost at community run libraries.
- Local author – regular user of Central Library and Beaumont Leys Library. Evening events at Central Library are great but is it an aim to draw people towards Central rather than delivering them in the community? Needs to be more daytime opportunities for people to come to and feel safe, such as the events that take place at Central. Town doesn't feel very safe in the evenings. Initial thoughts on proposals are relief that they aren't as severe as initially thought. Pleased that opening hours aren't dramatically changing.
- Customer lives in Astill Lodge. Uses library mainly – for DWP work coach and debt advice. Fine with proposals for Library and opening hours are fine. Didn't use Tudor centre until two years ago – now uses for two sessions – Friday gym and children's madrasah. Not concerned about future for centre as has seen.
- Local resident uses Beaumont Leys library – opening hours would be fine – doesn't come in early. Uses computers, photocopying and printouts and coffee mornings. Value the staff support. Doesn't borrow books anymore – too much to do at home. Wife has passed away. Most important part of library is social part – coffee morning.
- Customer with three children lives near Beaumont Leys Library – likes the proposed later opening on a Saturday. 5pm closing weekdays may be difficult for people who work, but Tuesday closing at 6pm will help. Children use the leisure centre for swimming – customer uses the library while they are doing this. Opening hours are fine for this customer. Uses the library for books for themselves and children. Attends children's activities and values these services. Doesn't use the computers. Has used Central library for printing when printer is broken.

- Customer uses library. Pleased that we are buying new books. Concerned authors do not get PLR rights from volunteer libraries. Like the idea of self-access to use the library later. Use both New Parks and Beaumont Leys Library equally as attends lunch club. Uses Belgrave Library a lot as is the friendliest. Uses the library on Sunday. Beaumont Leys opening hours – would like to see more late evenings for people at work. Community run libraries – good in theory but more challenging in practice. Feels it's a shame that trained staff will no longer run libraries.

Wednesday 23rd April: Officer led drop in session at the BRITE Centre. Attended by 7 people.

Key points raised were:

- Customer uses Aylestone, Westcotes, Brite, and New Parks. Would not feel comfortable using a building when it is not staffed.
- Café Staff – Currently concerned about the safety of Self-access and how they can continue to operate with reduced hours and keep their stock and equipment safe, people are unsure how self-access works. Current hours of operation 9.00-16.00 Mon – Fri and 10-3 Sat. Worried about access and morning hours – explained about different access across site -Library Plus and Control Access. Talked about H&S about site. Concerned about security of café during self-access.
- Customer - Will there be more cuts after this one? Always seems to be the worst off areas which are hit by these changes.

Thursday 15th May: Officer led drop in session at Pork Pie Library. Attended by 4 people.

Key points raised were:

- Resident who is the South Wigston musical theatre company – lead. Currently has key holder access to Eyres Monsell Community Centre. Uses the stage and has spent the groups money to improve the area. Props are stored at Pork Pie, can this continue?
- Fox's Art Group – Lead – group happens on a Friday. Also a regular user of the library. Wants the staffed hours to remain the same.
- Friendship Group – Very important group which has been happening for 30 years and has 40 members. On a Thursday also has lunch club then friendship group then prayer group. Not happy how pensioners are being treated – more political statement. Wants glass in the windows and a lick of paint. Cleaning is an issue – toilets – soap- paper towels. Currently a leak above the kitchen door.
- Saffron Community Trust – Monday to Friday Madrassah – term-time 250 children, two sessions. 4.30 start, finish 7.45. Monday 16.45-18.00 – use theatre, community, classroom, and kitchen. 18.15- 19.30 – community room, classroom and wider library floor space. Tuesday – Friday – 16.45 – 19.30 – community room, classroom, theatre and kitchen. Proposal clashes with proposed self-access hours.

Monday 19th May: Officer led drop in session at St Barnabas Library. Attended by 5 people.

Key points raised were:

- Customer uses St Barnabas and Hamilton Libraries. They visit St Barnabas on Mondays with his wife as she attends Adult Learning IT classes on Mondays. The proposed opening hours at both St Barnabas and Hamilton Libraries would work for the customer and his wife. The self-access arrangements would be better.
- Customer uses computers and Wi-Fi. Borrows English language books. Uses the library every day. Friends and family – brother and children use the library. Disappointed with proposals – use library in the evening after 5 o'clock after finishing work. Staff are important for safety and for help with enquiries. Sees people with mental issues and homeless people. Staff are very helpful with information – e.g. help on computers – scanning, web address, job searches. Think that self-access should be available on Saturday. Doesn't like Tuesday morning closure but this is the best day of the week. Self-access would work. Staff are important for the community – information and computers.
- Customer uses St Barnabas every day, also uses Central Library. Works nightshifts, so uses the library. Sometimes mornings, sometime evenings, due to 4 day rota. Use library for PHD in bioinformatics, having done a masters. Using Wi-Fi and study desks. Uses the public computers for detailed documents etc for the big screens. Public computers better for writing thesis. Staff and facilities are welcoming and comfortable. When not working, borrows books – enjoys ideas. For this user it doesn't make any difference. Unstaffed times would be difficult for people who speak a different language or older people and children who need. OK with proposals for Central Library. Concern if there is any reduction in Homework Help sessions. The most important is to keep all of the activities and services, but opening times are OK.
- Customer uses St Barnabas mainly, but also Hamilton Library. Involved with art group doing exhibitions at Hamilton Library in the entrance library. Uses St Barnabas for courses etc. Not a great user of library books. Self-access an improvement if properly policed. Both libraries look fine. Only concern is to ensure that the art on display at Hamilton is secure. Accept that money is tight. Other concern is if using on own and has a fall that there would be an alert. Customer has poor mobility and is hard of hearing.

Thursday 22nd May: Officer led drop in session at New Parks Library. Attended by 2 people.

Key points raised were:

- 2 members of the friendship group (New Parks New Friends) currently meet Tuesday morning 10 – 12, which under the current proposals would mean they would have to stop. An overview of how Self-Access works was given. What about access to the community room, kitchen, lift, cupboard? Use the room next door currently? Currently don't have first aiders in the group and rely on staff? When the site is unstaffed does an alarm go off to say it's closing?

Thursday 29th May: Officer led drop in session at Westcotes Library. Attended by 6 people.

Key points raised were:

- Thought it was an open meeting – regular user of the library 3 times a week. Opening hours are a concern. Staff are a big concern.
- Customer thought this was an open meeting. Is a book group member 1st Wednesday of every month from 2 30 – 3 30 – proposals would not affect this. Regular user of this library. Did a computer course here a couple of years ago. Self-access seems a good idea.
- Customer is a regular user of this building. Also different libraries according to the days of the week and the times. Believe site should be open on a Sunday. St Matthews also currently opens on a Sunday. Need something for a Sunday. Over the weekends says young people are here a lot on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Customer attends Westcotes once a week – Central Library most days. Not done the survey yet. Has heard Fosse is closing, which he used a decade ago. At Central Library, some computers out of action.
- Customer was not happy with the display screen, moves too quickly. Could do with a banner about the proposals. Uses Westcotes infrequently. Used to use the Brite Centre, but book collection better at Westcotes. Looked at the proposals but not filled out survey. What about the less abled bodied, who cannot travel 1.25 miles? Pleased Westcotes is remaining with LCC - even with the reduced hours. Dubious about CAT – running costs and funding. Once buildings are lost, we will not get them back.
- Customer uses Westcotes frequently. Helpful staff, part of book club -turning pages – 1st Wednesday of month. Computer literate for research, enjoys reading. Like seeing the children's activities, happy that there are computers on site.

Wednesday 4th June: Officer led drop in session at Rushey Mead Library. Attended by 4 people.

Key points raised were:

- Customer has used Rushey Mead Library since they retired 15 years ago. Uses Recreation Centre occasionally for functions. Uses library for English language newspapers. Uses Gujarati magazines. Misses the Garvir Gujarat magazines – very popular but not seen for a few weeks. Borrows books. Family uses library as well. Lives very nearby. Use the library every day – would come on closed days as well if they could. Meets other people at the library – social function – good for mental health. Lives with family. What would happen to the newspapers? Worried about staff losing jobs. Worried that library and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre are the only facilities in the area. Key worry is the level of service delivered. Important resource for the schoolchildren. Lots of local schools.
- Adult Learning tutor. In this area there are only two centres available for socialising. Students use the library. Need more tables for some events. Don't want to see the library close because it is valuable for everybody but especially young people and students.
- Customer works near the library. The council wastes too much money on staff not working. Believes the council can afford to keep libraries open – they have money but it's where they choose to spend it. Rushey Mead library is an important community hub, there are lots of

retired people in the area who use it, including his customers. Does not believe a volunteer run model will work.

Thursday 5th June: Officer led drop in session at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre. Attended by 8 people.

Key points raised were:

- LCC employee – doesn't use centre much at moment but will be very happy if there is a library in the centre. Would welcome class visits. Children go to a local school. School is unable to arrange class visit to a library as closest one is Hamilton which is too far to walk the children. Would like to be involved as an employee in making this happen. Issues for children: there is very little for youths to do, which can result in disruptive behaviour. Library would help with more for young people to do. Needs to include outreach activities. Issue with the centre at the moment is poor signage and lack of promotion. Need closer links with the school to promote the offer which would come more easily with the library offer. Would recommend a volunteer supported offer in the library. St Barnabas Library – need to better utilise performance suite, we do get requests for use of the suite for birthday parties. Feedback on opening hours – need to consider Saturdays – should be open later at many sites. Hamilton Library - Sunday is well used. Families who aren't visiting during the week visit at the weekend. Usage during the week more working people, printing labels etc. Home schooling families. After school use is important. Need to open on Friday instead of Tuesday due to groups e.g. Bowling group can't set up for themselves. Proposed hours for Monday better as is very busy and currently only open for 4 hours. Saturdays open 12-4. (as lunchtime is quiet). GP surgery sends patients to the library to photocopy personal documents – this requires staff but should be unaffected by the proposed opening hours. Book stock – impression is that non-fiction is not so well used and we have too much on our shelves. Note the health/wellbeing section is well used at Hamilton. Free space for other use. Use of talking books is reducing significantly. Study furniture – lots of students during spring/summer revision period – not enough study desks. PCs at Hamilton well used. Self-Access hours – issue with not being able to do printing.
- User works at pop-up café as a volunteer. Very supportive of multi-service centre approach and library. Supportive of proposed opening hours, as self-access groups can still access. The centre is very important to the user as he suffered with depression after losing their job. The pop-in café group is a lifeline and has made such a difference. Group provides support if they're feeling low as lives on their own. Found out about the group after GP referred to MIND and they linked up with the group. Social care workers support people to visit. Have seen a big difference in people attending the pop-in group – the social interaction.
- Leicester Navy Cadets. Filled survey and shared rest of the group. Also have the children's survey. Key holders at the site. Thurnby Lodge– some rooms used as a dumping ground. Two years since issues with external fascia and plaster. Bar area needs to be cleared.
- Customer says pop in café works for the NHS. Concern about building closures.
- Customer uses the pop up café. Enjoys the group and activities on offer.

- Customer uses the pop up café. Thinks centre is closing, told that is not one of the proposals. Told about the introduction of library function. Been using centre for years.
- Customer runs the pop up café – given the survey pack and overview of proposals for Thurnby Lodge. Officers went in to speak to the group which consists of 40 people. What are you doing to help existing groups? Group need funding and support to combat isolation, vulnerable. Learning difficulties and autism PTSD. 10-year-old group (café) – moved around the centre as group size increases. Centre to be run by LCC to continue. Thursday is already open during café hours. Looked into the usage of site > the staffed hours. Discussed self-access groups. Spending more money by minimising services will impact health issues for the community and other services. All group members benefit from the group and activities – all help each other. Hoping the council know what they are doing closing libraries and community centres as it impacts the elderly.

Thursday 12th June: Officer led drop in session at Belgrave Library. Attended by 25 people.

Key points raised were:

- Women's exercise at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) and lunch club at BNC. They explained that there is no suitable group in the Belgrave area to take on the BNC and without that service, many people, especially many old people will be lost. They have nowhere else to go. Many have been using the centre for 20-30 years. Without it they'll be stuck in home and isolated. It was discussed the way that centres can be transferred to community management and some of the successes that have been had but they feel that any group that takes on BNC will, eventually, only run it in their own interests not for the whole community. They also talked about the recently arrived Dhaman community and the way in which those people are not fully integrated into the wider Gujarati community in the Belgrave area. They felt that without the neutral space of a council run neighbourhood centre, this group will remain isolated and at a disadvantage. The young people will become frustrated and turn to crime and other anti-social behaviour. A final plea not to close or transfer the BNC and to keep both BNC and library exactly as they are.
- Due to the sheer number of people wishing to talk to officers to we suggested that people spoke to us as a group and so, for the rest of the afternoon, from 3-6, there was a rolling group of people. During the three hours we spoke with 27 adults and 16 young people aged between 12 and 19 years. The adult and young people's conversations are recorded separately below.
- Discussion with Adults - Many people spoke about the value to the local community of both BNC and Belgrave Library. There was broad consensus that the council should and is obliged to continue to run both building, that they should be kept separate, that opening hours should not be reduced and that neither service should be transferred into community management. Examples are reading newspapers, access to Gujarati language materials and other Indic language materials were raised and very valuable and important. We spoke with some of the older men who attend the library daily to read the papers. They explained the importance of having the library to meet and how much the community will struggle to come together without this space of the BNC facility. There were various views expressed from the council

passing the buck, not caring to ideas about the council deliberately undermining community cohesion. Lots was said about the space for older people to keep warm. Opening hours and Sunday opening were significant concerns of many. It was suggested that the opening hours are good as they are. Self-access and the additional opening this allows were discussed but were met with scepticism. Old people will not be safe if the library is unstaffed, young people will have more limited access. Most people seemed to agree that the opening hours should remain unchanged. Some older people said that we should be stricter with the young people and be much quicker to ban them if they become disruptive.

- Discussion with 16 young people between 12-19 years - The views of most of the young people we spoke with were largely similar to those of the adults. There was a great deal of dissatisfaction with council proposals expressed. Young people talked about the value of the facilities to grandparents and parents and were very positive about the way different generations mix in the library. A major concern from young people spoken with was the impact of reduced library opening on the homework club. We spoke with several young people who attend homework club daily and say it is the only place they have to study, get help from adults and from peers with homework. The library is the perfect place for young people working together on a project to meet to collaborate. The library is the only quiet place for people to do their homework. The library staff are really helpful and provide support to students that they can't get at home. One young person was clear that without homework club, he'd never have made it to college. Self-access was not considered a viable option for young people needing a place to study, especially as many are under 16 so could not access anyway. One university student did say self-access would suit him very well but was the only one to say this out of everyone I spoke to. As with the adults, the consensus was that the council should continue to run these local services unchanged. The idea that the council has to make savings was treated with suspicion and scepticism.
- Customer grew up in Belgrave neighbourhood – used Library as a child. Now lives in Fosse. Has been in Belgrave area to look after mother who lives in area. User has been using Belgrave library to work from here. Their observations are the staff are providing huge community benefits. Comes here for respite while looking after mother. Concern at the reduction at Belgrave Library will be very impactful on Belgrave area. Concerned that self-access would not have the same reach for community wellbeing – human interaction. A vulnerable community – reading / writing / language barriers. Concerned might not be able to use services without staff e.g. digital support. Would prefer a charge for every household to keep the service going. Finds that library is still busy at later times when we wouldn't be staffed. Would still impact the community.
- User lives locally, walks to library, over 80 years old. Lives on own. Uses library every day. Council increases the Council Tax every year – so why are services reducing? Reduction of hours for the library bad because people are using the library to keep warm. People use the library to meet and overcome depression. The customer uses the library for long hours especially to keep warm. Neighbourhood Centre is a lifeline for people using the lunch club – people are getting good food, socialising and keeping warm. Self-access – like the idea of using the library for longer, but people do rely on the staff for advice. Customer uses computers and

reads newspaper – rely on library to stay connected with the news. Staff are sometimes needed to change computer because it's not working properly. Prefer current hours for library. Customer very concerned about reduced opening hours at the Customer Service Centre as more difficult to get bus pass – takes a long time.

- Customer is 18-20 years old and uses homework club. In Belgrave there aren't many places to go where you don't have to spend money and can keep warm. Language barrier in this community may be a problem with self-service. Use jobs fairs, computers. This is a secure area for us, a place to meet friends. Staff are very important to create sense of community. Most kids come every day for books, study support. Households are very busy – difficult to study. Study support important as other homework clubs are chargeable and we can't afford these. Worried if nowhere for young people to go, then more ASB, more depression etc. Youth club runs at Children's Centre – only once per week. Staff are important to support people with disabilities. Worried that self-service is not suitable for older people. Most people work Monday to Friday so need to be open on Sunday. Self-access – worry that people would smoke/vape in the library. This would be a bad influence for children. Staff prevent this from happening. Study support important – proposed hours don't work for current study support would prefer to have study support open at the end. Older people are using the centre for socialisation.
- User said Importance of library for lifelong education – importance for people who have missed education earlier on. Importance for study – better environment for young people to learn.
- Regular library user and Belgrave resident uses library 6 days a week for newspapers. Uses the ladies exercise group Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Mother attends arts and crafts group retired in 70s. Use Neighbourhood Centre 3 times a week for lunch club, and wife uses exercise group 2 times a week. Also use monthly coffee morning jobs club. Uses jobs club. City council needs to look at number of people using services. Ladies and children attend study support – extremely important to keep open. Self-access is not useful without the staff. Need to relook at impact of opening hours on study support.
- User has concern that the library will become a playground if no staff present under self-access. Close the library for lunch to have staff here early, but also later. Use volunteers to help boost staff – use for extra value activities. Worry for Neighbourhood Centre that an incoming group might be exclusive. Library is heart and soul of community the user came Kenya 11 years ago. Had depression in Kenya, started coming to library – company and books have helped user to feel better.

Tuesday 17th June: Officer led drop in session at Aylestone Library. Attended by 1 person.

Key points raised were:

- Staff member – Can you explain the process and timeframe? As a resident wanted to speak up for Sunday opening. I can see how busy it is at certain sites and most of the time it's busier on a Sunday than in the week, Westcotes as an example. Computers are always busy. Some people will be scared of self-access and language barriers will cause issues.

Wednesday 18th June: Officer led drop in session at Evington Library. Attended by 11 people.

Key points raised were:

- Customer uses Evington Library. Proposals are shocking, Leicester born and bred. Lots of schools in vicinity, they will lose out. Library service crucial to children and young people. Willing to be a volunteer for the community library.
- Customer feels that there should be some staffing from LCC and volunteers, reduce some staffing but not all. Customer is a member of the community group being put together by a local councillor. Has been telling the community to 'use it or lose it' for the library.
- Customer uses Evington and sometimes Belgrave. Not sure about the library being community run – the community already pays council tax for these services. Why should the community run the library and pay for it. Budgets not being used correctly by LCC.
- Customer is a regular user of the main library in Evington – visits once a week and values it as one of the last remaining free community spaces. Recently made redundant from the police station and is concerned about potential staff redundancies at the library. Strongly opposed to partial staffing models, believing they risk further cuts and eventual closure. Deeply values Evington Village and its strong community spirit. Uses the library as a warm space, especially important as a semi-retired resident. Notes high usage of the library by the local primary schools. Has strong family ties to the area – his mother has lived in Evington for over 50 years. Feels that the recent open meeting should have been held in the evening to allow broader attendance. Has made lasting social connections through the library – met people he wouldn't have encountered otherwise.
- Customer is interested in committing her time to volunteer at the library. Feels that Evington is being unfairly targeted for service cuts due to the perception that it is a wealthy area.
- User comes to the library every day. Doesn't want it to shut. Used to be a carer. Very concerned about staff being made redundant. Worries about the quality of jobs left behind. Spends time here during Self-Access hours — listens to music, reads non-fiction. Brought her daughter here when she was younger and thinks the library helped her get a good job. Doesn't drive, so can't get to other libraries easily. Says Evington has already lost a lot. Doesn't understand why you'd close a library when children still use it. Doesn't like the modernisation — thinks it's costing people their jobs.
- Customer has been bringing their kids to this library for the past 40 years. Uses the library occasionally themselves. Feels that if the building has to change, he just hopes it's used in the best way possible for a difficult situation. Concerned about the staff — says they've always been helpful and efficient. At the open meeting, he questioned whether closing the library would even save enough money to justify it — doesn't think it would. Uses the Central Library for computer access — says it's been a lifesaver. Also used to borrow CDs there. Gets around fine by bus — good routes and can get to wherever they need.
- User lives locally to Evington and family use the library. Education for children and young people is building block for life. Libraries are key for delivering this. Worry people are not

computer literate – Adult Learning sessions should focus on computer literacy – and so should libraries. Concern about criteria for CATs – recommend a short term tenure. Need to ensure that organisations represent cross section of community (no one group). If an opportunity is advertised the Council should use local magazine's and local radio stations – radio station on Melton Road – Sanskar radio. Indic language books – may need to review use of community language books ongoing to ensure we are making best use of resources – demand for Hindi, Gujarati is declining over time as third generation longer read the languages.

- Local resident – uses library frequently. Collaborates with staff to deliver projects for children. Working on a puzzle swap project for the summer. A trustee of Friends of Evington. Focus is community development and collaborating with people. Uses the African Caribbean Centre regularly. What are the principles for the proposals for Evington Library? Disagrees with assessment of Evington Library – it could be multi-service centre as it could host other activities after the library closes, e.g. media hubs. Could be a home to the Evington Echo.
- Thinks the community could come forward to run something like this. Would like the community to look at innovation, and the future. What could the community be capable of? There are people in the community who have the skills to take on the running of a library. Thinks it would be best for a new group of individuals with an interest in libraries to come together.

Thursday 26th June: Officer led drop in session at Knighton Library. Attended by 13 people.

Key points raised were:

- Members of Friends of Clarendon Park – have drafted a response. It's clear everyone wants to keep Knighton Library. Good response from campaigns, children and young people. Children's petition has been organised and will be submitted before the end of the consultation. Has been doing posts. To confirm the survey is relevant to everyone even if they don't use. Question about the consultation – the “are you interested” question – you can only comment if you say “yes.” Issue if the level volunteering currently happening – can't take on anymore. E.g. Friends of Clarendon Park, Community Garden, PTFA, Age UK, etc. The only places to hold meetings are religious venues such as Quaker Meeting house and Synagogue.
- Member of Friends of Clarendon Park. Joined 50 years ago in 1972 as a student. The community prioritises the library because there are no other meeting places. Staff help is important especially for supporting IT and internet searches. Population is often transient so people have ideas but quickly move on. That's the concern about volunteering. May have skills and education to run a community initiative, but concerned it's not sustainable. Issue is high number of students, and many young families who don't have the time. Community has changed over recent years. On lower income - Library and Park are the only places I can go for free. Knighton ward is different to Castle ward, a lot of Knighton ward visit Oadby Library because they can take their car. Used to be a childminder – conscious that the library is important free resource for childminder. The children going to the child minder are often from lower income families. The area between Queens road and Clarendon park Road are terraced, and flats are students.

- Two customers living in South Knighton are concerned about volunteers – they are unreliable. Concerned about staff. Libraries are a place where people come in to keep warm, a social space etc. Few pensioners in Clarendon Park, more in South Knighton. Worries about access to public toilets and to read newspaper. Important for children to come in for meeting up, away from screens. Both also use central library. Worry that volunteering may start off well but would decline.
- User lives locally in the flats off London Road. Previously lived in Wellingborough – introduced volunteer run libraries – but volunteers didn't turn up after 6 months and it didn't work. Concerned that if proposals went ahead same would happen here. Uses the library for talking books and reading books and to find out community information. Visit once a week. Visits the Central because the selection of talking books is better. Understand the financial situation. Not against the concept of community run libraries. Socio-economic area is important – retired people more likely to volunteer. User has volunteered in sport since 2012. “So how could it work here?” Getting a group together and keeping their interest is crucial. But it's getting harder to get young people to volunteer. Think you would need younger people to volunteer when school children are around. Key concern is that people seem to be less willing to volunteer so general volunteer base is ageing. Succession planning is crucial. Self-service terminals don't always work well. Ideally want the service to be kept open in a similar format with staff in place.
- User with young children have been using the library since oldest was 2yrs. Doesn't want the library to close. Organised petition at local school. Thinks the closure of the library would have an economic impact on the local area – people also use cafes and shops. Wants to highlight the feeling against the proposals within the local community.
- Two service users have not completed the survey as it's a waste of time. The paperwork they have seen says that if there is no group to run the library it will shut. I want it to stay open, if we cannot find a community group to run the library, it needs to remain with the council and open. Useful if LCC put group together all interested groups who wish to run library. Not impressed with the whole consultation and doesn't trust the process. All parts of the consultation should have been made available in paper. I hope that the decision is not from the CM but full council.
- Customer uses Knighton, once a month, during staff hours. Disappointed, I know money is tight, assumption about affluent area, but people still in need. Understands money needs saving. A better approach like Phoenix arts, reduce hours to save money. Community will not take Knighton over, not enough time for the people in this area -will go downhill after a while. There will be no appetite to take over this site. Reduce all library hours across the city to save money. Groups and business model needs to be robust.
- Service user uses Knighton every day during staff hours. Two children use library, worried they will lose library – concerned. Worried about stock and reservations. Worried about TT and children's activities SRC and half term. Was told nothing is off the table in meeting at Quaker meeting house.
- Customer uses Knighton and Central Library, with children. Not filled out survey. Concerned with the proposal. Even if there is a suitable group. How is it going to work? If a model comes out of how Knighton could work, I would like the council to consult on the proposal model as it

comes together. LCC has not given any case studies about sustainability. Biggest concern if we find a group is how it will sustain fundraising for the future years. Will there be a fundraising role. Does not believe it will last, setting community up to fail. Might find a group but not to be able to fundraise. LCC not confident in its own proposals.

- Customer uses Knighton, Central, St Barnabas, Evington – use self-access at Knighton and Evington – shame we can't use the toilets during self-access. Proposed hours at Central Library – worried about people who finish work later. Can't use the computers at the University Library but does use the books. Need to utilise space at St Barnabas and Pork Pie. Noise pollution – doors could be designed to cause minimum sound – Knighton they bang when they shut. Is there any plans for a new central library in the city? Some of the IT equipment could do with an upgrade at all sites.
- Local customers who both use the library. Worried that volunteers won't be able to do the job of trained librarians. Libraries are vital for an urban environment. Give an opportunity to those who need it most. Worried about the succession of planning of volunteers. Feels its services being taken out of the city, which should not be Labour policy.
- Local library user understands the financial pressure on the local government.
- Local library user. Very concerned about this. Know people in the county who look after CMLs. In this area they feel it won't work. Perception that this is an affluent area, this is an area of transition with people coming in and out. Not the sort of area where it will work. A large number of people are needed to run a library through volunteers. Concerned that as a taxpayer I'm paying my council tax and it feels double taxation. Lots of HMOs near the library, not a suitable area for this model. A lot of people who could volunteer work – older people have health issues. We need to look at different models for this. Self-Access – may be a worry for women. The self-access hours are irrelevant to me. Fear that books I check back in would get stolen. Interested in using the university library. But they don't have children's books etc. Concerned about both the CAT and CML in all cases. The New Solutions section of the survey could have been worded better.
We need access to books and information for new communities. Really needs to go to full council. Worry about Evington as much as Knighton. With the level of volunteering resource available. Friday opening hours in areas of higher Muslim needs looking at.
- A regular visitor to the library, often comes with their grandchildren. Describes the library as consistently busy, with a steady flow of people using the space. Impressed by the range of activities, events, and resources available, though feels many aren't well advertised – more promotion could help reach others. Sees the library as more than just a place for books – it functions as a community hub, offering a welcoming and social environment. Has built connections with others in the local area, particularly people from Knighton.
Notes that local primary schools frequently bring children to the library. Recently moved from Edinburgh and is getting to know the area. Expressed an interest in volunteering at the library in future, if any opportunities become available – keen to support the community and give something back.
- Customer visits the library every couple of months, to attend events or bring their children. Used to come more often when the children were younger, but visits have become less

frequent now that they're older and more independent. Still enjoys the events and tries to attend, when possible, especially if there's something suitable for families. Noted that fewer adults use the library for reading, compared to the number of children. Thinks it's great that children are so engaged with the library but would like to see more opportunities for adult readers and activities as well.

- Service user expressed concern about the future of the library and its staff, asking whether staff would lose their jobs. Said it would be a real shame if the library building were to close, as there are very few free public spaces like it left. Uses the library regularly to read the newspaper and attends the Tuesday tea and coffee sessions, which they really value. Sees the library as a vital community hub, offering a welcoming space for people of all ages. Is a local resident from Knighton Fields and prefers to walk to the library rather than take the bus into town – appreciates having a facility nearby. Shared concerns about a closure but also understands that services may need to be 'reinvented' to keep up with modern needs.
- Customer praised the library staff, describing them as friendly and helpful. Emphasised that the library is important to the local community and should be protected as a space for connection, learning, and support. Observed that children don't seem to read as much these days and worries about the long-term impact if libraries are lost.
- Service user raised the question of whether the library should be run by a community group and what that would mean for existing services. Concerned about losing access to printing, and whether volunteers would be trained in GDPR and data protection. Said they wouldn't feel comfortable with volunteers seeing personal documents, unlike trained council staff. Stressed that the library must remain politically neutral, no matter who runs it. Mentioned that some volunteers behave well at first, but not over time – felt poor behaviour shouldn't be ignored. Recognised that some volunteer staff are excellent and essential to the service. Emphasised the importance of community languages and having some trained staff on site. Felt that reducing opening hours across the city to keep all library buildings open isn't a fair or effective solution.
- Customer said they feel overwhelmed by too many volunteering opportunities on Assemble and don't want to receive all of them. Felt that the volunteering survey doesn't reflect their needs or situation. Volunteers at Toddler Time and would be very upset if it ended – said there are no other toddler groups nearby. Believes Homework Help is essential, especially in deprived areas where children need extra support. Felt the city is often looked down on compared to the county and wants to see that change.
- Customer said that a lot of elderly people come into the library and it's nice for them. Aylestone library gets very warm and it's too hot.

Thursday 3rd July: Young Peoples Council session at City Hall. Attended by 8 young people.

Key points raised were:

- Young People (YP) attendees use Evington, Highfields, Fosse and Central. Some don't attend libraries anymore and just buy books.

- How do you use libraries and community centres now?
 - Taken part in the summer ready challenge and still borrowing books. Fantasy and crime books. Young adult fiction. Doesn't use it for anything else
 - Don't read as much as i used to. Use the online service to book and then pick it up. Used to walk around with parents and pick books, not so much anymore. Get books of interest – non-fiction. Would prefer to read books over reading online – Kindle
 - All YP attending are reading regularly with except for one
 - 2 reading kindles but most prefer paper
 - A lot of people just buy the books these days as they want to build their own library. Put off by due dates.
 - COVID lead to a spike in book buying
 - Use computers in libraries to get away from noisy home
 - Not a lot of use of Wi-Fi or computers in the room
 - No use of Community Centre – except for Team Hub and Afro Caribbean Centre
 - Only 1 attendee doesn't use a library
 - Libraries are boring – do go to Afro Caribbean Centre for activities though.
 - Busyness is a factor for not being able to go to libraries
 - Wants to be active now, used to read a lot.
 - Age appropriate groups might entice people back – music classes with DJ decks.
 - Summer reading challenge ends at 12 so nothing happens from 12-19
 - 12-19 year olds need third spaces – to hang out with friends
 - Traditional view that you need to be quiet in libraries puts people off
 - Young people can't just walk into a community centre and use it – always booked.
- What can we do better as a service?
 - Libraries should have societies like a university – gives a time and a reason for being there.
 - Promotion – not at the front of their mind – TikTok, Instagram, YouTube – interesting videos. Posts are not being seen. They look the same as everything else.
 - Need better promotion through schools. School libraries are much more convenient. School libraries hand out vouchers for taking books out.
 - Clubs happen in the school library – Mandarin, Crafts – during lunch and after school
 - Volunteering – wanted to do it at New Parks but can't as not over 16
 - Career advice in school libraries – in city libraries it's only for adults
- Views on proposals?
 - Where would St Matthews move to?
 - Entering a library with no staff, is that not dangerous, can anyone come in?
 - If the community cannot afford to run a centre, will it close?
 - What about people who can't travel to a new location e.g. elderly?
 - If Fosse closed member would still be able to walk to New Parks
 - Thinks community groups understand communities better and could run libraries better than the council
 - Need for work placements for under 16s in our city libraries

- Feels if you enjoy your volunteering it would be fine, but if not it may become too heavy and people would stop. You need to be passionate about it – constant theme across the whole group.
- Group feels that communities can run libraries but it does depend on the area. Areas of higher deprivation wouldn't be able to do this as they have more important things to do. Training and support for volunteers is essential

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool:

Title of proposal	Proposals for Libraries & Community Centres
Name of division/service	Neighbourhood & Environmental Services
Name of lead officer completing this assessment	Lee Warner and Michael Clarke
Date EIA assessment commenced	1 st July 2023 (ongoing from the commencement of the Community Services & Library Needs Assessment)
Date EIA assessment completed (<i>prior to decision being taken as the EIA may still be reviewed following a decision to monitor any changes</i>)	11/11/2025
Decision maker	Cllr Vi Dempster – Assistant City Mayor
Date decision taken	

EIA sign off on completion:	Signature	Date
Lead officer	Lee Warner	11/11/2025
Equalities officer (has been consulted)	Sukhi Biring/Surinder Singh	13/11/2025
Divisional director	Sean Atterbury	17/11/2025

Please ensure the following:

- a) That the document is **understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents** and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy but must be complete and based in evidence.
- b) That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- c) That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.
- d) That the equality impact assessment is started at an early stage in the decision-making process, so that it can be used to inform the consultation, engagement and the decision. It should not be a tick-box exercise. Equality impact assessment is an iterative process that should be revisited throughout the decision-making process. It can be used to assess several different options.
- e) Decision makers must be aware of their duty to pay 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty (see below) and 'due regard' must be paid before and at the time a decision is taken. Please see the Brown Principles on the equality intranet pages, for information on how to undertake a lawful decision-making process, from an equalities perspective. Please append the draft EIA and the final EIA to papers for decision makers (including leadership team meetings, lead member briefings, scrutiny meetings and executive meetings) and draw out the key points for their consideration. The Equalities Team provide equalities comments on reports.

1. Setting the context

Describe the proposal, the reasons it is being made, and the intended change or outcome. Will the needs of those who are currently using the service continue to be met?

In early 2023 Leicester City Council launched the Community Services & Library Needs Assessment (CSLNA) which is a transformational programme for our Neighbourhood Services scoping in all our facilities. It will conduct an in-depth assessment of need across all communities and the whole of the city to assess present and future needs.

The CSLNA programme was launched because, we know, the cities demographics are changing, we know new communities are arriving in the city and that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed what people need from our services. The programme aims to ensure our communities have the right type of service offering for the future, based on robust evidence gathering.

Like many local authorities Leicester City Council are facing a challenging financial situation so it is vital that we ensure the service we provide meets the needs of our users. We will need to ensure resources are used efficiently whilst protecting a service which is highly valued and widely used across the city.

Leicester City Council manages 25 community facilities across the city including 9 multi service centres and the Central Library. Within these facilities the Council runs 16 statutory libraries and 13 community centres, with many services co-located. At these sites people can access books and reading, use the internet and find information, attend a group, take part in an event and much more. Neighbourhood Services facilities are located in the heart of local communities.

The primary research for this programme has been conducted by Activist, an independent, sector specialist research and engagement agency.

As part of the primary research Leicester City Council ran a public engagement from 3rd July 2023 to 24th September 2023 to identify which services people use now, what their priorities are for the future, and their thoughts on alternative models. Members of the public, stakeholders and staff members were asked for their views. A detailed questionnaire was available to complete online and on paper over a three month period from June – August 2023. A survey aimed at children and young people was also made available online in September 2023. In total 2851 responses were received. To gain further insight and depth 12 public focus groups were held in neighbourhood locations around the city. Interviews were held with key internal & external stakeholders and two staff workshops were undertaken. Leicester City Council's Neighbourhood Services management and project team has produced a secondary research report which summarises service data, benchmarking information and ward profiles to provide details of local communities and their needs. Separate reports for both the primary and secondary research findings are available and were used as the evidence basis for the initial proposals and the first iteration of this EIA.

Proposals for service transformation were developed to deliver services in areas where need is great and within the reduced budgetary envelope available for the future. The Neighbourhood & Environmental Services division will see a significantly reduced budget over the next 3 financial years. The proposals aim to develop widely accessible multi-service hubs whilst reducing the overall number of facilities we operate and focusing service provision in areas of greatest need.

Proposed model for consultation (2 April and 29 June 2025)

The proposed Neighbourhood Services model developed for consultation put forward community based multi-service centres with a focus on neighbourhood hubs for wellbeing. The multi-service centres are located in areas of need and in buildings which are fit for the future with good accessibility and surrounding transport networks to cover broad catchment areas. The Central Library service will provide city-wide coverage with added breadth and depth serving residents living in all areas. Under the proposals there would be a renewed focus on core

areas of need aligned with the remit of Neighbourhood services: four nationally recognised “Universal Offers” and the “Children’s Promise” developed by Libraries Connected. The proposals provide interventions, resources and activities around reading, digital and information, culture, creativity and health, and wellbeing themes. Online services including extensive e-libraries would be further developed to provide e-books, e-newspapers and e-magazines to library members from anywhere in the city, at any time. The Children’s BookBus will provide regular services in the most disadvantaged areas of the city and a volunteer supported Home Library Service will deliver books to housebound residents. Under the proposals community organisations would be supported to develop plans to take on the running of facilities no longer run by the service to deliver additional community benefits.

The following multi-service centres would be developed under the proposals, to provide neighbourhood services located in accessible areas of need across the city, supported by the city-wide in-depth provision at the Central Library:

- Leicester Central Library – 45 staffed hours per week
- Aylestone Library (located in Aylestone Leisure Centre) – 30 staffed hours per week & self-access hours during leisure centre opening times
- Beaumont Leys Library Hub - 40 staffed hours per week
- Belgrave Library Hub - 40 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- The BRITE Centre Hub - 40 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- Hamilton Library & Community Centre Hub - 30 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- Highfields Library Hub - 40 staffed hours per week
- New Parks Centre Hub - 30 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- Pork Pie Library & Community Centre Hub - 30 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- St Barnabas Library Hub - 40 staffed hours per week & Install library self-access to increase overall opening hours
- St Matthews Library (relocated within the St Matthews Estate)
- Thurnby Lodge Community Centre - 30 staffed hours per week
- Westcotes Library - 30 staffed hours per week

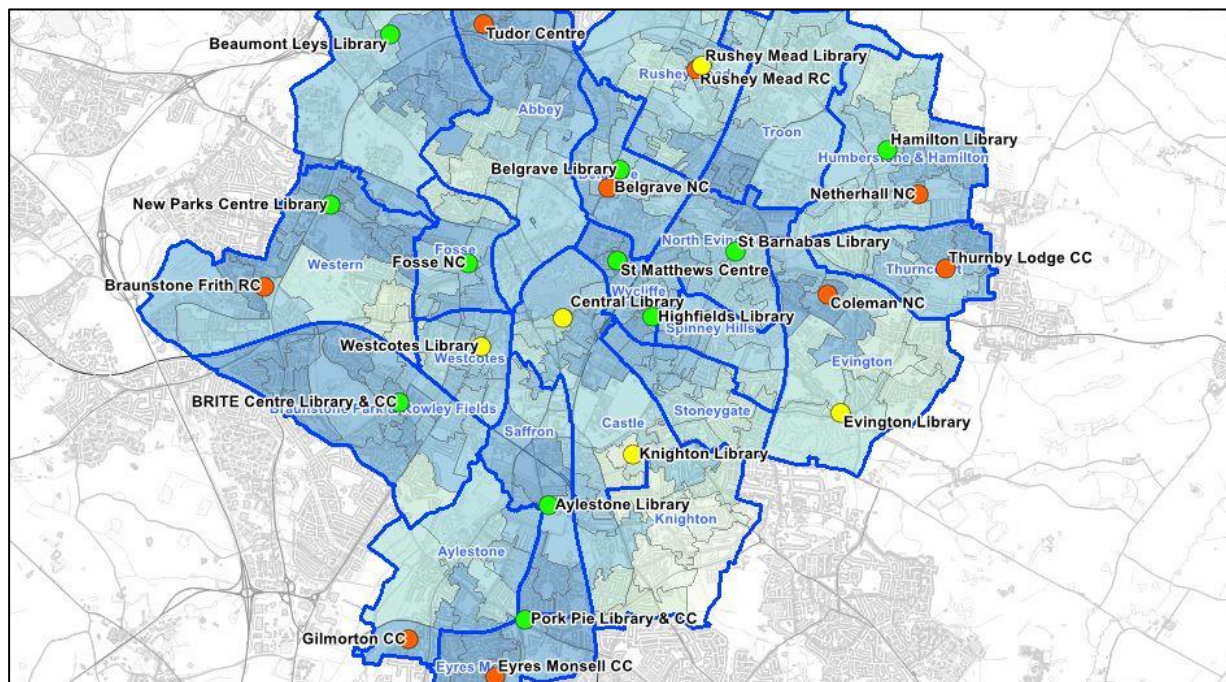
Under the consultation proposals the following facilities would be released and where appropriate opportunities provided for community organisations to take on the running of services:

- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre

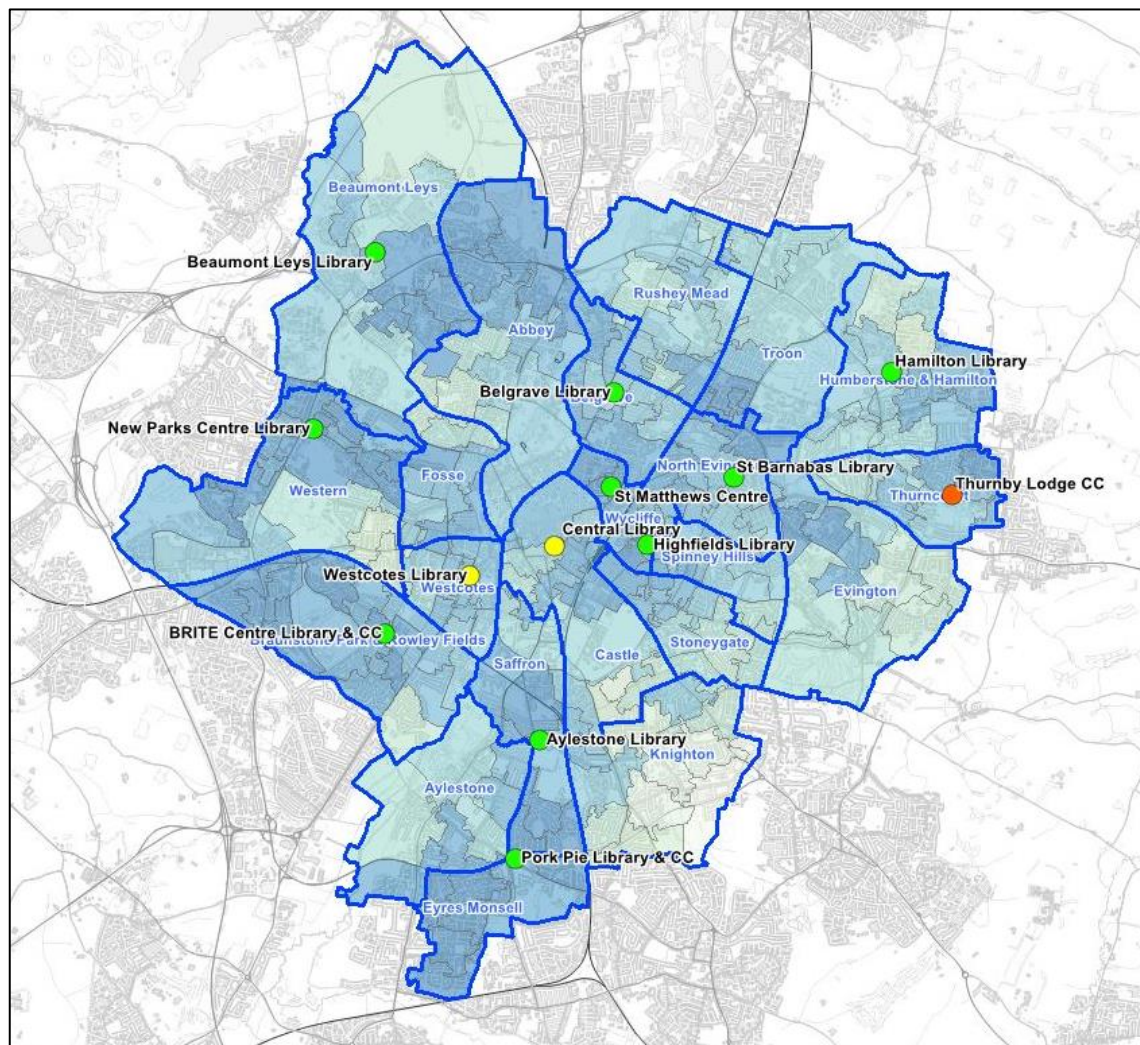
- Coleman Neighbourhood Centre
- Eyres Monsell Community Centre
- Evington Library
- Gilmorton Community Rooms
- Knighton Library
- Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- Rushey Mead Library
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Tudor Centre

The St Matthews Centre would be closed and the library would be re-located within the estate. Fosse Neighbourhood Centre would not be put forward for Community Asset Transfer due to the condition of the building and other disposal options would be explored.

Current Dispersed Neighbourhood Services Model



Multi-Service Centre Model proposed for consultation



The consultation proposals would support a multi-service centre model with additional investment, transformed services and technical enhancements to deliver additional benefits as follows:

- Self-Access after core staffed hours at suitable sites to extend opening hours and availability.
- Capital investment to further develop retained buildings as multi-service centres with a focus on wellbeing. The centres would act as one stop shops for multi-services including libraries, community rooms and adult learning facilities
- Review of the areas visited by the new Children’s BookBus to focus on covering areas of greatest need.
- Provision of enhanced activity programmes providing activities and resources around our “universal offers” wellbeing centres. Our Needs Assessment work has identified a clear priority for providing activities to support health and wellbeing, support information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together.
- Extend our range and provision of online services and resources including our e-library
- Closer working with partners including the university libraries to provide additional access to study spaces and book stock for members of the public.
- Support community groups to take on the running of more services
- Development of volunteer opportunities to enhance the services we offer and to provide benefits to participants
- Relaunch our satellite libraries at identified children’s centres to provide additional access to books for children and young families.
- Expanded Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever they live in the city

Consultation response overview

As part of the consultation Leicester City Council ran a public consultation from 2nd April 2025 to 29th June 2025 to identify their views on the proposals outlined above. Members of the public, stakeholders and staff members were asked for their views. A detailed questionnaire was available to complete online and on paper over a three month period from April – June 2025. A survey aimed at children and young people was also made available online in April 2025.

The period of consultation had several key parts

- **Open public meetings** – 12 open meetings were held across the city (details can be seen in the Findings Report) with 1,053 attendees. The meetings were chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres and senior officers with a remit for the services in question. An interpreter was present at 2 of the meetings to assist attendees.
- **Officer led drop in sessions** – 15 officer lead drop in sessions were held across the city (details can be seen in the Findings Report) with approximately 120 attendees.

- **Main public survey** - The survey ran from Wednesday 2nd April 2025 to Sunday 29th June 2025. We received 4989 survey returns comprising of:
 - 2591 online surveys
 - 2,065 paper surveys
 - 333 community language surveys (the survey was available in English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Somali)
- **Children and young people's survey** - The survey ran from Tuesday 22nd April 2025 until Sunday 29th June 2025 . We received 1,366 survey returns.
- **Ward Councillor Engagement Meetings** – Engagement meetings were held for all Ward Councillors in small ward groups.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** – Stakeholders and community groups could request a meeting with officers and 41 were held.
- **Young People's Council** –a session was held at City Hall with members of the Young Peoples Council.
- **Group submissions & individual comments** – 33 submissions/comments were received into the consultation email address outside of the survey.
- **Petitions** – 6 petitions were received and details of these can be found in the Findings Report.

Leicester City Council's Neighbourhood Services management and project team has produced a consultation findings report which summarises the responses of the above mentioned activities and is available on the consultation website.

Recommendations for Libraries and Community Centres

The feedback from the consultation has been considered together with the latest service data to develop final recommendations for the libraries and community centres. As a result there are significant changes to the original proposals. The recommendations are as follows:

Twelve library multi-service centres would operate as hubs to support wellbeing by integrating a range of services provided by the council and its partners. The centres would provide library and community services to a wide catchment area with accessible transport routes. St Matthews Library and services would be relocated to St Matthews Children's, Young People and Family Centre as one of the twelve multi-service centres. Options would be explored for the future use of St Matthews Centre building once the services have relocated.

Leicester Central Library service would continue to deliver a broader offer, serving residents living in all areas of the city. A wide range of reading and cultural programmes will be developed to support the promotion of reading for pleasure, to bring communities together and to support informal learning and improve life chances.

Three further stand-alone libraries, previously proposed for community management, would be retained. Following feedback from the recent consultation exercise the council would continue to run Evington, Knighton and Rushey Mead Libraries. The staffed opening hours would be reduced. Knighton and Evington Libraries would continue to offer extended customer self-access hours outside of staffed times.

Two stand-alone community centres previously proposed for community management, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre would continue to be run by council. The council would work with the local community to improve the usage and financial sustainability of the centres.

A reduction in staffed opening hours in line with previous proposals at retained sites would enable the widest network of facilities to be sustained. The Central Library would be staffed for 45 hours per week. The five busiest multi-service centres would be staffed for 40 hours per week, with the seven less busy multi-service centres staffed for 30 hours per week. Standalone libraries would be staffed for 25 hours per week (Knighton and Evington Libraries) and 20 hours per week (Rushey Mead Library). The proposed pattern of opening hours has been amended to reflect the consultation feedback for each building. The total library opening hours currently and as recommended are as follows:

Opening hours	Current	Recommended
Staffed opening hours	754	525
Total opening hours (with self-access)	825	778

Following consultation the recommendations are:

- 15 statutory library service points will be open and staffed for at least one evening per week until 6pm or later to ensure people working a standard 9-5 week have access to the service.
- All statutory library service points will be open and staffed on Saturdays to ensure families are able to visit at the weekend outside of school and traditional working days
- All statutory library service points will be open on a range of mornings, afternoons and early evenings during weekdays to optimise access for the wider community

- The needs of groups who use the buildings have been considered wherever possible. Where groups do not have self-access or require staffed support their requirements have been considered within the context of the wider community
- Core activities such as children’s toddler time sessions, homework help sessions and DWP job shop sessions have been accommodated within the recommended hours. These sessions support residents with protected characteristics including children in disadvantage and people living with disability

Customer self-access systems would be implemented at six additional library multi-service centres in line with previous proposals. Weekday 8am to 8pm opening would be supported by the introduction of library self-access systems to over and above the staffed opening hours. The investment would extend the current hours at six sites.

Six community centres would be made available for lease under the council’s Community Asset Transfer policy. As per the previous proposals Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, Eyres Monsell Community Centre, Gilmorton Community Rooms, and Tudor Centre would no longer be run by the council. A sixth CAT opportunity would be offered at either Netherhall or Armadale Centre following feedback from community members that the vacant Armadale Centre would be better suited. A formal opportunity would be published with support for community organisations to develop a business case to take on the running of the six centres. Community groups would be supported to take on the running of more services.

Fosse Neighbourhood Centre and Library would close as per the previous proposal due to the condition of the building. Alice Hawkins Community Projects operating from the annex of the building would be supported to relocate elsewhere within Fosse ward.

Staffing and operating costs would be reduced with a revised staffing model reflecting the changes in service delivery and opening hours.

The Book Fund budget would be reduced by £30,000 from £415,000 to £385,000. This is a change to the previous proposals noting the retention of three standalone libraries.

Community room hire charges would be increased by 20 per cent over two years to support the operation of and financial viability of the remaining council run community centres.

Capital investment would be made to further develop and adapt retained buildings as multi-service centres including libraries, community rooms and adult learning facilities.

Enhanced activity programmes would be provided around our “Universal Offers” in multi-service centres, focused on health and wellbeing, information and signposting needs, and more cultural and creative activities to bring people together. The libraries reading programme and children’s engagement activities would be prioritised to encourage reading for pleasure and to improve life chances from early years onwards.

Online services and resources including the e-library would continue to receive investment recognising the growth in this area and the convenience of 24/7 digital services for city residents.

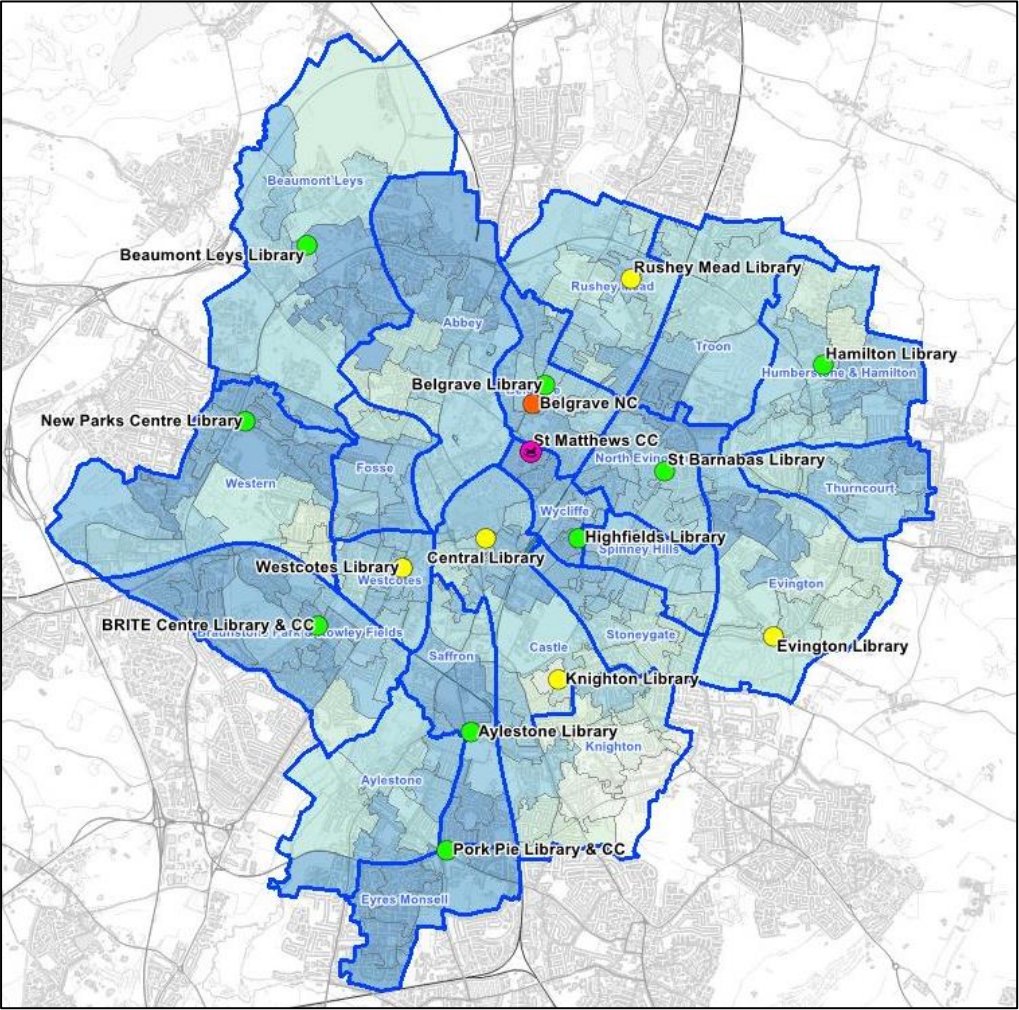
Volunteer opportunities would be developed to enhance and add value to the services we offer and to provide a range of benefits to participants.

Small libraries at identified children's centres would continue to be provided for additional access to books for children, and parents and carers with young families.

The Home Library Service linked to our volunteer offer would be expanded to support housebound residents with door-to-door book deliveries wherever residents are unable to leave their homes to access reading.

The Children's BookBus routes would be reviewed following a decision to enhance provision for children in areas of need, and in particular in Fosse ward following withdrawal from the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre

Recommended model of council run multi-service centres, libraries and community centres



2. Equality implications/obligations

Which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are likely be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes.

a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- How does the proposal/service aim to remove barriers or disproportionate impacts for anyone with a particular protected characteristics compared with someone who does not share the same protected characteristics?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

Libraries and Community Centres provide welcoming, neutral spaces for the widest possible range of people to come together. The recommendations include:

- Cultural and creative programmes to be delivered in multi-service centres with broad catchment areas, to celebrate the diversity of our local communities.
- Resources and support to overcome digital exclusion including lack of access to devices and internet service providers, and support to get online and access services for those who may be digitally excluded. Multi-service centres will review the provision of public access computers, study desk with Bring Your Own Device charging points and access to Wi-Fi, scanning and printing.
- Health and wellbeing activities including volunteering activities to bring people together and overcome loneliness and isolation
- A focus on children's reading programmes bringing children together from all communities and backgrounds
- Access to reading and information online through e-libraries and e-resources to provide access to residents 24/7 from any location.

The proposed model will reduce the number of community centre facilities we offer but will invest in the retained multi-service centres with a focus on wellbeing hubs. The retained buildings are fully accessible and are located on good bus routes in the centre of communities. The buildings are accessible for the majority of the city with 15 minutes of bus travel (including walking time) and available to all with 30 minutes of bus travel (including walking time).

The introduction of Self-Access after core staffed hours at six library sites will enable residents to access welcoming community facilities for longer and at more convenient times for some to meet, study and select books together.

b. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- Does the proposal/service advance equality of opportunity for people?
- Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

The recommendations affect all residents and service users across the city.

Current usage of our libraries by ethnicity demonstrates a close correlation with the ethnic make-up of the city as a whole. This is also replicated at local library level, see appendix 5.

Using the indices of multiple deprivation the city has pockets of high deprivation (see appendix 1). The proposals aim to ensure the most deprived areas of the city have good access to facilities.

Age is a consideration for inequalities faced by two groups (older people and children). There is disproportionately high usage of libraries by children and young people under 16yrs. Children may be less able to travel to use a local library. Many of the children responding to the under 16yrs survey said they used an after-school homework club, indicating they are visiting the library on their way home from school. Homework Clubs will be developed under the proposal to respond to broader needs around health and wellbeing and especially recognising the role the clubs play in providing a neutral, safe and welcoming space outside of school and home and have a role to play in boosting mental health. Whilst a homework club would no longer be available following the withdrawal from Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, homework clubs would be available at Westcotes Library (0.5 miles away) and New Parks Library (1.2 miles away).

The Community Services and Library Needs Assessment found that: “A sizeable proportion of Leicester children are understood to grow up in poverty, with related impacts on school readiness and future life outcomes. Libraries and community centres, alongside other public services, can play a role in helping children, young people and their families with these early year challenges.” Under the recommendations the early years Book Start programme is retained through funding from the Family Hubs Programme with a focus on children aged 0-5yrs living in the most disadvantaged areas of the city.

Children living in deprived areas are affected by child poverty. Under the recommendations multi-service centres including library provision would be located in areas of need. A range of children’s reading programmes will continue to be developed to include outreach programmes delivered through primary and secondary schools. The children’s BookBus routes will be reviewed to focus on children in the most

disadvantaged areas considering any changes in local service provision and in particular the withdrawal from Fosse Library. Satellite libraries at local children's centres will be expanded to reach more children and young families in these areas. Outreach programmes will be prioritised under the transformed service to provide opportunities for all children to engage with reading for pleasure. Schemes such as Our Best Book, Our Best Picture Book and the Reading Rampage will continue to be delivered to children at participating primary and secondary schools.

Older people were over-represented in our primary research Needs Assessment survey with 27% of all respondents over the age of 65yrs. This was reflected in comments from older people living in deprived areas who said they visit community run groups at local facilities to improve physical health and overcome social isolation. Under the recommendations a programme will be set up to support community organisations to take on the running of community facilities where appropriate to develop wider community benefits. The Council will work with groups meeting to socialise at Community Centres to support their continued usage where possible and to support them to explore alternative arrangements where necessary. This may include signposting to alternative council and non-council run community facilities.

Some Community Centres and Libraries have disproportionately high use by people from specific ethnic backgrounds. For example Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre have very high use by people describing themselves as Asian/British Asian many of whom are Gujarati speakers and over 65yrs. The consultation findings show that the protected characteristics of both age and ethnicity are strong considerations at these two sites and that as a result both centres are extremely well used. The recommendations are to retain both community centres recognising that there would be insufficient capacity at this time for a community organisation to take on the running by introducing an additional offer which would risk displacing existing users.

c. Foster good relations between different groups

- Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives?
- How does it achieve this aim?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

Our libraries and multi service centres provide an opportunity for local residents to come into contact with and potentially engage with other residents from different backgrounds and with different protected characteristics to themselves. This opportunity to engage with diverse members of the local community raises awareness of distinct groups who share similar interests and concerns to them and helps to foster good relations between them and enhance community cohesion. Under the recommendations all retained facilities will offer shared community space and the majority with community rooms for hire at a significant concessionary rate for community groups.

The recommendations provide support for community groups to take on the running of 6 sites to provide additional community benefit. There is evidence from our 11 existing Community Asset Transfer buildings to show that usage of local facilities can be increased and with a wider range of local organisations accessing services due to improved community networks and a greater sense of ownership.

In the event of a community asset transfer bids would be assessed to ensure community impact criteria are met with provision made to accommodate existing and new groups through the lease.

Under the recommendations the service will prioritise a “Culture and Creativity” offer to provide events and activities involving arts And crafts and cultural celebrations to provide more opportunities for people to come together. This will be supported through work with a wide range of partners to provide added value activities in shared community spaces, and through an expanded volunteering network to provide an opportunities for people from different background to work together on community and library programmes.

The service will continue to provide a Ward and Community Engagement Team, to support ward councillors in the running of a ward funding scheme in all 21 city wards, providing small grants to fund community benefit projects led by local groups and residents. Ward officers promote opportunities for cross community projects at the multi-service centres and at other local venues.

3. Who is affected?

Outline who could be affected, and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include people who currently use the service and those who could benefit from, but do not currently access the service. Where possible include data to support this.

The population of the city is diverse and differs across the city – particularly in regard to ethnicity (along with use of English as their main language), religion or belief, and to a lesser degree, age (some differences in % of over 65 year olds). The chart below presents an overview profile of relevant statistics for the 2021 census:

Total Population	368,581	%
Age		
Age 0-14	72,729	19.7%
Age 15-64	252,347	68.5%
Age 65+	43,505	11.8%
Place of birth		
Born in UK	217,079	58.9%
Born in Middle East and Asia	79,373	21.5%
Born in Europe	34,828	9.4%
Born in Africa	33,549	9.1%
Born in The Americas and the Caribbean	3,244	0.9%
Born in Antarctica and Oceania	497	0.1%
Other	1	0.0%
English Language		
Main language English	248,771	67.5%
Main language is not English: Can speak English very well	36,216	9.8%

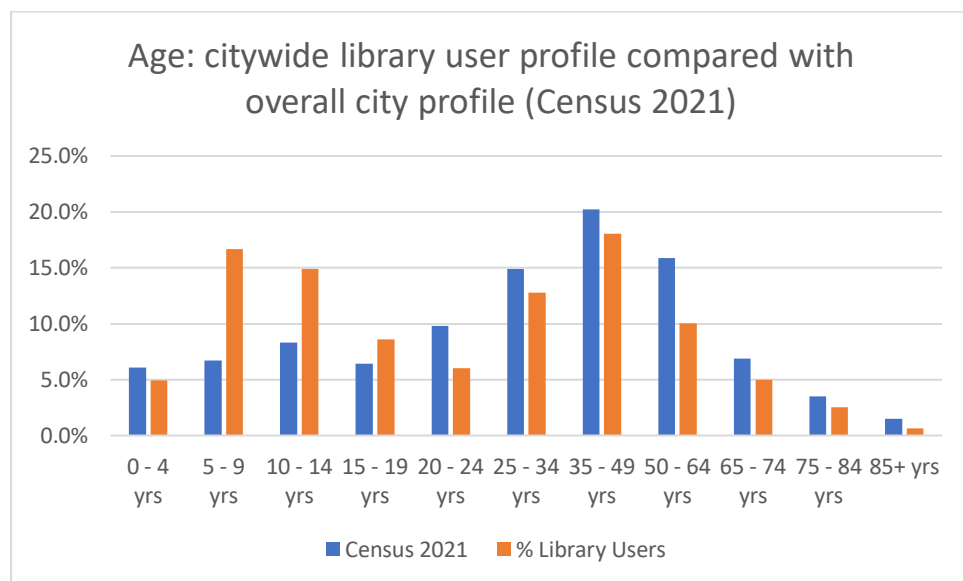
Main language is not English: Can speak English well	38,545	10.5%
Main language is not English: Cannot speak English well	24,541	6.7%
Main language is not English: Cannot speak English	7,499	2.0%
Ethnicity		
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	159,977	43.4%
White	150,657	40.9%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	28,766	7.8%
Other Ethnic Group	15,272	4.1%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	13,899	3.8%
Religion		
Christian	91,161	24.7%
Muslim	86,443	23.5%
No Religion	84,607	23.0%
Hindu	65,821	17.9%

Religion not stated	20,509	5.6%
Sikh	16,451	4.5%
Other religion	2,072	0.6%
Buddhist	1,181	0.3%
Jewish	326	0.1%
Disability		
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	25,692	6.97%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	31,456	8.53%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	17,029	4.62%
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	294,394	79.87%

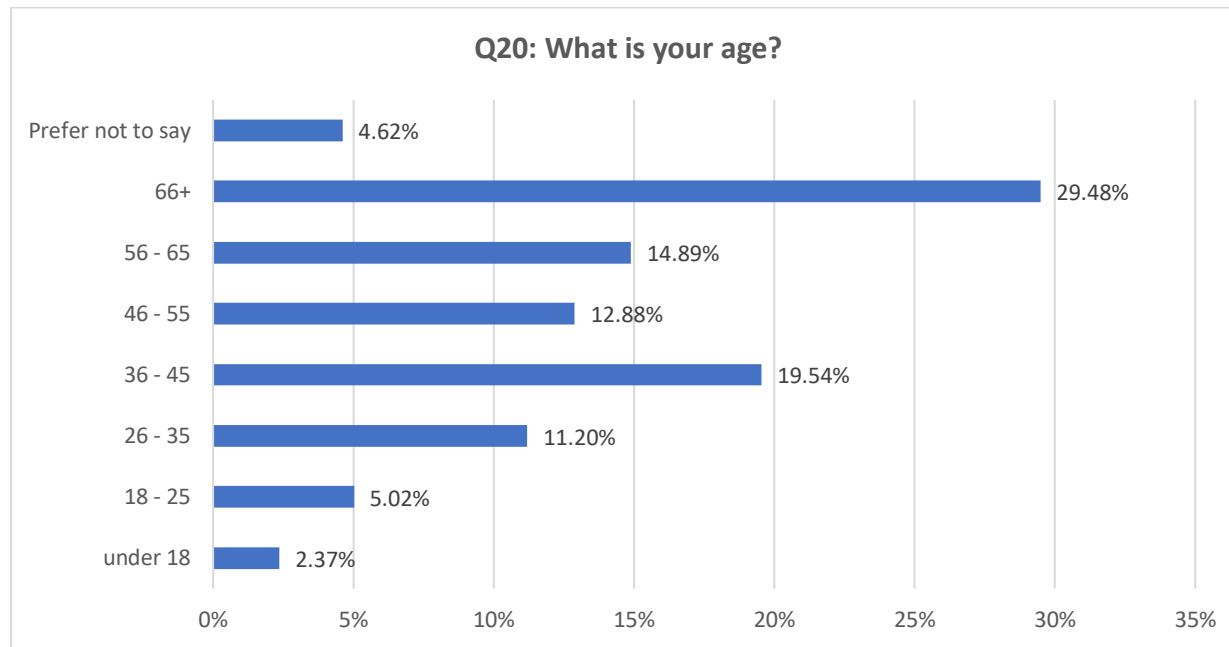
Our library membership records show there are currently 55,000 active users of the library service, although this does not include customers without a library card, or who have not engaged with our systems recently but may have attended events and activities.

Our records show there is disproportionately high use of the service by children and young people aged 0 – 19yrs, and particularly between the ages of 5 – 16yrs, compared to the Census data for the city as a whole.

Age category	Leicester (Census 2021)	Active Library Users
0 - 4 yrs	6.1%	4.9%
5 - 9 yrs	6.7%	16.7%
10 - 14 yrs	8.3%	14.9%
15 - 19 yrs	6.4%	8.6%
20 - 24 yrs	9.8%	6.0%
25 - 34 yrs	14.9%	12.8%
35 - 49 yrs	20.2%	18.0%
50 - 64 yrs	15.9%	10.0%
65 - 74 yrs	6.9%	5.0%
75 - 84 yrs	3.5%	2.5%
85+ yrs	1.5%	0.6%



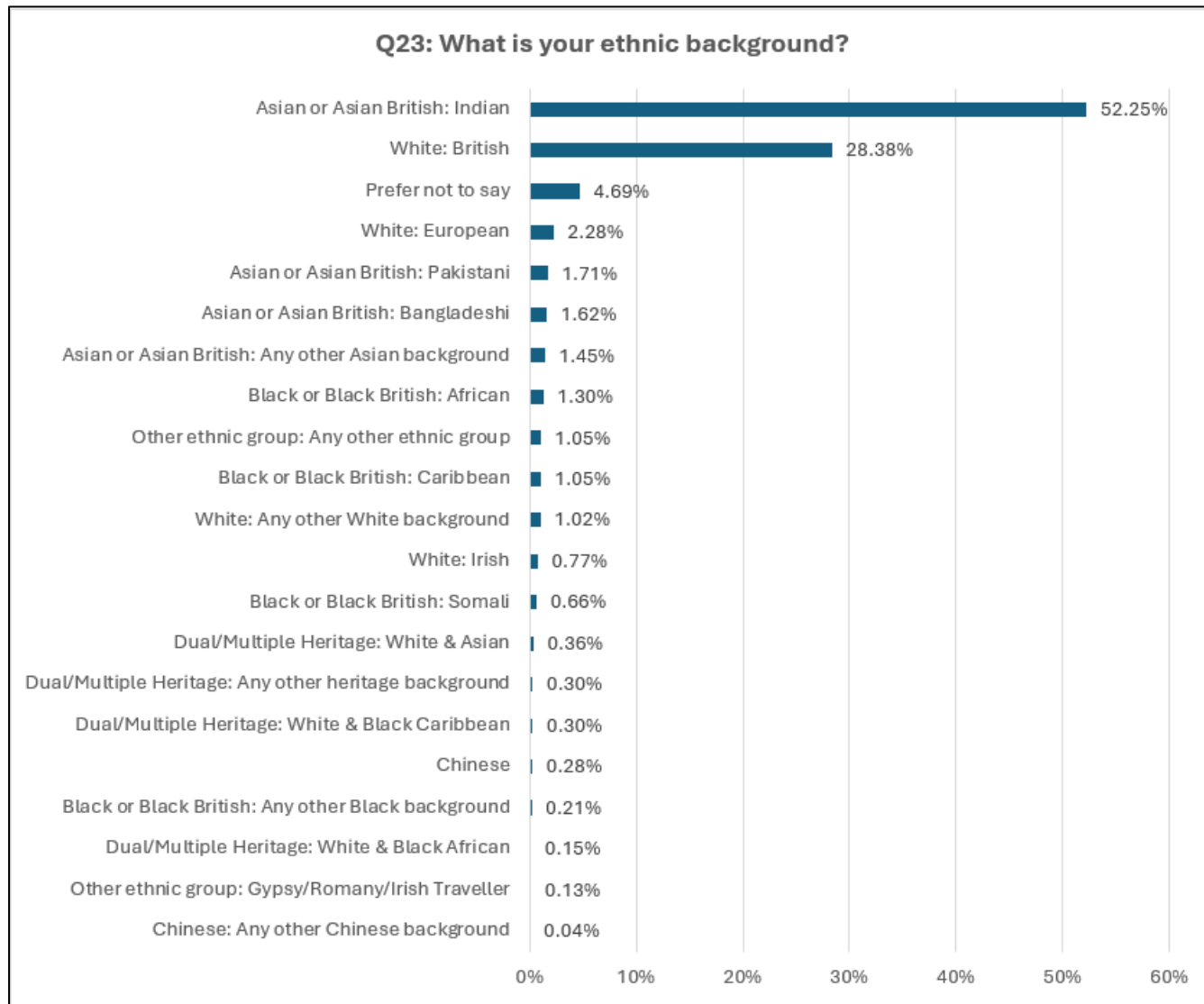
Respondents to the public consultation were asked to indicate their age by selecting from set age bands. The largest proportion were aged 66 and over (29%):



Our records show that there are disproportionately more female library users than male users:

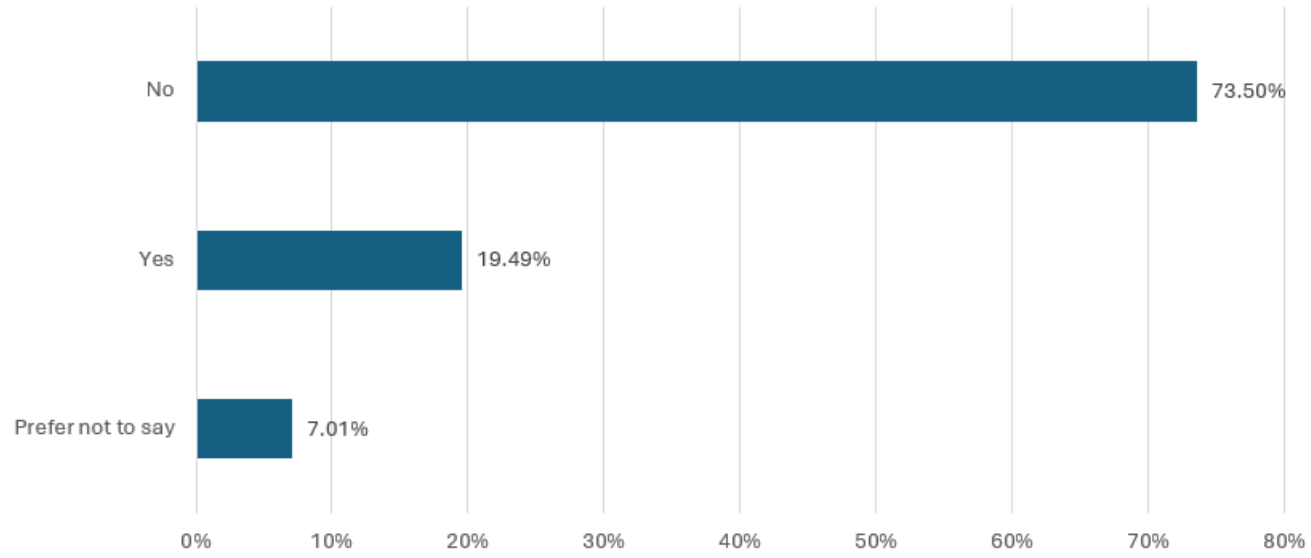
Gender	% of library users
Not stated	0.2%
Female	54.6%
Male	45.1%
Transgender	0.1%

Respondents to the public consultation were asked to indicate their ethnic background. The largest proportion were Asian or Asian British: Indian (52.25%) followed by White: British (28.38%):

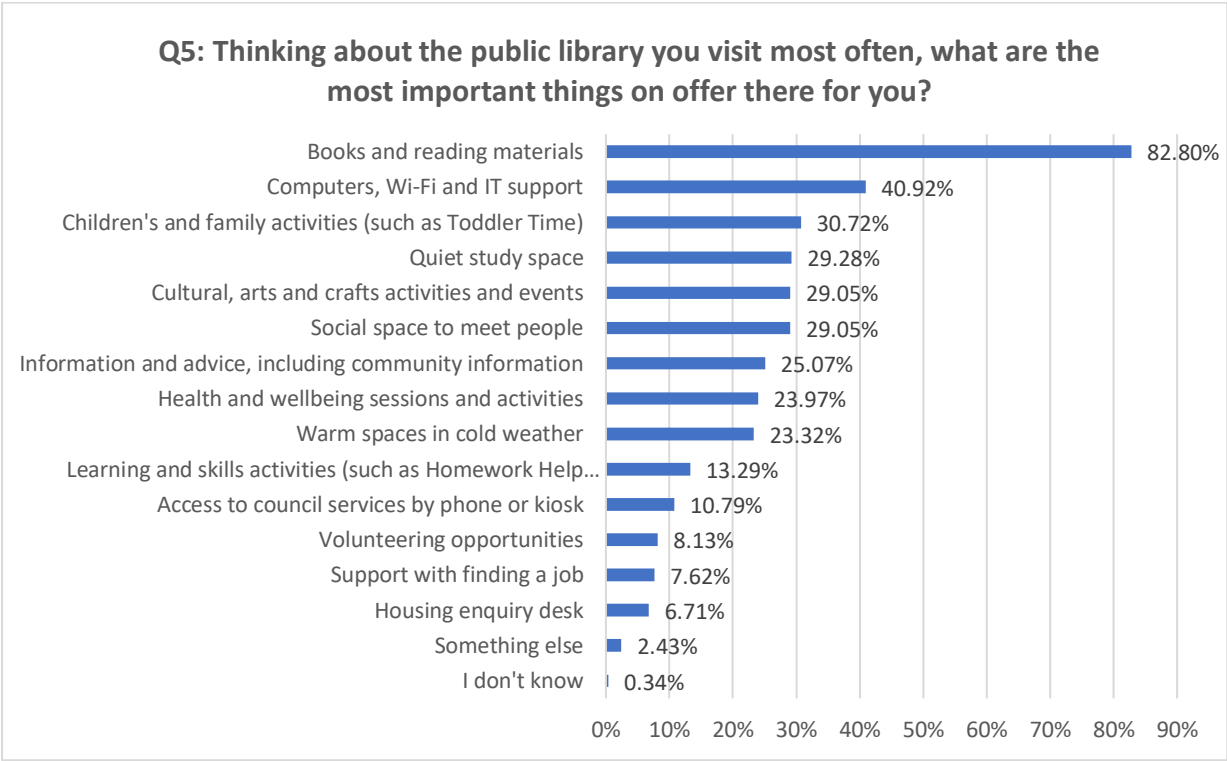


Respondents to the public consultation were asked if they considered themselves to be a disabled person:

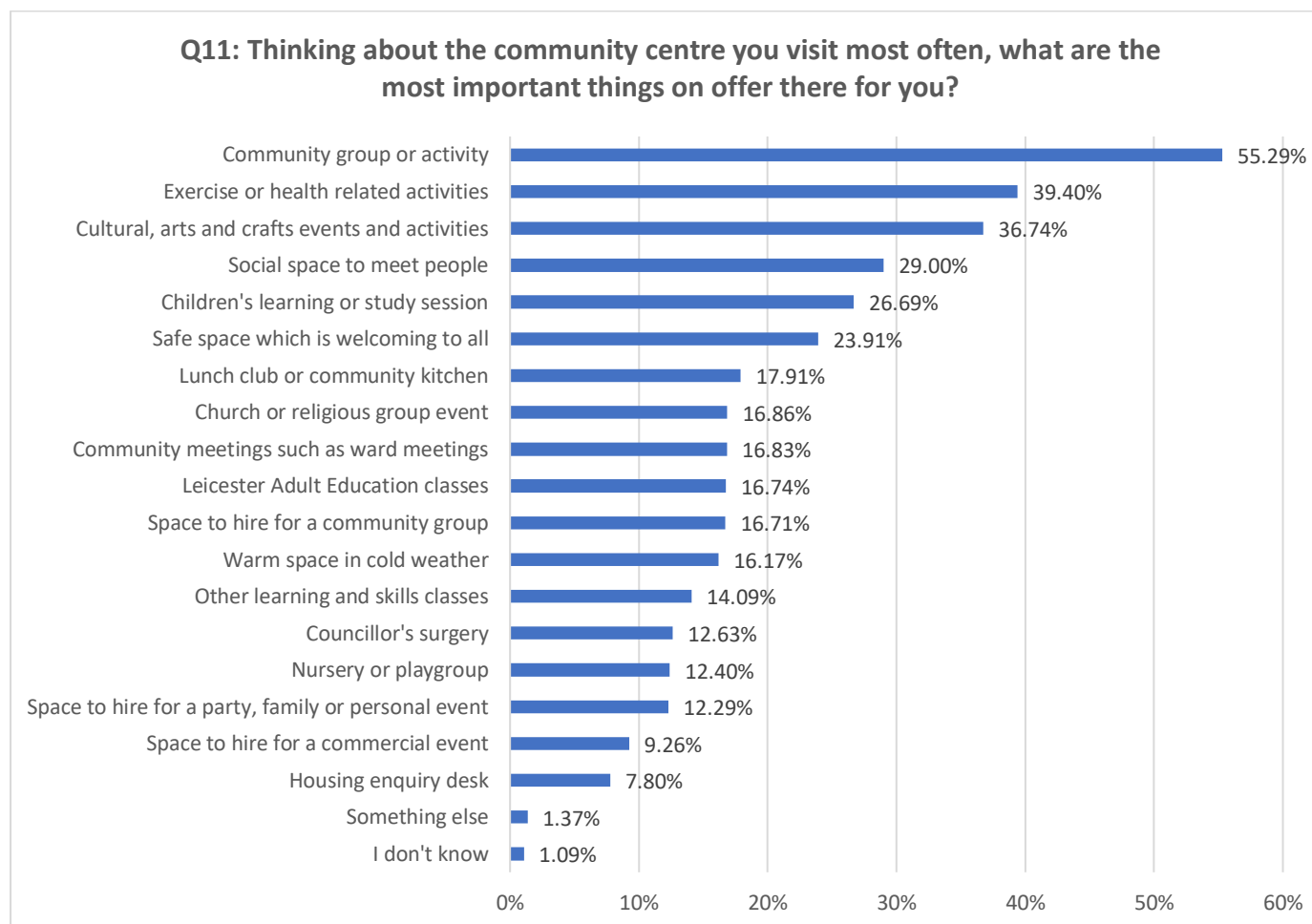
Q24: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?



Library users who responded to the consultation survey questionnaire identified the following services as most important to them. Under the recommendations all libraries would remain, with reduced staffed opening hours, with the exception of Fosse Neighbourhood Centre which is also nearby to New Parks and Westcotes library. The service will ensure that toddler time sessions and study support continue but may have times changed.



Those who responded to the survey said the most important reasons for using community centres were as followed.



Residents, partners, stakeholders and community groups could be affected by the recommendations in the following ways:

- Groups and individuals meeting and participating in community activities at Community Centres. Some users may need to relocate to another building if the building is proposed for alternative use – travel distance may be an issue. Some users may need to use buildings which are run by non-Council organisations with a change to terms and conditions of use, including higher charges for hire of community space.

- People using local libraries which are planned for a reduction in hours. Those most affected may include older people who are less mobile, and children and young people under 16 years who are disproportionately higher users of libraries. These users may need to make more use of online services and visit at different at times potentially utilising Self-Service for those over 16.
- Local residents who do not currently use the above services but who may wish to so in the future

4. Information used to inform the equality impact assessment

- What **data, research, or trend analysis** have you used?
- Describe how you have your information and what it tells you
- Are there any gaps or limitations in the information you currently hold, and how you have sought to address this? E.g. proxy data, national trends, equality monitoring etc.

The Needs Assessment was undertaken by an independent consultant, Activist, between July – September 2023 with a full findings report completed in January 2024. The primary research consisted of public, stakeholder and staff engagement including:

- Engagement questionnaire available online and on paper for 12 weeks. The questionnaire was available in 5 community languages and in additional languages upon request.
- Focus groups held in 12 locations across the city and focusing on 5 themes. This included a young persons’ focus group.
- Stakeholder interviews with internal and external stakeholders.
- A young persons survey undertaken online and across the city for one month.
- Two Neighbourhood Services staff workshops.

A Secondary research report was produced to gather information about service usage, city and ward profiles, and benchmarking data with near neighbour local authorities.

- Demographic information for the area taken from the most recent Census data (2021) was used to understand the profile of the city’s population.
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation map produced by the Public Health Division of Leicester City Council was used to identify levels of deprivation at ward and super output area level.
- Service usage data was used to ascertain the levels of use for each service. The data includes:
- Total use (annual visits) for each building

- Full timetable of activities delivered at each building and in each room, and any protected characteristics relating to user groups
- Numbers attending each type of activity
- Service level data relating to ethnic background, disability, age and gender.
- Bus routes, walking distances and catchment area mapping to assess the accessibility of sites.
- Analysis of age, gender, BME group and disability information supplied by respondents to the public engagement exercise
- Visitors survey – looking at how many customers are in the building during certain times
- Post code survey at Community centres
- PC Usage and Stock Issues at libraries

Both the Public Engagement Report and Secondary Research Report are available here:

[public-engagement-report.pdf](#)

[Secondary Research Report](#)

A full public consultation on draft proposals was undertaken between April – June 2025 with a full findings report completed in September 2025. The methodology and response rates is outlined below.

5. Consultation

Have you undertaken consultation about the proposal with people who use the service or people affected, people who may potentially use the service and other stakeholders? What did they say about:

- What is important to them regarding the current service?
- How does (or could) the service meet their needs? How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)?
- Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?

Public Engagement (July – September 2023)

An extensive public engagement exercise has been undertaken across the city. An online and paper survey exercise was made available from 3rd July 2023 to 24th September 2023 for which we received 2851 responses to the survey (from a main and young people's survey)). We have also undertaken:

- 12 citywide public focus groups (including a young people's group)
- Key internal & external stakeholder interviews
- Staff workshops

The key findings of the main engagement exercise were as follows:

- Over half of respondents (56.75%) cited cost of living as their greatest concern in life
- Over half of respondents (52.82%) want to be more physically active
- 41.84% of respondents visit a library at least weekly
- With regard to library services, over half of respondents (54.87%) cited books and reading materials as the most important thing on offer. Followed by Computers, Wi-Fi and IT support (23.46%) then a social space to meet people (22.39%)
- 10.34% of respondents use a public computer at least weekly, 6.62% of respondents use a printer and 3.97% use a scanner
- Better promotion of what is on offer is the main thing which would encourage people to visit a local library more often
- 54.32% of respondents have either never or rarely visited a community centre in the last 5 years
- With regard to Community Centres 44.91% of respondents cited either a space to meet people or to attend a community group/activity as the most important things on offer
- A wider range of activities and events is the main thing which would encourage people to visit a community centre more often

The key findings of the young people's engagement exercise were as follows:

- Majority of responders between 11-16 years old
- 92.37% spoke English at home and 60.27% spoke Gujarati
- Watching videos, TV or films, spending time with family and reading books were the most common ways of how free time is spent
- 83.76% were happy with where they live
- 29.55% would like more parks and play areas
- 34.25% (By September) had visited a local library since the end of the summer holidays
- Only 6.07% had never been to a local library
- 74.17% said their local library is a friendly place and 70.84% said there are lots of books to choose from
- 81.02% borrowed books to take home from their local library and 66.14% stayed to read books at the library
- 36.99% said they would go to the library more if it had better books and 31.31% said they would go more if it was closer to home or school

Respondents to the survey were asked to consider approaches taken by other local authorities for transforming libraries and community centres. The responses were as follows:

Many councils are changing how they operate community centres and library services in order to better meet the needs of residents. Please tick up to three ideas that you think we could look at."

Option	Total	Percent
Have more multi-service centres to bring community centres, libraries and local services together	1014	58.78%
Involving community organisations more in running services	621	36.00%
Reviewing opening hours to match peak demand	596	34.55%

Making more use of customer self-service in public libraries	375	21.74%
Providing more services online	294	17.04%
Making more use of volunteers	377	21.86%
None of the above	211	12.23%
Other	91	5.28%

A full primary research report containing the findings of the engagement exercises is available here [public-engagement-report.pdf](#)

The public engagement exercise and primary and secondary research reports informed the development of draft proposals for consultation. A full public consultation exercise was undertaken on proposals and is used to update this Equality Impact Assessment.

Public Consultation (2nd April 2025 to 29th June 2025)

An extensive public consultation exercise has been undertaken across the city. An online and paper survey exercise was made available from 2nd April 2025 to Sunday 29th June 2025.

- **Main public survey** - The survey ran from Wednesday 2nd April 2025 to Sunday 29th June 2025. We received 4989 survey returns comprising of:
 - 2591 online surveys
 - 2,065 paper surveys
 - 333 community language surveys (the survey was available in English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Somali)
- **Children and young people's survey** - The survey ran from Tuesday 22nd April 2025 until Sunday 29th June 2025 . We received 1,366 survey returns.

- **Open public meetings** – 12 open meetings were held across the city (details can be seen in the Findings Report) with 1,053 attendees. The meetings were chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Health, Culture, Libraries and Community Centres and senior officers with a remit for the services in question. An interpreter was present at 2 of the meetings to assist attendees.
- **Ward Councillor Engagement Meetings** – Engagement meetings were held for all Ward Councillors in small ward groups.
- **Officer led drop in sessions** – 15 officer lead drop in sessions were held across the city (details can be seen in the Findings Report) with approximately 120 attendees.
- **Stakeholder Meetings** – Stakeholders and community groups could request a meeting with officers and 41 were held.
- **Young people drop in sessions** – Were held at Belgrave and Knighton Libraries along with a session at City Hall for the Young Peoples Council.
- **Group submissions & individual comments** – 33 submissions/comments were received into the consultation email address outside of the survey.
- **Petitions** – 6 petitions were received and details of these can be found in the Findings Report.

Headline findings from the consultation were as follows and a full findings report is available on our webpages.

Main Survey

Q2: 44.90% of respondents visit a library every week

Q3: Belgrave Library was the most visited library (32.25% of respondents) followed by Knighton Library (17.08%)

Q4: The Central Library was the highest selected alternative use library (26.52% of respondents)

Q5: Most important things on offer at a library:

- Books and reading material - 82.80%
- Computers, Wi-Fi and IT support – 40.92%
- Childrens and family activities – 30.72%

Q6: 66.65% of respondents walked to a library.

Q7: Of respondents who don't use a library 38.71% said it was because they can access what they need online such as eBooks.

Q8: 30.67% of respondents visit a community centre every week followed by 22.75% who never visit one.

Q9: 50.79% of respondents visited Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre most often followed by 15.29% who visited Rushey Mead Recreation Centre.

Q10: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre was also the highest selected alternative use community centre (36.19% of respondents)

Q11: Most important things on offer at a community centre:

- Community group or activity – 55.29%
- Exercise or health related activities – 39.40%
- Cultural, arts and crafts events – 36.74%

Q12: 39.35% of respondents walked to a community centre.

Q13: A total of 1,101 respondents out of 4,989 answered this question. The most cited reason respondents didn't use a community centre was "I don't need to use one" (38.7%).

Q14a: 61.20% of respondents said the proposed changes would make it much harder to visit a library.

Q14b: 47.12% of respondents said the proposed changes would make it much harder to visit a community centre.

Q14c: 44.10% of respondents said the proposed changes would make it much harder to access council services.

Q15: 39.21% of respondents said the proposed opening hours would be less convenient.

Q16 and **Q17** were open questions and encouraged respondents to tell us about any positive/negative benefits of the proposals as well as asking for any new solutions that should be considered. Full analysis of these questions can be found in the Findings Report.

Q18: 267 respondents said they were part of a community group might be interested in taking on the running of a library or community centre

Q19: 4225 valid home post codes were provided by respondents and a breakdown and map of which wards these came from is available in the Findings Report.

Q20: The largest proportion of respondents were aged 66 and over (32.8%), followed by 36–45 (18.9%) and 46–55 (15.7%).

Q21: 63.5% of respondents selected their sex as Female.

Q22: In response to the question 'Is your gender identity the same as your sex registered at birth?' 63.1% of respondents selected 'Yes' and 34.9% of respondents choosing not to answer.

Q23: 52.25% of respondents who answered selected 'Asian or Asian British: Indian' as their ethnic background followed by 28.38% who selected 'White British'.

Q24: 73.50% of respondents who answered considered themselves not to be disabled. 19.49% considered themselves disabled.

Young People's Survey

Q1: Respondents were asked to indicate their gender, and of the 1,364 (99.85%) responses, 49.34% identified as girls, 46.71% as boys.

Q2: The highest range of age of respondents was '14 or older' at 28.07% followed by '8 or younger' at 20.21%.

Q3: 39.97% of respondents visit a library in Leicester more than once a week 39.97% followed by 18.30% who visit once a month.

Q4: The most visited library was Belgrave Library by 55.77% of respondents followed by Knighton Library by 12.61% and Rushey Mead Library by 10.45%.

Q5: The most common thing done at a library was 'borrowing books to take home' by 78.76% of respondents followed by 'Reading books while I was there' by 65.95%.

Q6: 64.28% of respondents walked to the library.

Q7: Respondents were asked who they usually go to the library with. The most common answer was "with family" (33.60%), followed by "with an adult" (32.43%), "with friends" (29.65%), "by myself" (22.04%) and "with school" (18.23%).

Q8: Out of 231 respondents who said they don't visit a library 29.44% said the reason they don't go to a library is 'they can get what they need at home or school' and 25.97% said 'there's nothing at the library for me anymore'.

Q9: 45.28% of respondents don't go to community centres. Of the ones that do, 41.35% visit Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

Q10: 'Education classes or tutoring' and 'Sports or martial arts' were the main reason young people visited a community centre.

Q11: Of the young people who visit a community centre 71.43% walk.

Q12: 64.37% of young people don't visit a community centre because 'I don't know what there is to do'.

Q13: 35.44% of respondents said our ideas would make visiting a library 'much harder' and 22.33% said it would be 'much easier'.

Q14: 30.70% of respondents said our ideas would make visiting a community centre 'much harder' and 29.59% said 'it wouldn't make much difference'.

Q15: 28.14% of respondents said the new opening hours would mean 'I wouldn't be able to go there anymore' and 24.34% said 'it would be the same'.

Q16: Asked for the thoughts and ideas about the proposals and if the respondents have any other ideas about the future of our libraries and community centres. The question was an open question and a full analysis of these questions can be found in the Findings Report.

6. Potential Equality Impact

Based on your understanding of the service area, any specific evidence you may have on people who use the service and those who could potentially use the service and the findings of any consultation you have undertaken, use the table below to explain which individuals or community groups are likely to be affected by the proposal because of their protected characteristic(s). Describe what the impact is likely to be, how significant that impact is for individual or group well-being, and what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts. This could include indirect impacts, as well as direct impacts.

Looking at potential impacts from a different perspective, this section also asks you to consider whether any other particular groups, especially vulnerable groups, are likely to be affected by the proposal. List the relevant groups that may be affected, along with the impact, potential risks and mitigating actions that would reduce or remove any negative impacts. These groups do not have to be defined by their protected characteristic(s).

Protected characteristics

Impact of proposal:

Describe the impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. Why is this protected characteristic relevant to the proposal? How does the protected characteristic determine/shape the potential impact of the proposal? This may also include **positive impacts** which support the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be disproportionately negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For disproportionate negative impacts on protected characteristic/s, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove the impact? You may also wish to include actions which support the positive aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. All actions identified here should also be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA.

a) Age

Indicate which age group/s is/ are most affected, either specify general age group (children, young people, working aged people or older people) or specific age bands.

What is the impact of the proposal on age?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

Older people and children may be impacted by the distance they need to travel to alternative community facilities; the nearest sites have been listed in appendix 2.

A reduction in staffed opening hours could lead to times of Toddler Time and Study Support sessions being moved.

A reduction in staffed opening hours could lead to older people being unable to access library services at a time which suits them.

Younger people could also be impacted by withdrawal from sites with ball courts (Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre, Eyres Monsell Community centre, Coleman Neighbourhood Centre)

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on age?

Overall the risk is assessed as low due to a range of mitigations which will be put in place under the proposals. Key areas for consideration are:

Older People: The proposals may lead to issues of social isolation for people unable or unwilling to travel to access services elsewhere. A higher proportion of community centre users in particular are older people.

Young children: Young children aged 0 - 4 years may be impacted as families with young children have to travel to different sites to access services due to changes to opening hours. This may result in some young children having reducing engagement with books and reading and in particular with book sharing with their parents and carers. Some mothers and toddlers may be unable to attend a Toddler Time (under 5's) session at a local library.

Some community centres are currently hired by Pre-schools. These include Coleman Neighbourhood Centre, St Matthews Centre, Netherhall Community Centre and Tudor Centre. These pre-schools may need to relocate impacting local families.

Children: Children may be unable to visit a local library so frequently and/or may be unable to attend a homework club. This may have an impact on children's learning, especially with regard to reading for pleasure which is associated with improved life chances, and for studying and socialising. Children aged 5 – 16 years are disproportionately high users of community libraries in the city.

What are the mitigating actions?

A reduction in facilities will enable reallocation of the budget to improve the service at better used and better located sites and make the Neighbourhood Services offer more sustainable in the long term for all age groups in Leicester.

Self-Access will be introduced at 6 further libraries which will allow 8am – 8pm access for inducted members who are over 16.

Online services will be expanded to provide access to e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines and newspapers in digital format, at any time and from anywhere.

Council officers will collaborate with all affected community groups to help them find alternative space for community activities where needed

The BookBus offer will be reviewed to ensure children living in areas of high disadvantage continue to receive a library service.

Older People: We will work with existing community groups to support their continued operation in the future. A programme will be put in place to support community organisations to take on the running of community centres where suitable. Existing community groups and room hire charges will be protected under the terms of any asset transfers. Alternative community venues have been mapped so that community groups can be signposted to these providers should their centre become unavailable. The proposals have been changed following consultation feedback to retain the two busiest community centres recognising the very limited capacity for community organisations to deliver additional income generating services at these sites.

Older people may be impacted by the recommendation to increase community room hire rates by 20%. This has been considered and will be phased over two years to provide time for community groups to review their subscriptions and funding models.

Young children: At Fosse Centre Library We will signpost parents to alternative under 5's groups in nearby libraries, or to other provision in the local area. The children's BookBus will visit local nurseries and pre-school settings to deliver book sharing and storytelling sessions. We will work with partners including LCC Early Years to provide alternative book collections for young children in some Children, Young People and Family Centres.

Children: Multi-service centres including library provision will be located in areas of need. A range of children's reading programmes will continue to be developed to include outreach programmes delivered through primary and secondary schools. The children's BookBus routes will be reviewed to focus on children in the most disadvantaged areas considering any changes in local service provision. Satellite libraries at local children's centres will be expanded to reach more children and young families in these areas. Outreach programmes will be prioritised under the transformed service to provide opportunities for all children to engage with reading for pleasure. Schemes such as Our Best Book, Our Best Picture Book and the Reading Rampage will continue to be delivered to children at participating primary and secondary schools.

We will signpost parents and carers at Fosse Library to alternative under 5's groups in nearby libraries, or to other provision in the local area. The children's BookBus will visit local nurseries and pre-school settings to deliver book sharing and storytelling sessions. BookBus route will be reviewed for access by young families in Fosse ward. We will work with partners including LCC Early Years to provide alternative book collections for young children in some Children, Young People and Family Centres.

b) Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to conduct normal day-to-day activities. If specific impairments are affected by the proposal, specify which these are. Our standard categories are on our equality monitoring form – physical impairment, sensory impairment, mental health condition, learning disability, long standing illness, or health condition.

What is the impact of the proposal on disability?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

Some disabled people may be impacted by the distance they need to travel to alternative provision because of mobility issues. Access to buildings and building features will also need to be considered and other barriers that prevent disabled people accessing services

Some special interest disability groups meet regularly at community centres and libraries and may be affected by withdrawal of services from some buildings.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on disability?

Closure of Neighbourhood Services buildings or relocation of services could have a disproportionate negative impact on users with a disability, especially those who take part in regular activities at a specific site near their home.

What are the mitigating actions?

All retained Multi-Service Centres are fully accessible for a wide range of disabilities including wheelchair users. IT users are able to use accessibility tools which can be demonstrated by staff. Services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will continue to receive training to ensure awareness of the widest range of needs and the tools available to support these.

Investment in the retained centres will include any additional accessibility requirements above and beyond the current full compliance of the centres with reference to the wider catchment and incoming communities

We will work with any affected community groups to signpost and support them to relocate to appropriate alternative settings where necessary. Alternative community room hire providers have been mapped for all facilities.

We will signpost users of Fosse Library to alternative nearby libraries, or to other provision in the local area.

c) Gender reassignment

Indicate whether the proposal has potential impact on trans men or trans women, and if so, which group is affected. a trans person is someone who proposes to, starts, or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected.

What is the impact of the proposal on gender reassignment?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

At this stage none known

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on gender reassignment?

Currently there is no evidence to support that this protected characteristic is likely to be negatively impacted.

What are the mitigating actions?

Services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will be trained to be aware of not stereotyping or discriminating against anyone based on their protected characteristics

d) Marriage and civil partnership

Please note that under the Public Sector Equality Duty this protected characteristic applies to the first general duty of the Act, eliminating unlawful discrimination, only. The focus within this is eliminating discrimination against people that are married or in a civil partnership with regard specifically to employment.

What is the impact of the proposal on marriage and civil partnership?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

At this stage none known

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on marriage and civil partnership?

Currently there is no evidence to support that this protected characteristic is likely to be negatively impacted.

What are the mitigating actions?

Services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will be trained to be aware of not stereotyping or discriminating against anyone based on their protected characteristics

e) Pregnancy and maternity

Does the proposal treat someone unfairly because they are pregnant, breastfeeding or because they have recently given birth.

What is the impact of the proposal on pregnancy and maternity?

There is no known impact on pregnancy.

There may be an impact on maternity with regard to the availability of local library under 5's groups where libraries are proposed for a reduction in hours.

There may be an impact on maternity with regard to the availability of local pre-school settings where these are hosted in community centres which are proposed for withdrawal.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on pregnancy and maternity?

The risk is considered low due to the availability of alternative providers and services.

What are the mitigating actions?

The retained facilities have adequate access for pushchairs and prams and there are baby changing facilities available. Most Under 5s sessions will continue at the same times.

We will signpost parents and carers at Fosse Library to alternative under 5's groups in nearby libraries, or to other provision in the local area. The children's BookBus will visit local nurseries and pre-school settings to deliver book sharing and storytelling sessions. BookBus route will be reviewed for access by young families in Fosse ward. We will work with partners including LCC Early Years to provide alternative book collections for young children in some Children, Young People and Family Centres.

f) Race

Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example Black Britons, British Asians, British Sikhs, British Jews, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

What is the impact of the proposal on race?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

By offering buildings to be run by community groups this will encourage the mixing of people of different race and enhance community cohesion.

Customers whose first language is not English may have difficulty understanding new online information

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on race?

Some facilities have a disproportionately higher use by individuals and by communities from specific backgrounds.

For people unable to speak English they may have an issue accessing the enhanced online offer.

What are the mitigating actions?

All Neighbourhood Services facilities, in particular the multi-service centres, libraries and community centres retained under the proposals, are welcoming and accessible to people from all backgrounds and communities.

We will signpost and support community groups who may be impacted by the withdrawal from specific centres to access alternative spaces, either in convenient LCC multi-service centres, or in spaces run by other providers. We have mapped alternative community spaces around each facility to support this process.

We also work with existing and local community organisations to develop capacity for the community organisations to take on the running of local facilities which are no longer required by the Council, with a focus on retention of local groups.

Services will ensure access to translators is accessible where possible.

Services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will be trained to be aware of not stereotyping or discriminating against anyone based on their protected characteristics.

g) Religion or belief

Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. This must be a belief and not just an opinion or viewpoint based on the present state of information available and;

- be about a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour
- attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion, and importance, and
- be worthy of respect in a democratic society, not incompatible with human dignity and not in conflict with fundamental rights of others. For example, Holocaust denial, or the belief in racial superiority are not protected.

Are your services sensitive to different religious requirements e.g., times a customer may want to access a service, religious days and festivals and dietary requirements

What is the impact of the proposal on religion or belief?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

By offering buildings to be run by community groups this will encourage the mixing of people of different religion or belief and enhance community cohesion.

Faith based groups who use community spaces in any of the community centres which will cease to be operated by the council may be displaced.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on religion or belief?

Religious groups may be displaced from their current meeting spaces in community centres.

What are the mitigating actions?

The risk of negative impact on religion or belief is considered low, as the recommendations only impact on the availability of meeting space in some locations. We will signpost and support community groups who may be impacted by the withdrawal from specific centres to access

alternative spaces, either in convenient LCC multi-service centres, or in spaces run by other providers. We have mapped alternative community spaces around each facility to support this process.

We also work with existing and local community organisations to develop capacity for the community organisations to take on the running of local facilities which are no longer required by the Council, with a focus on retention of local groups.

h) Sex

Indicate whether this has potential impact on either males or females.

What is the impact of the proposal on sex?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

Popular light exercise classes at some community centres are gender specific. There is high demand on space from both groups.

Overall there is higher use of libraries by females (55%) than by males (45%). This is generally the case for library activity groups (crafting, knit and natter etc) and also for book borrowing for those aged over 16 years. However use of public access computers is higher for males than for females.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sex?

Currently there is no evidence to support that this protected characteristic is likely to be disproportionately negatively impacted.

What are the mitigating actions?

N/A

i) Sexual orientation

Indicate if there is a potential impact on people based on their sexual orientation. The Act protects heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual people.

What is the impact of the proposal on sexual orientation?

A building by building breakdown of potential equality impact is attached as appendix 2. This section will focus on cross cutting service impacts.

At this stage none known

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sexual orientation?

Currently there is no evidence to support that this protected characteristic is likely to be negatively impacted.

What are the mitigating actions?

Services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will be trained to be aware of not stereotyping or discriminating against anyone based on their protected characteristics.

7. Summary of protected characteristics

a. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have commented on, are relevant to the proposal?

Age is important due to the disproportionately high number of people under 16 years who use the library service. Any reduction in opening hours at local libraries should consider the impact on children's access to reading for pleasure, the role of books and reading in improving life chances and the positive impact of library homework clubs and social spaces on children's mental health. A range of mitigations are proposed to reduce any negative impact from the recommendations on children, including a review of the Book Bus routes and stops and closer working with Children, Young People and Family Centres. Feedback on opening hours has informed change to the recommended hours, to ensure wherever possible that Toddler Time and Study Support sessions can take place at the same times. Where self-access is implemented children under the age of 16 years may use the library only when accompanied by an inducted adult library member. There is a potential impact on year 11 children studying for their GCSE exams and requiring access to the library to support their study. To ensure equality of opportunity all year 11 children aged 15 or 16 years will be able to be inducted into the self-access programme. Staffed opening hours patterns have been configured at all sites to ensure weekly after school and Saturday availability.

Disability is important when considering access and travel to community centres and libraries for groups and individuals who identify one or more disabilities. We have mapped public transport routes and times, and our research shows that other sites are available to most of the city via bus or walking.

Investment in retained multi-service centres will need to focus on flexible and accessible design for all groups. Understanding special requirements to accommodate the wider range of physical and mental disabilities will be crucial.

Race, Religion or belief and sex are important due to the potential impact of recommendations on community groups hiring space, for example for prayer groups or gender specific exercise groups. Mitigation will include signposting to other council or external providers and also the possibility of transfer of facilities to the local community. The consultation will help to understand specific issues which may arise from the proposals.

b. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have not commented on, are not relevant to the proposal?

Click or tap here to enter text.

There is no evidence to support that the following protected characteristics will be impacted by the recommendations; Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation. All of our services aim to ensure inclusive access to all protected characteristics and staff will be trained to be aware of not stereotyping or discriminating against anyone based on their protected characteristics.

8. Armed Forces Covenant Duty

The Covenant Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies to 'have due regard' to the principles of the Covenant and requires decisions about the development and delivery of certain services to be made with conscious consideration of the needs of the Armed Forces community.

When Leicester City Council exercises a relevant function, within the fields of healthcare, education, and housing services it must have due regard to the aims set out below:

a. The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces

These include danger; geographical mobility; separation; Service law and rights; unfamiliarity with civilian life; hours of work; and stress.

b. The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces

A disadvantage is when the level of access a member of the Armed Forces Community has to goods and services, or the support they receive, is comparatively lower than that of someone in a similar position who is not a member of the Armed Forces Community, and this difference arises from one (or more) of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life.

c. The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces

Special provision is the taking of actions that go beyond the support provided to reduce or remove disadvantage. Special provision may be justified by the effects of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life, especially for those that have sacrificed the most, such as the bereaved and the injured (whether that injury is physical or mental).

Does the service/issue under consideration fall within the scope of a function covered by the Duty (healthcare, education, housing)? Which aims of the Duty are likely to be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes. Are members of the Armed Forces specifically disadvantaged or further disadvantaged by the proposal/service? Identify any mitigations including where appropriate possible special provision.

Some ex forces members may be affected by travel issues if a facility is no longer operated by LCC. Good bus routes across the city do allow for access to other local sites. In addition enhanced online services are available to users.

Cadets meeting and ex-military groups meeting at centres.

9. Other groups

Other groups

Impact of proposal:

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on children in poverty or any other people who we may consider to be vulnerable, for example people who misuse substances, care leavers, people living in poverty, care experienced young people, carers, those who are digitally excluded. List any vulnerable groups likely to be affected. Will their needs continue to be met? What issues will affect their take up of services/other opportunities that meet their needs/address inequalities they face?

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that this group of people will be negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For negative impacts, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact for this vulnerable group of people? These should be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA. You may also wish to use this section to identify opportunities for positive impacts.

a. Care Experienced People

This is someone who was looked after by children's services for a period of 13 weeks after the age of 14', but without any limit on age, recognising older people may still be impacted from care experience into later life.

What is the impact of the proposal on Care Experienced People?

Care experienced people are able to access books and reading programmes, homework help, computers, wi-fi and printing in a safe and warm space with trusted staff on hand. Our community centres host a number of groups who run classes/sessions aimed at targeting social isolation and digital exclusion e.g. homework help and DWP job shop sessions.

What is the risk of negative impact on Care Experienced People?

Careful consideration has been given to the proposals with regard to care experienced people. Whilst there is potential for this group to be negatively impacted through loss of informal social networks, access to safe spaces and IT resources, the proposals retain provision in areas of need and propose effective mitigations across the city.

What are the mitigating actions?

Services will continue to be delivered in areas of need across the city. The centres recommended to remain are easily accessible with wider catchment areas, 99% of residents are less than 1.25 miles from a centre. Homework help, study support and job shop sessions will be retained. Any groups displaced from a building will be assisted to find an alternate venue.

b. Children in poverty

What is the impact of the proposal on children in poverty?

A disproportionately high number of children use library services. Children are able to access books and reading programmes, homework help, computers, wi-fi and printing in a safe and warm space with trusted adults on hand. Usage of libraries by children in areas of high diversity and high-density housing including the Belgrave, Fosse, Highfields and Uppingham Road areas of the city. Children's activities are well attended in the outer estates, including Saffron, New Parks and Braunstone.

What is the risk of negative impact on children in poverty?

Careful consideration has been given to the proposals with regard to children in poverty. Whilst there is potential for this group to be negatively impacted through loss of informal education opportunities, study space and access to safe spaces at community centres, the recommendations retain library provision in areas of high child poverty. Staffed opening hours have been amended for all libraries to ensure availability of after-school and Saturday access.

What are the mitigating actions?

Libraries will continue to be delivered in areas of need across the city, with reduced staff opening times. Centres proposed to remain are easily accessible with wider catchment areas. The Children's BookBus routes will be reviewed to ensure coverage of areas of greatest need where child poverty is highest. Satellite book collections will be expanded in some children, young people and family centres to provide additional access to books and reading for children. Outreach reading programmes will continue to be provided to local children through schemes run in partnership with primary and secondary schools. Staffed opening hours have been amended for all libraries to ensure availability of after-school and Saturday access.

c. Other (describe)

What is the impact of the proposal on any other groups?

Click or tap here to enter text.

What is the risk of negative impact on any other groups?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What are the mitigating actions?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

10. Other sources of potential negative impacts

Are there any other potential negative impacts external to the service that could further disadvantage service users over the next three years that should be considered? For example, these could include:

- other proposed changes to council services that would affect the same group of service users;
- Government policies or proposed changes to current provision by public agencies (such as new benefit arrangements) that would negatively affect residents;
- external economic impacts such as an economic downturn.

Neighbourhood Services is working closely with other Council Services to understand and effectively coordinate changes in these services to minimise the global impact from an equalities perspective. Service currently proposing changes include:

- Sports Services
- Early Years / Children, Young People and Family Centres
- Early Years / Youth Services
- Early Years / Family Hubs
- Customer Service Centre

11. Human rights implications

Are there any human rights implications which need to be considered and addressed (please see the list at the end of the template), if so, please outline the implications and how they will be addressed below:

None identified

12. Monitoring impact

You will need to ensure that monitoring systems are established to check for impact on the protected characteristics and human rights after the decision has been implemented. Describe the systems which are set up to:

- monitor impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) for different groups
- monitor barriers for different groups
- enable open feedback and suggestions from different communities
- ensure that the EIA action plan (below) is delivered.

If you want to undertake equality monitoring, please refer to our [equality monitoring guidance and templates](#)

1. Primary research public engagement exercise (July - September 2023)
2. Consultation exercise (July – September 2025)
3. Annual Neighbourhood Services user survey
4. Ward community meetings
5. Monitoring of active library users and recorded characteristics (where provided)
 - Monthly reporting

13. EIA action plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from this assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
Equality of access to library and community services amongst all groups	Monitor access to services for people with protected characteristics through our systems and ongoing survey work	Lee Warner	Ongoing
Equality of access to library and community services amongst all groups	Invest in study spaces to support children, young people and adults from diverse backgrounds to access the resources and space they need for schoolwork and career development to improve life chances	Lee Warner	Complete
Provide framework for community groups to take on the running of identified local facilities to retain provision and enhance community cohesion.	Update policy and guidelines for Community Asset Transfer to support the best outcomes for local people and ensure robust mechanisms to deliver equality of access.	Kathryn Ellis	Complete
Provide framework for community groups to take on the running of identified local	Commission support for community organisations apply for Community Asset Transfer opportunities.	Lee Warner	Spring 2026

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
facilities to retain provision and enhance community cohesion.			
Equality of access to library and community services amongst all groups	Support community groups through the transformation of services to adapt to changes or to explore alternative options where required	Lee Warner	Spring 2027
Protected Characteristic: Age Supporting Children to access neighbourhood services	Review BookBus routes to provide convenient access for children living in Fosse ward	Lee Warner	Autumn 2026
Supporting Children in Poverty: improve life chances through access to books and reading from a young age	Seek alternative funding to retain the BookStart programme, to deliver book sharing experiences for young families in priority school areas	Lee Warner	Complete
Equality of opportunity (non-users)	Invest in promotion and re-presentation/signing of retained facilities to engage non-users who may have need of the services	Lee Warner	Autumn 2026
Extend access to libraries for people over 16yrs to optimise availability for adults from all backgrounds	Install library self-access systems at 6 library locations	Lee Warner	Winter 2026

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
Provide improved access to services for people from all backgrounds.	Develop multi-service centres with a focus on wellbeing at 12 centres, to increase access to a range of council and partner services	Lee Warner	Spring 2027
Widespread public understanding of the changes.	Develop and implement an accessible comprehensive, multi-format Communication Plan	Lee Warner	Spring 2027

Human rights articles:

Part 1: The convention rights and freedoms

Article 2: Right to Life

Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way

Article 4: Right not to be subjected to slavery/forced labour

Article 5: Right to liberty and security

Article 6: Right to a fair trial

Article 7: No punishment without law

Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life

Article 9: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 10: Right to freedom of expression

Article 11: Right to freedom of assembly and association

Article 12: Right to marry

Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against

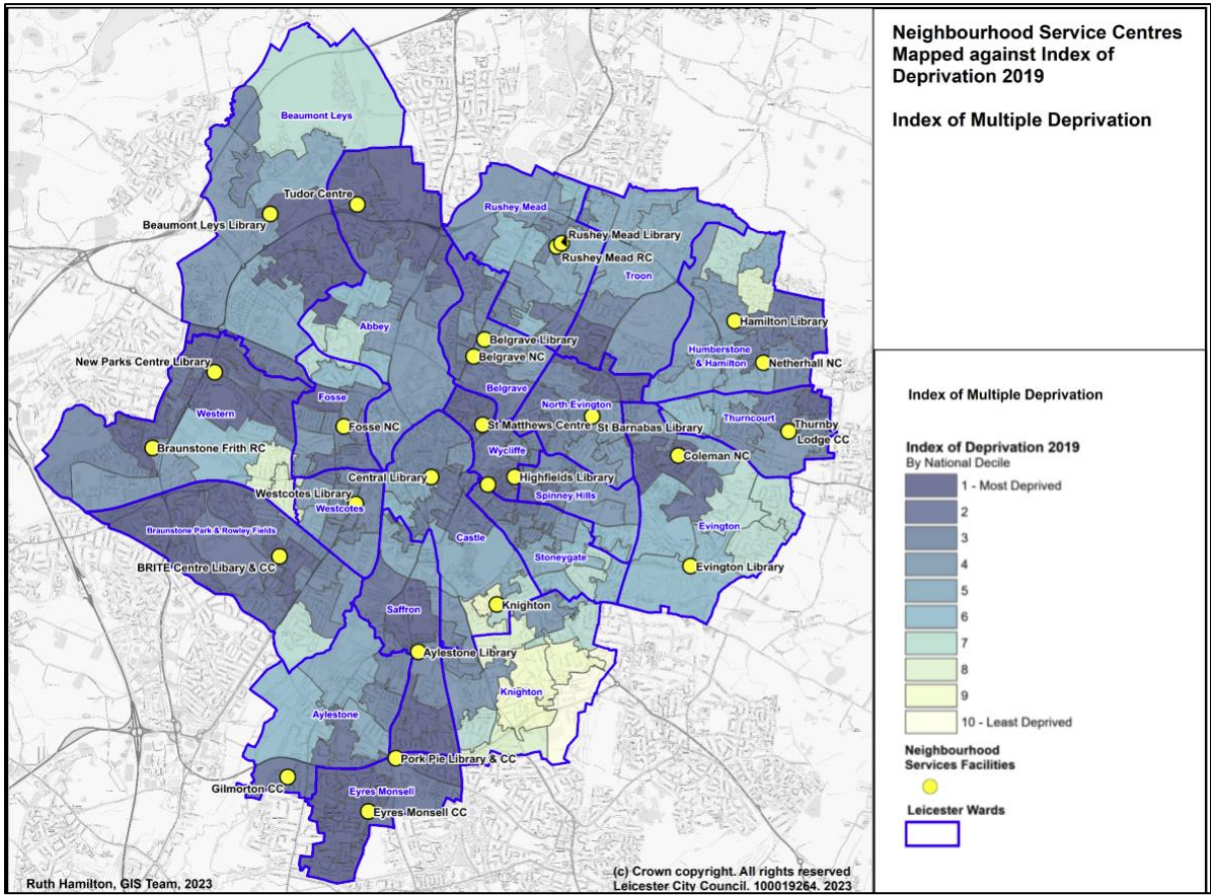
Part 2: First protocol

Article 1: Protection of property/peaceful enjoyment

Article 2: Right to education

Article 3: Right to free elections

Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Services facilities plotted over the indices of multiple deprivation.

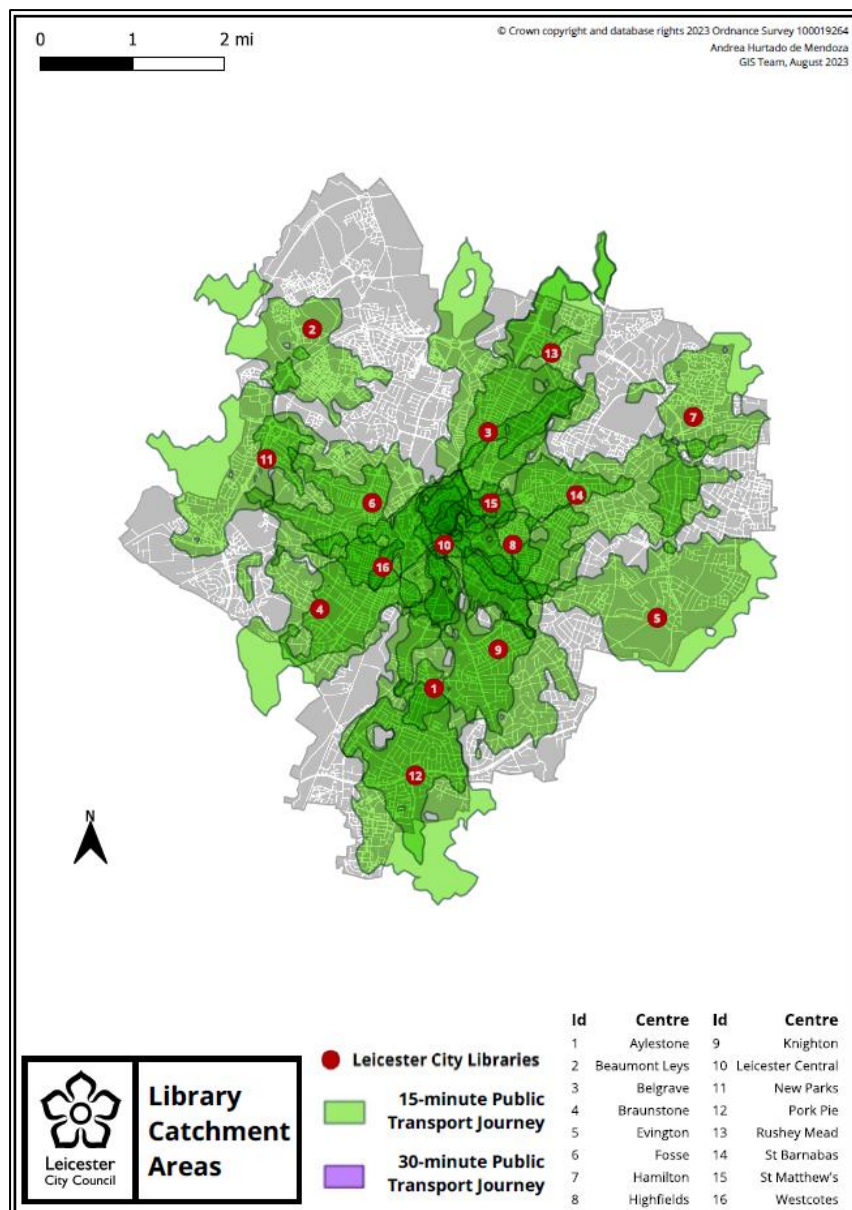


Appendix 2 – Proposed building withdrawals - breakdown of potential impacts on protected characteristics

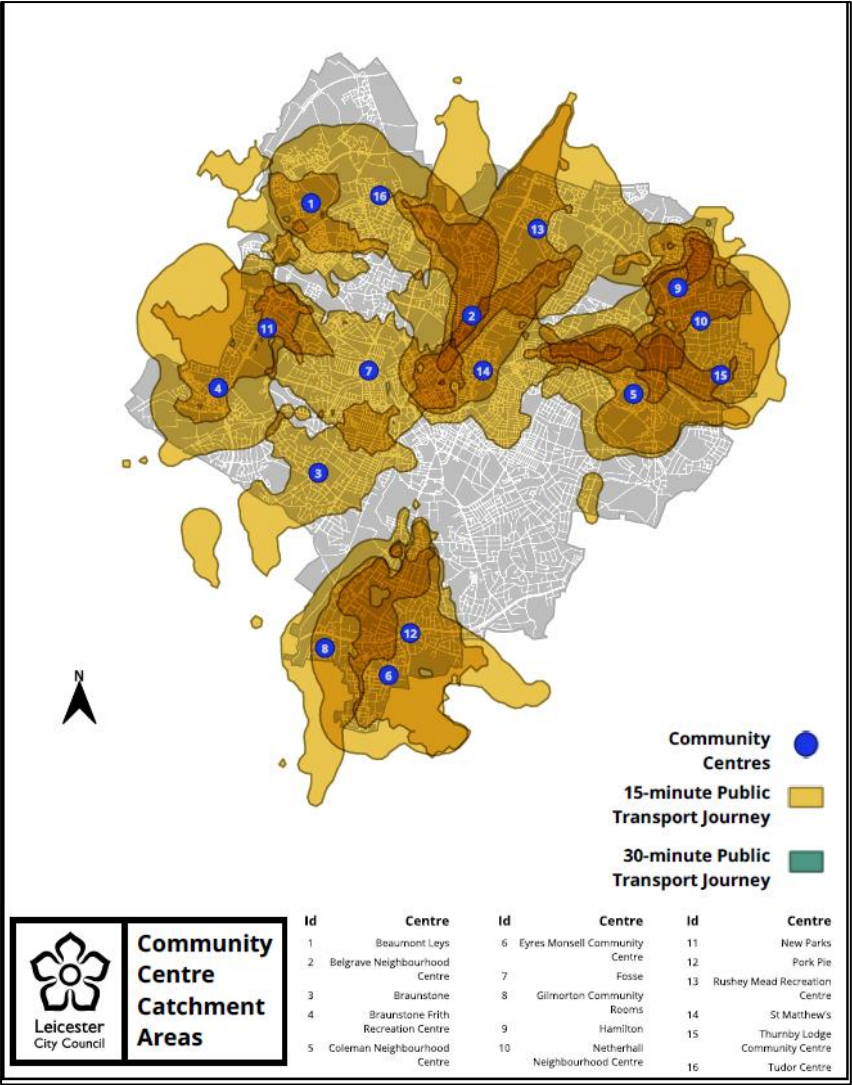
Building	Impact of proposal	Mitigating actions
Braunstone Frith Recreation Centre	Age - Food bank - Children in poverty Fortnightly coffee morning - older users hyper local	Make available for Community Asset Transfer – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups Signpost to alternative providers where required: Less than 2km away from Allexton Youth & Community, New Parks Library, Kirby Muxloe Library and Glenfield Library. An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.
295 Coleman Neighbourhood Centre	Age – Pre school Bowls club – predominantly elderly people Disability - Some customers have Mental and physical disability Race – Primary usage by Asian/British Asian as below Religion or belief – Madrassah and prayer group	Make available for Community Asset Transfer – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups Some local capacity Coleman lodge community centre nearby for community room hire Less than 2km away from St Barnabas Library, Hamilton Library & Nearby madrassah at Coleman Lodge An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.
Eyres Monsell Community Centre	Age – Classes focused on younger and older people – dance class and theatre group Disability – Older users with disabilities Religion or belief – Madrassah group	Opportunity for community running – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups Less than 2km away from Pork Pie Library, South Wigston Library, Glen Hills Library

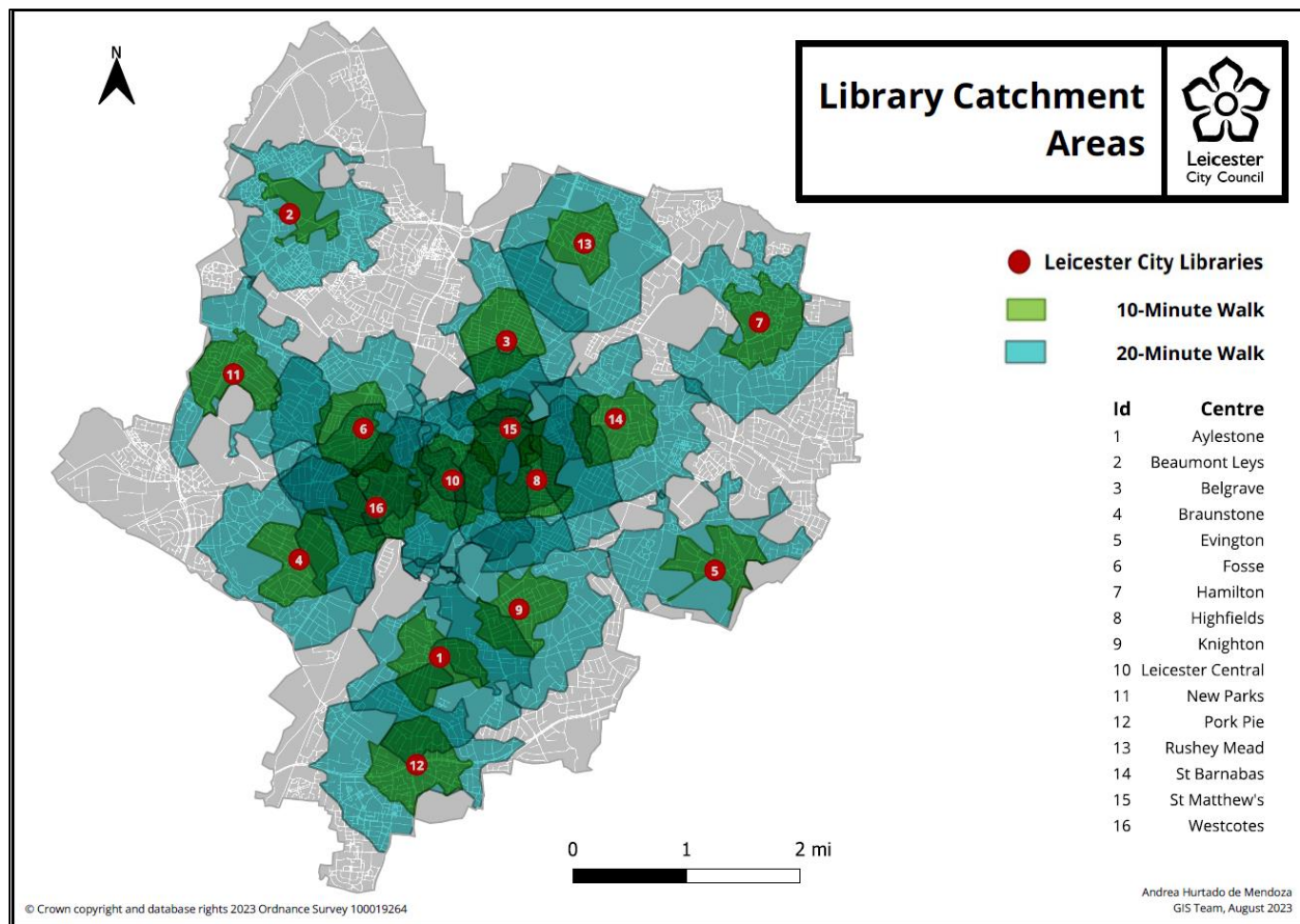
<p>Fosse Neighbourhood Centre</p>	<p>Age – Toddler time and children’s activities</p> <p>Children in Poverty - Alice Hawkins Community Projects; Library services for children and for people from all backgrounds</p>	<p>Signpost community groups and library users to alternative providers.</p> <p>There are several libraries nearby which are considered accessible for local residents with 100% of residences falling within a 1.25 mile radius of alternative library provision. These are New Parks Library, Westcotes Library, BRITE Centre and the Central Library.</p> <p>An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.</p> <p>A commitment has been made to work with the Alice Hawkins Community Projects group to find them an alternate venue.</p> <p>Re-routing the Childrens book bus to visit the area.</p> <p>The Home Library Service which is available to all city residents would be promoted to residents and service users in Fosse ward</p>
<p>Gilmorton Community Rooms</p>	<p>Age – Fortnightly foodbank – around 20 people</p>	<p>Opportunity for community running – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups</p> <p>Less than 2km away from Glen Hills Library and Pork Pie Library, Eyres Monsell Community Centre</p> <p>An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.</p>
<p>Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre</p>	<p>Age – Preschool and youth activities – dance classes</p>	<p>Opportunity for community running – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups</p> <p>Less than 2km from Hamilton Library</p> <p>An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.</p>

<p>St Matthews Centre</p>	<p>Age – Pre School</p> <p>Disability – Disabled groups</p> <p>Pregnancy and Maternity – Toddler Time</p> <p>Race – Higher impact on African origin users</p> <p>Religion or Belief – Church groups</p>	<p>The library and services (Housing and Adult Education) will be re-located to St Matthews Childrens Centre. Options for further community space will also be explored with each community group.</p> <p>Less than 2km away from Highfields Library, African Caribbean Centre, Belgrave Library, The Big Local, The Peepul Centre, The What Cabin</p> <p>Potential for the BookBus to visit more often</p> <p>An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.</p> <p>A commitment has been made to work with Community Groups to find them an alternate venue.</p>
<p>Tudor Centre</p>	<p>Age - Play Group - parent & toddler Pre School Adult Learning classes</p> <p>Disability - Mosaic Disability Group</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity - Play Group - parent & toddler</p> <p>Religion or belief - Islamic prayer group Sunday school</p>	<p>Opportunity for community running – successful groups will be asked to retain established groups</p> <p>Less than 2km away from Beaumont Leys Library, Beaumont Leys & Stocking Farm Children Young People and Family Centres, Bewcastle Children Young People and Family Centres, Beaumont Leys Leisure Centre</p> <p>An open public meeting was held to allow groups to engage with us and request a follow up 1-1 meeting.</p>

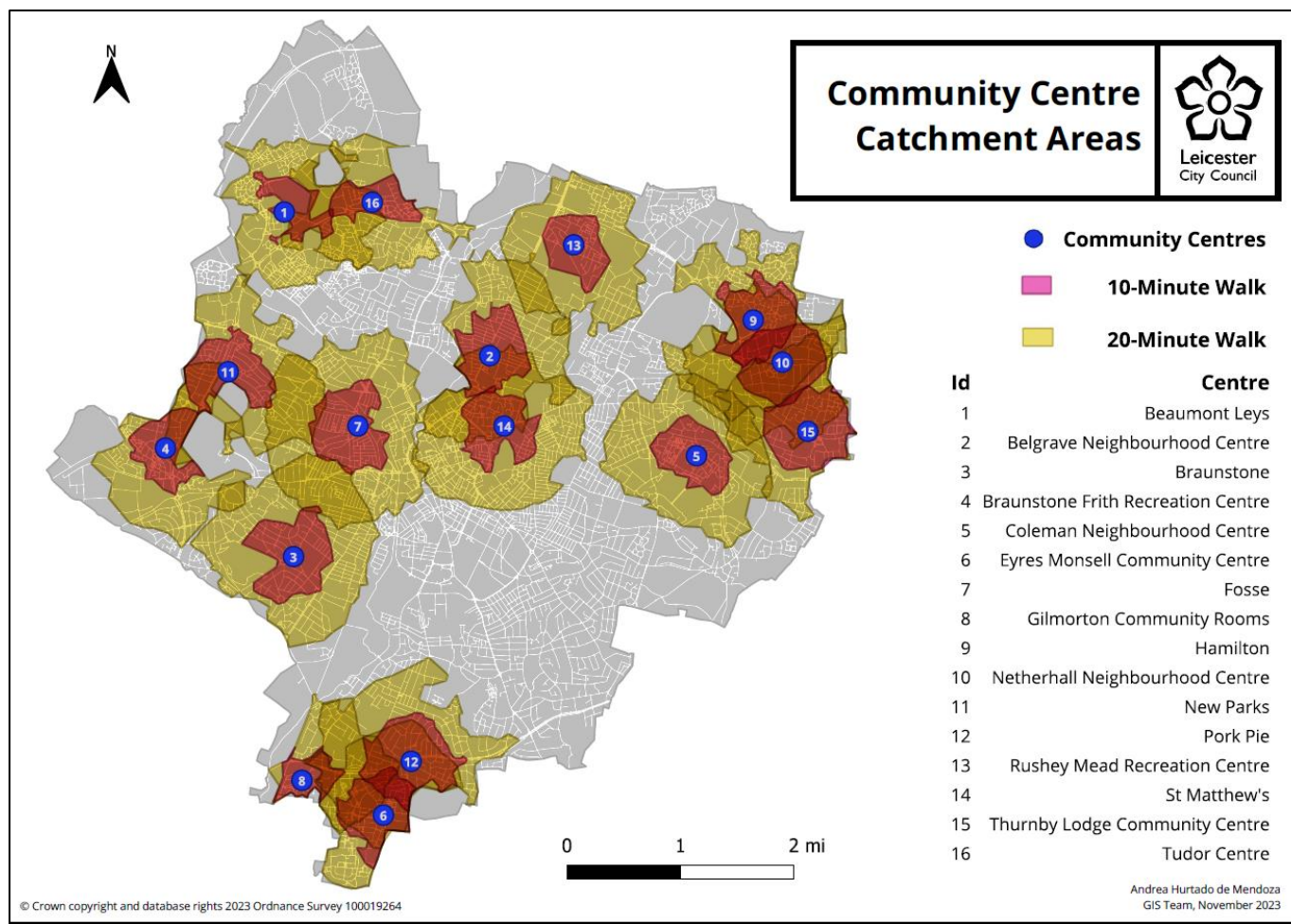


Appendix 3 – Public transport maps showing a 15 minute bus journey from each facility



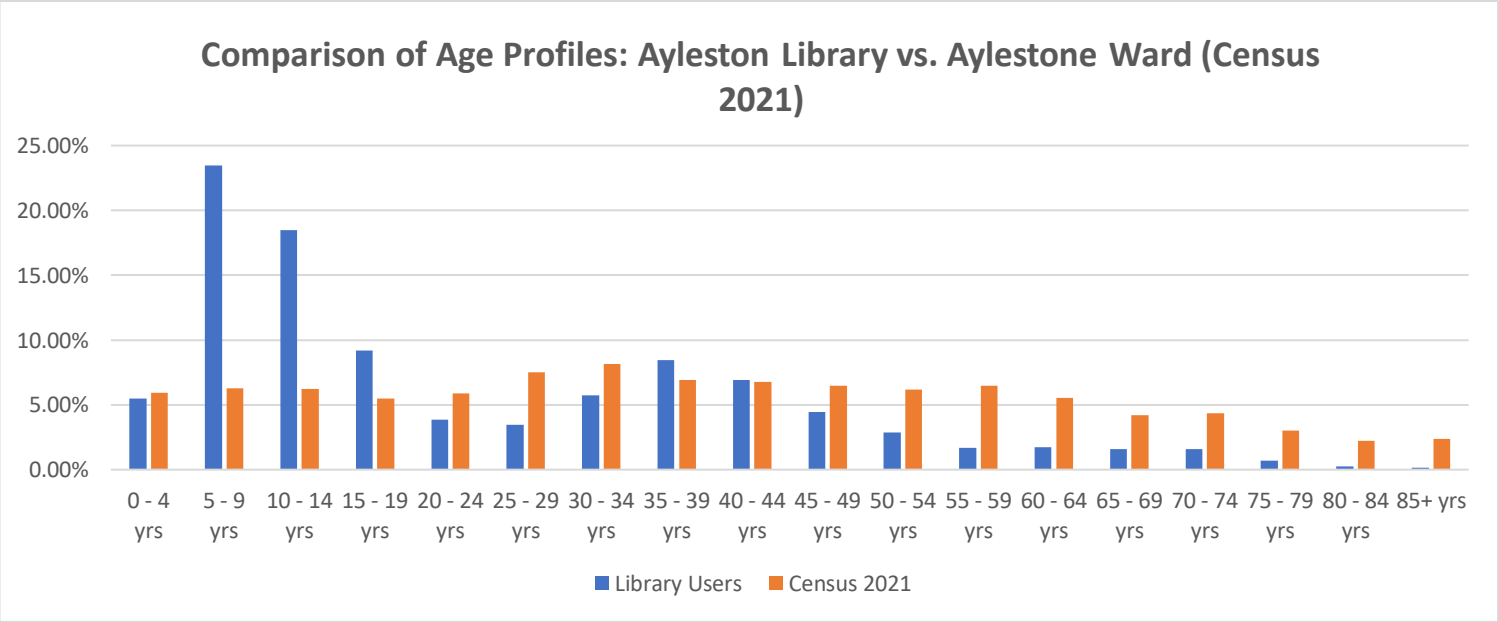
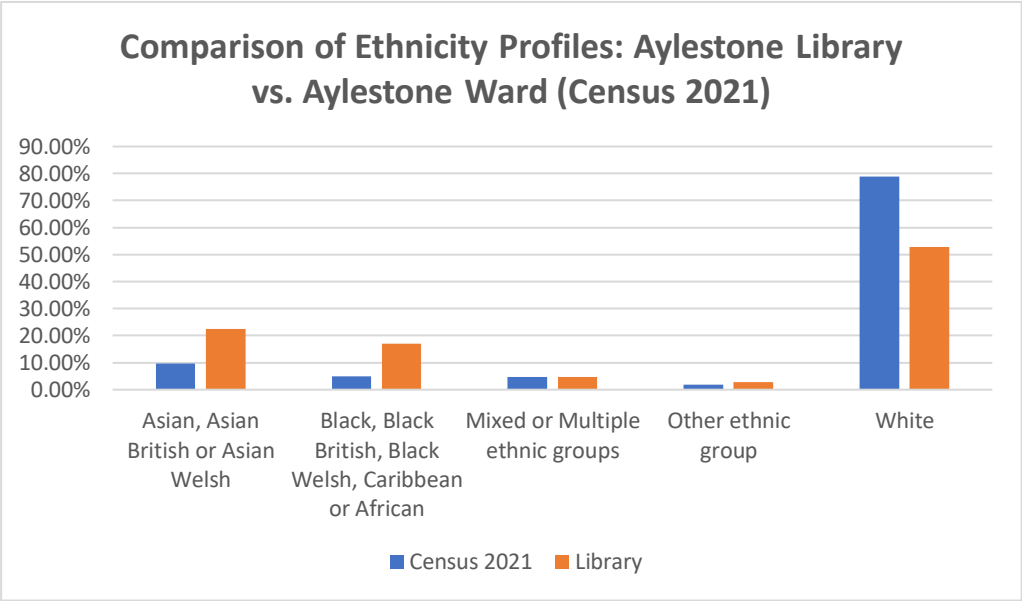
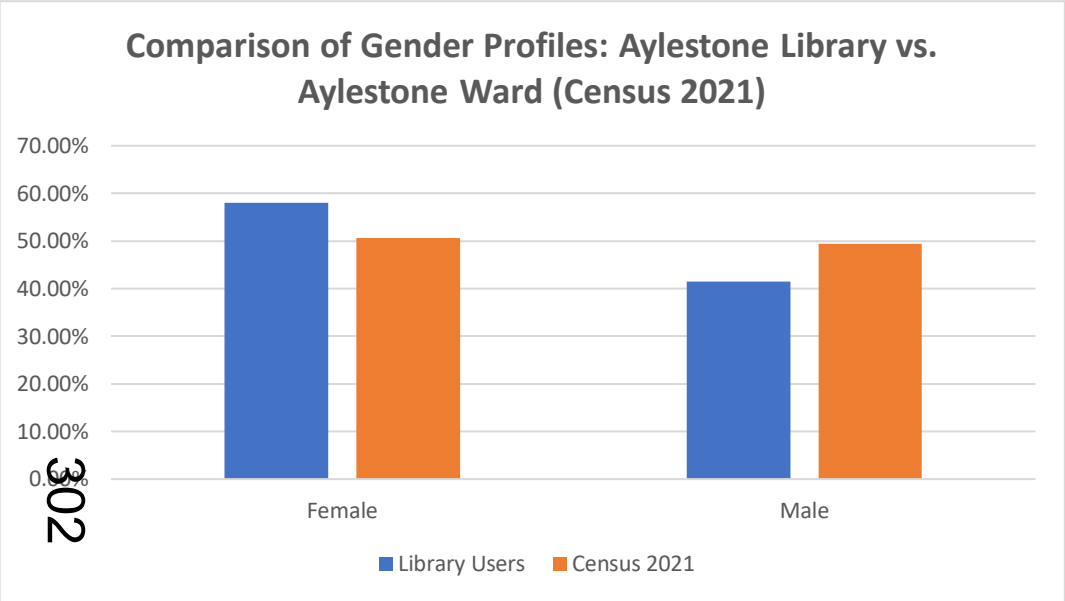


Appendix 4 – Walking maps showing 10 and 20 minute walks from each facility



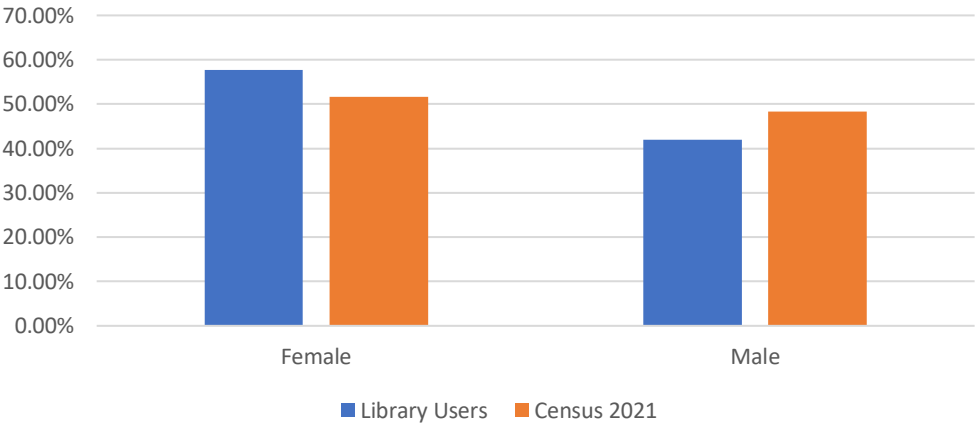
Appendix 5 – Library gender, ethnicity and age ward comparison graphs

Aylestone Library

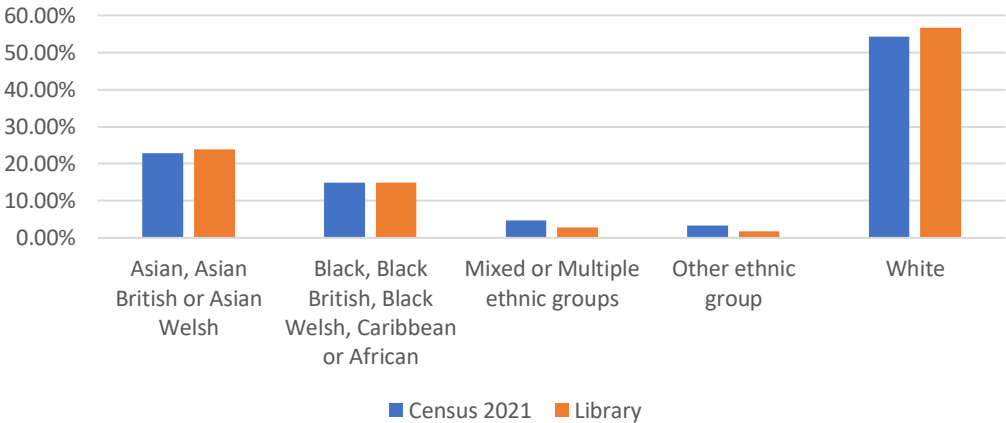


Beaumont Leys

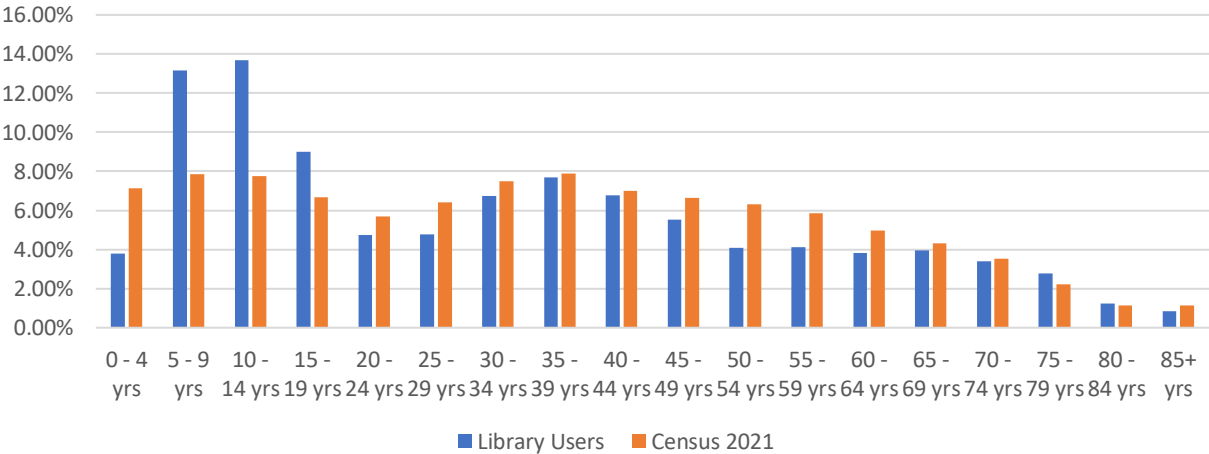
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Beaumont Leys Library vs. Beaumont Leys Ward (Census 2021)



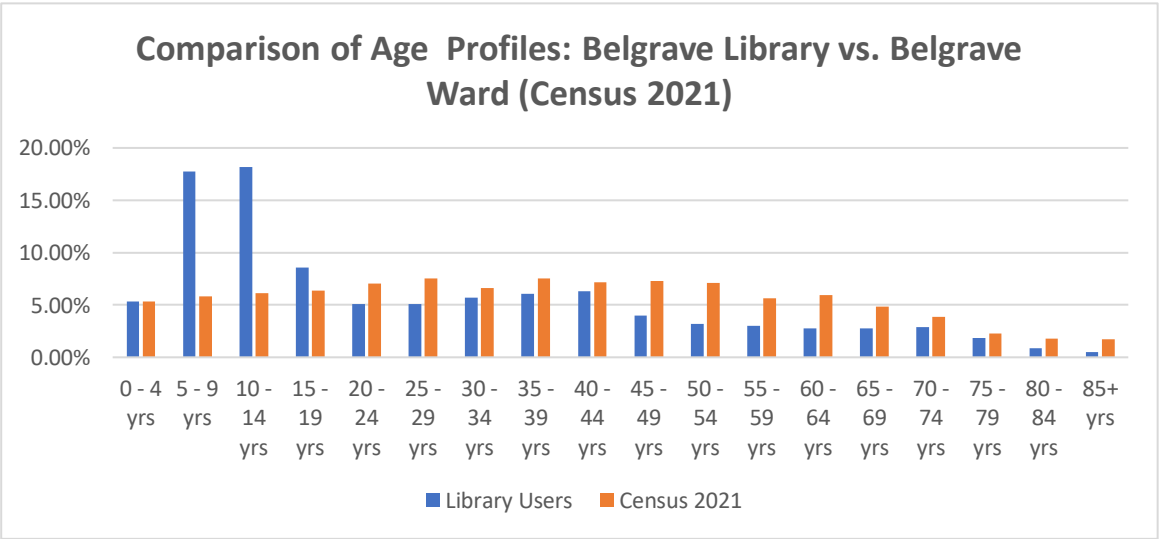
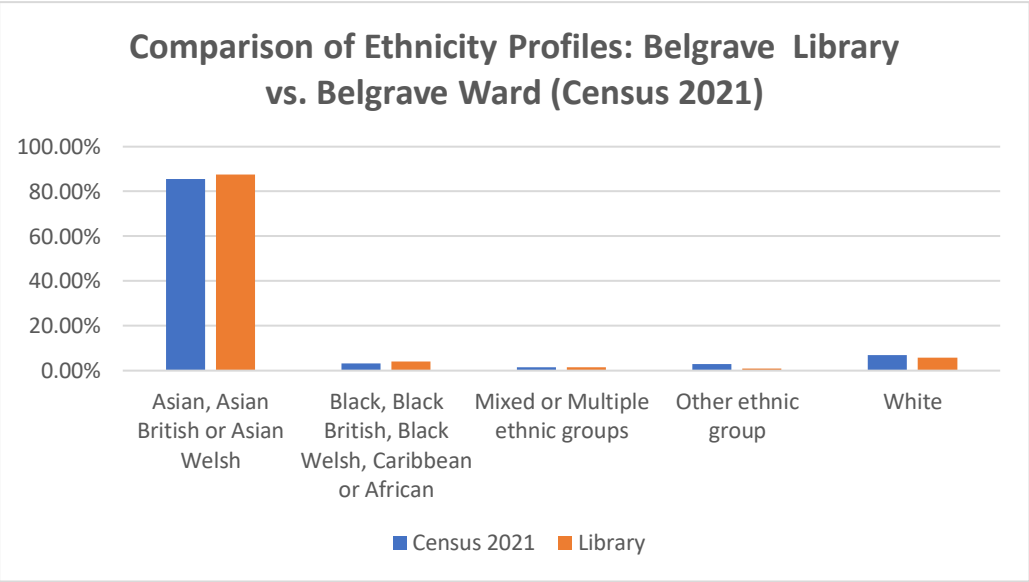
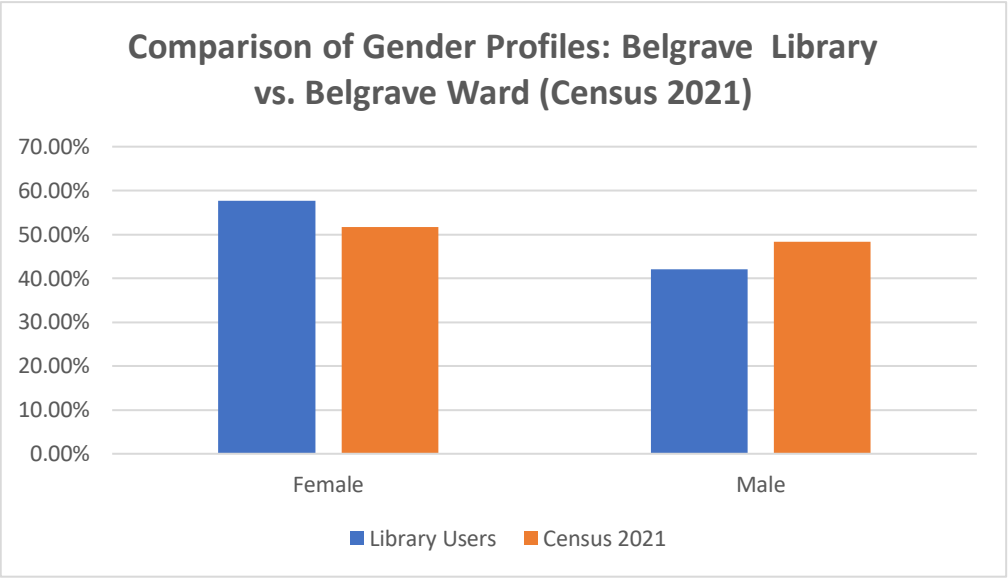
Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Beaumont Leys Library vs. Beaumont Leys Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Gender Profiles: Beaumont Leys Library vs. Beaumont Leys Ward (Census 2021)

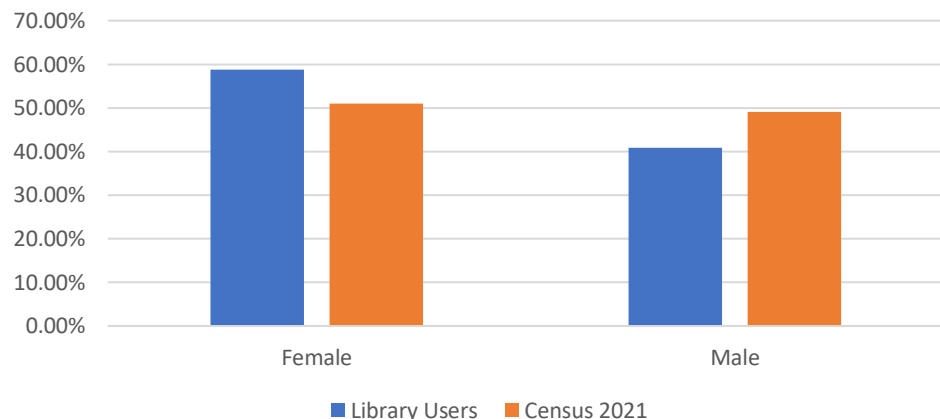


Belgrave Library

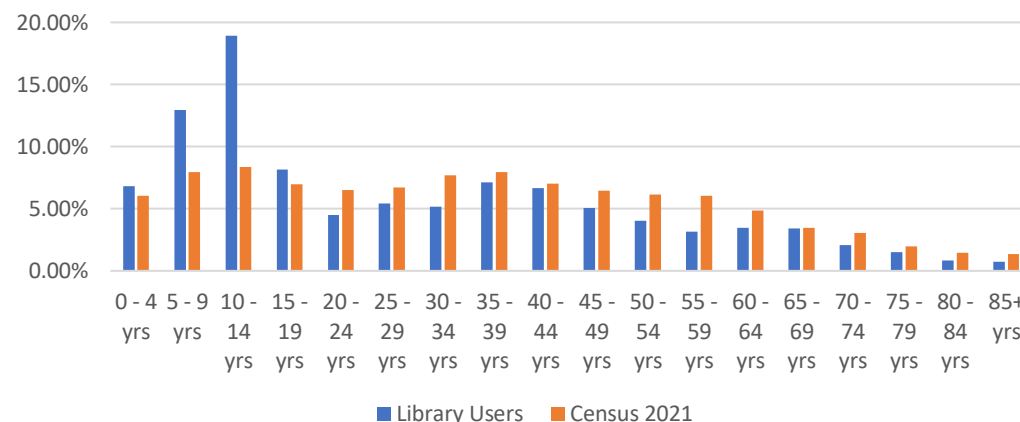


BRITE Centre

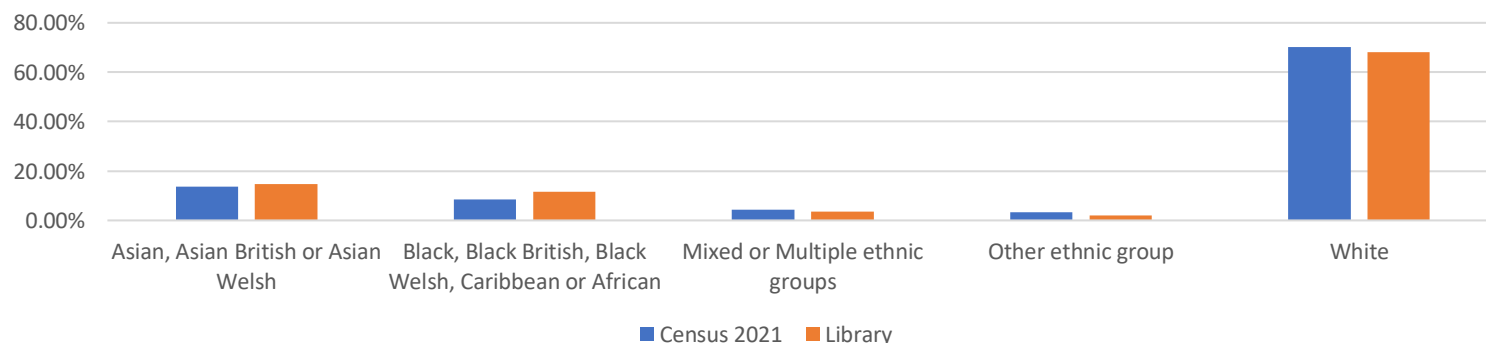
BRITE Centre Library vs Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields Ward



Comparison of Age Profiles: BRITE Centre Library vs Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields Ward

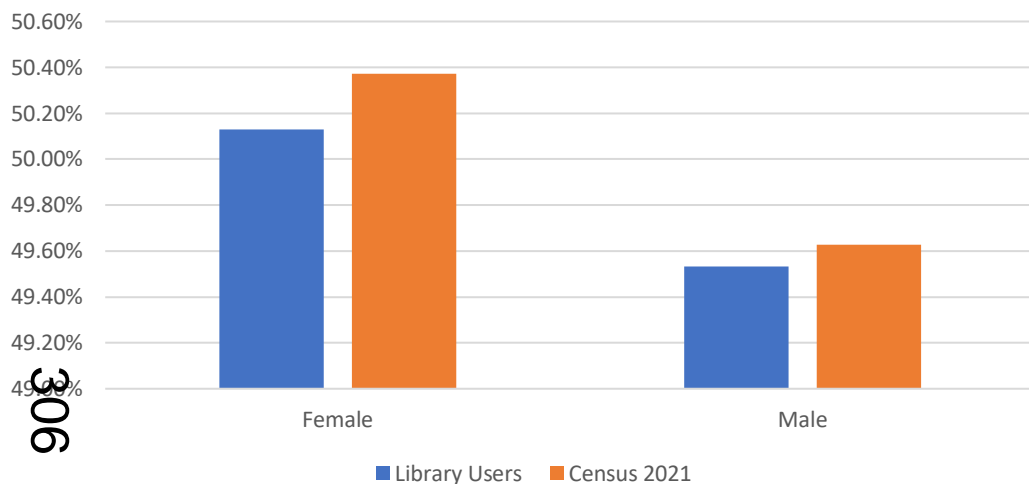


Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles BRITE Centre Library vs. Braunstone Park & Rowley Feilds Ward (Census 2021)

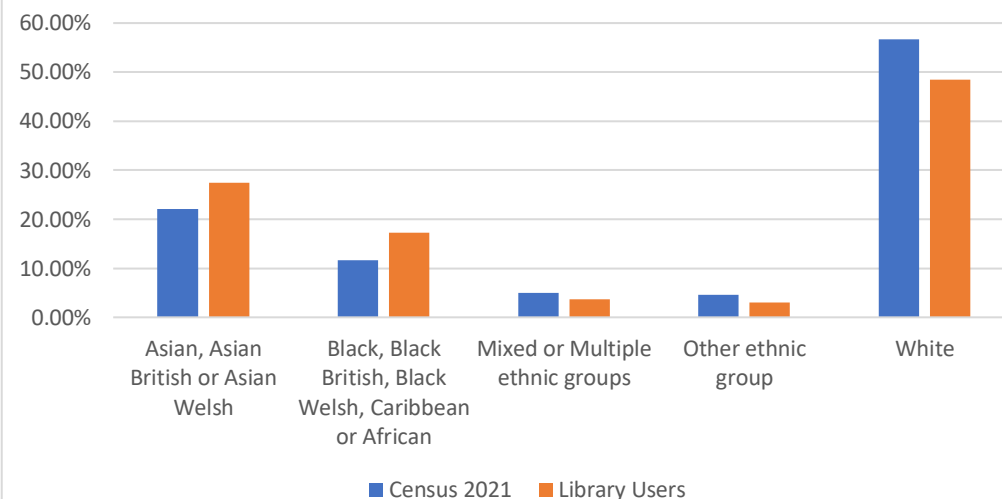


Leicester Central Library

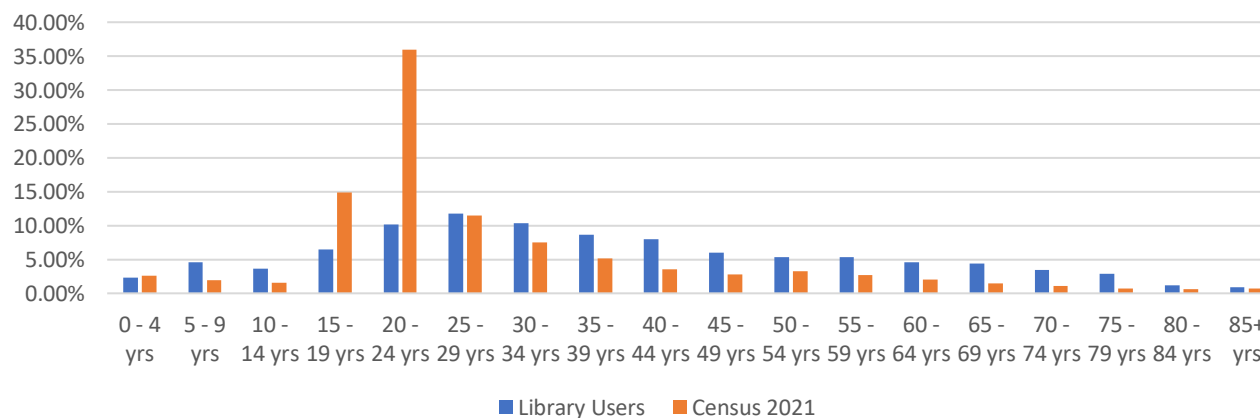
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Central Library Users vs. Castle Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Central Library Users vs. Castle Ward (Census 2021)

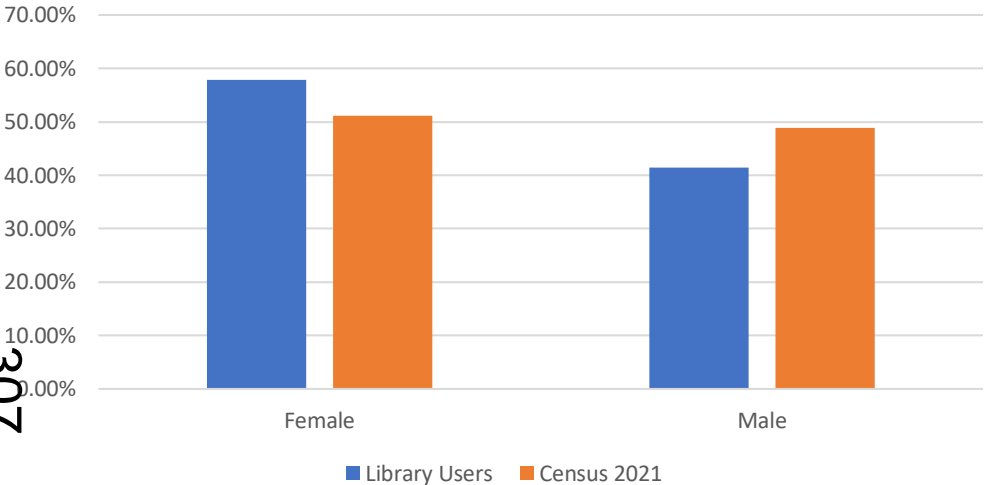


Comparison of Age Profiles: Central Library Users vs. Castle Ward (Census 2021)

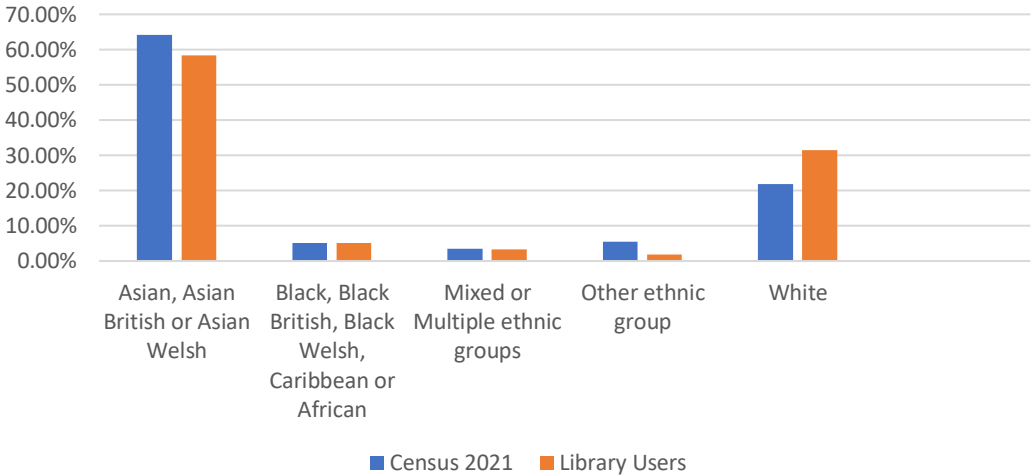


Evington Library

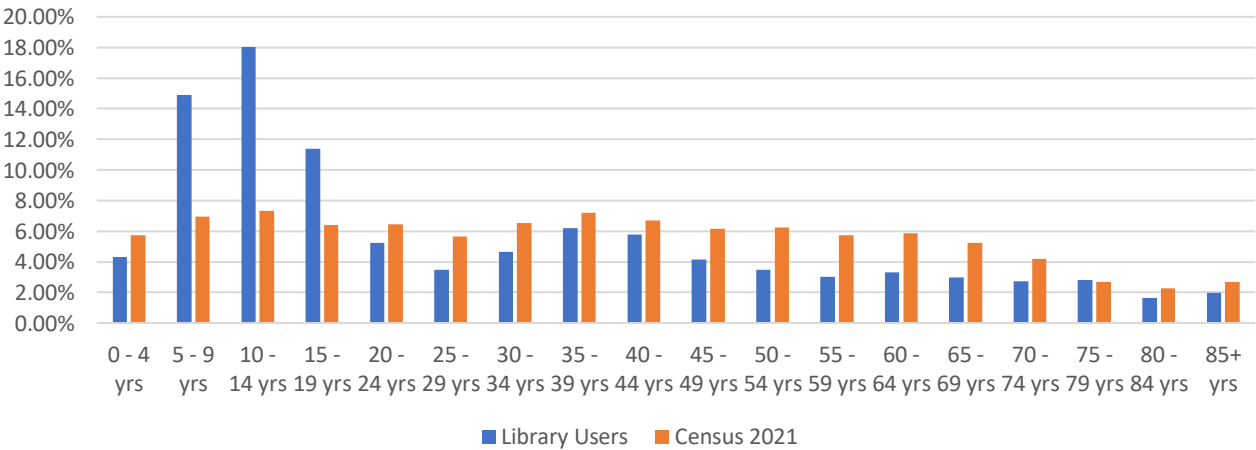
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Evington Library vs. Evington Ward (Census 2021)



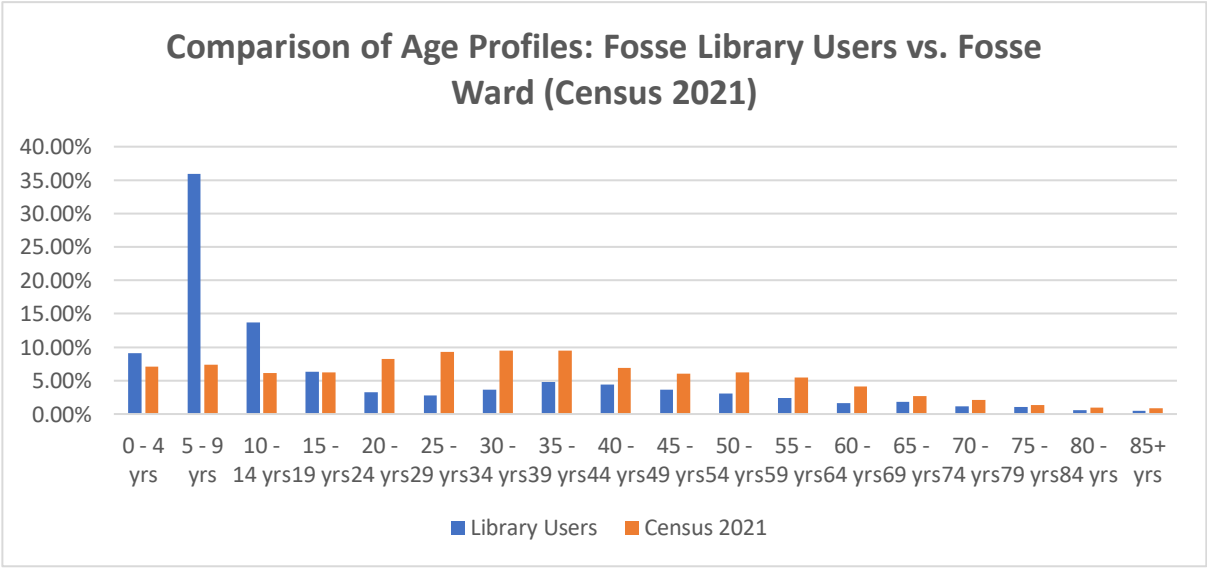
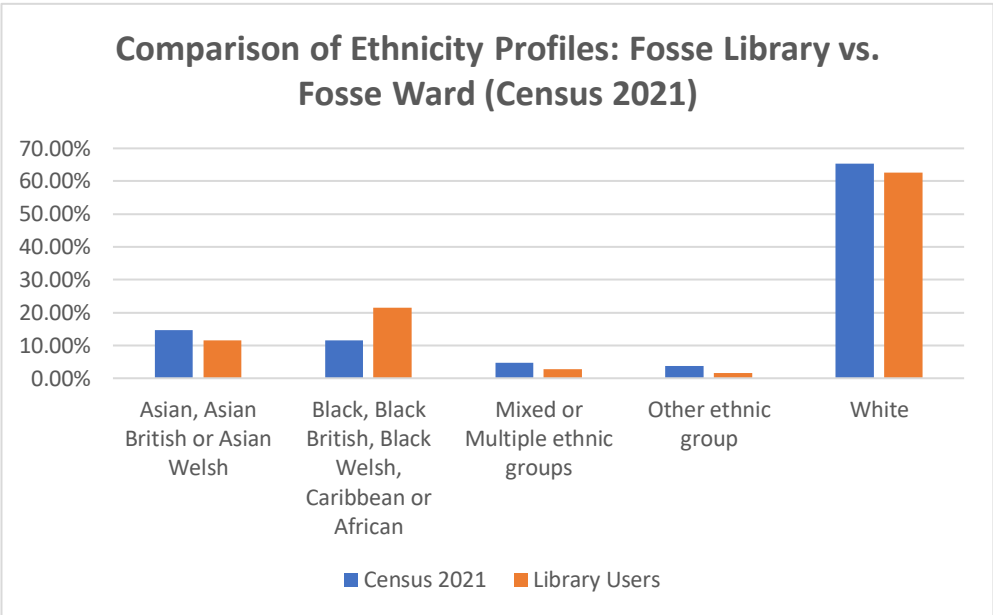
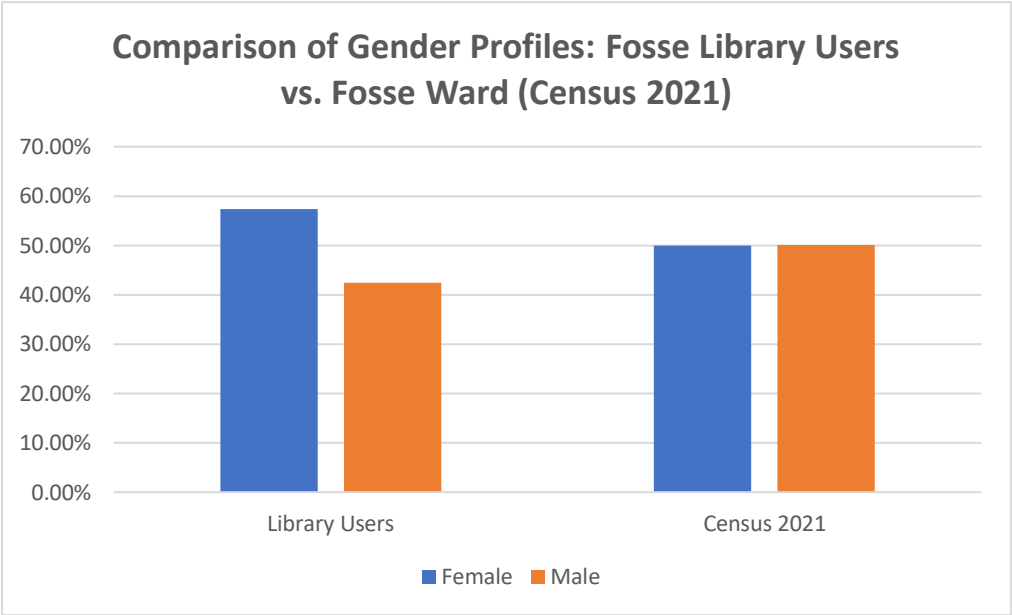
Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Evington Library vs. Evington Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Age Profiles: Evington Library vs. Evington Ward (Census 2021)

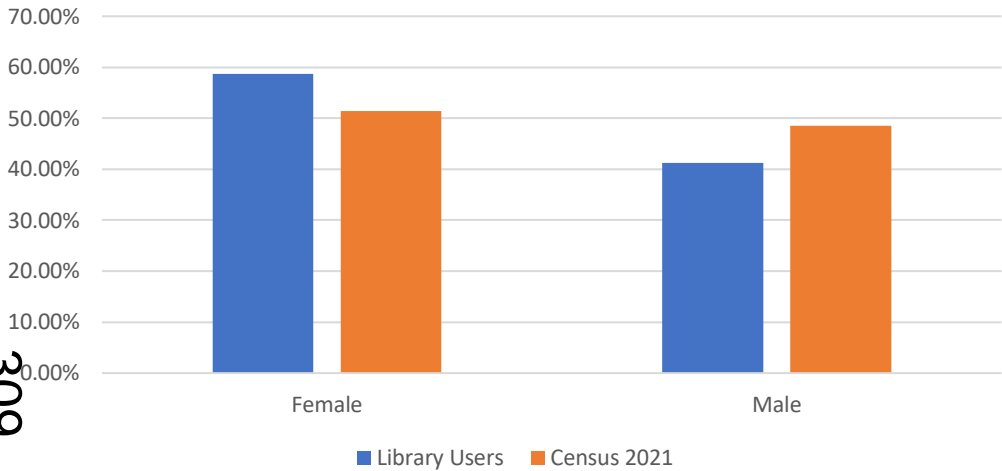


Fosse Library

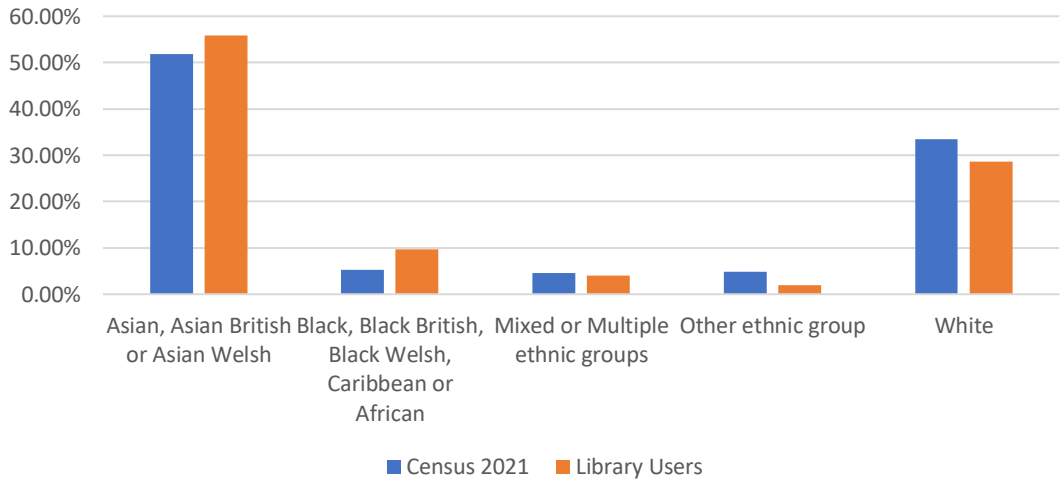


Hamilton Library

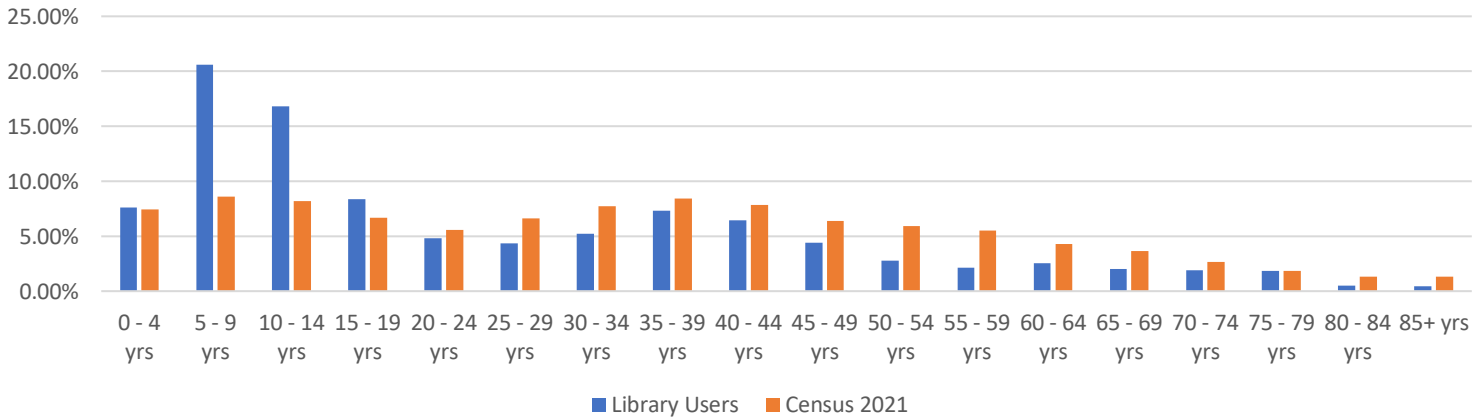
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Hamilton Library vs. Humberstone & Hamilton Ward (Census 2021)



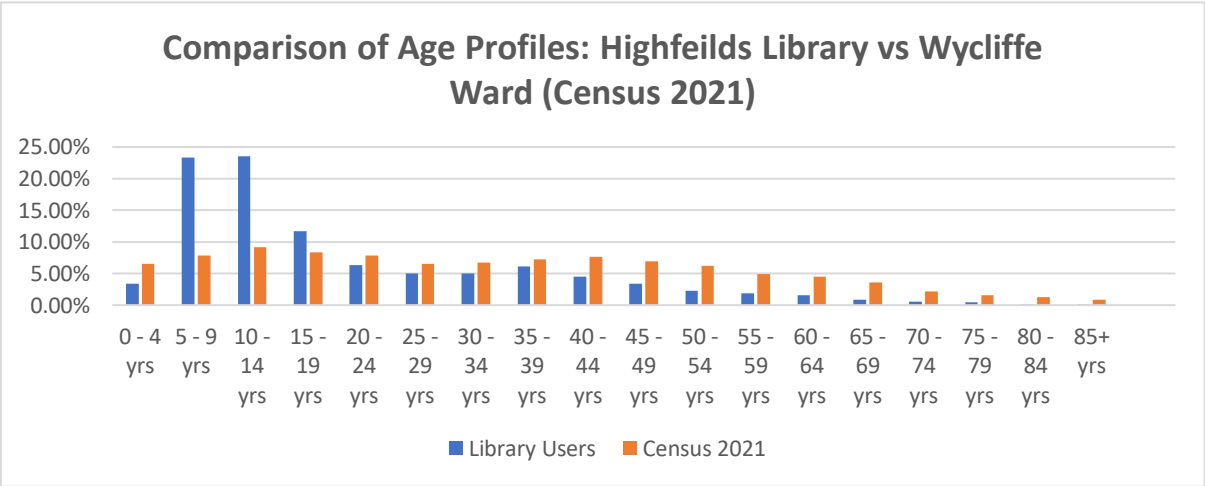
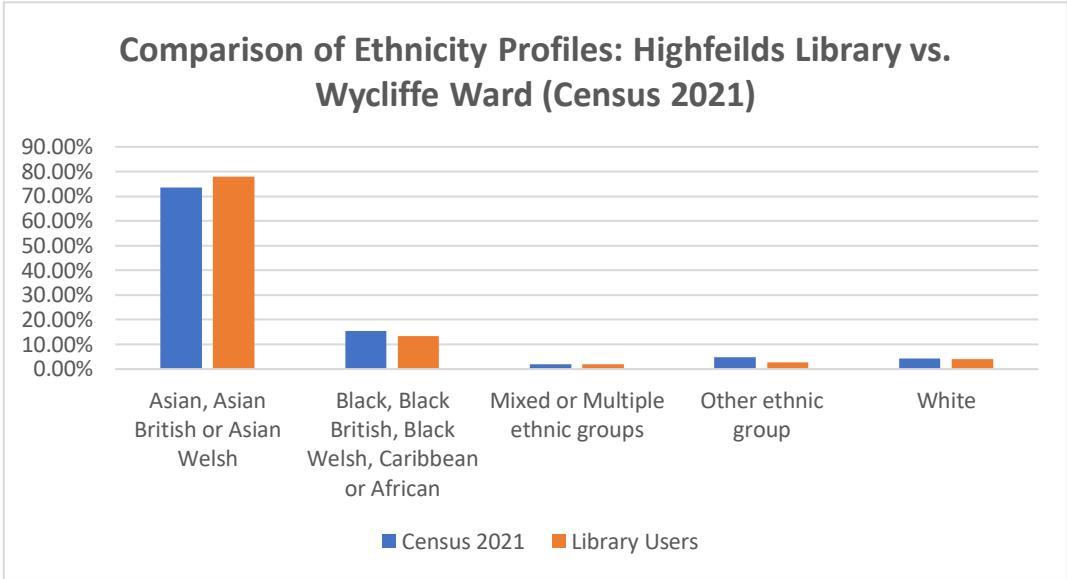
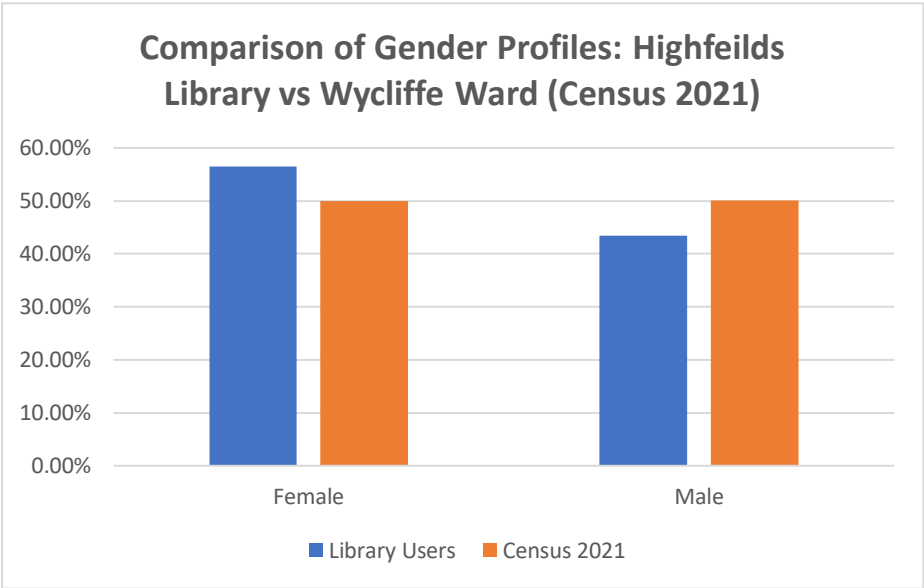
Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Hamilton Library vs. Humberstone & Hamilton Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Age Profiles: Hamilton Library vs. Humberstone & Hamilton Ward (Census 2021)

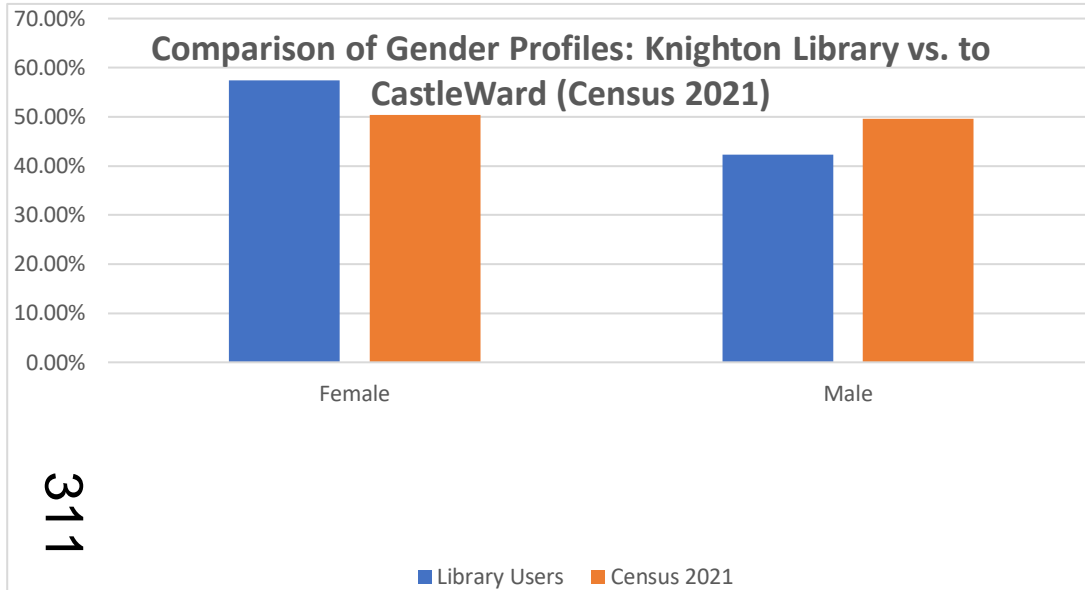


Highfields Library

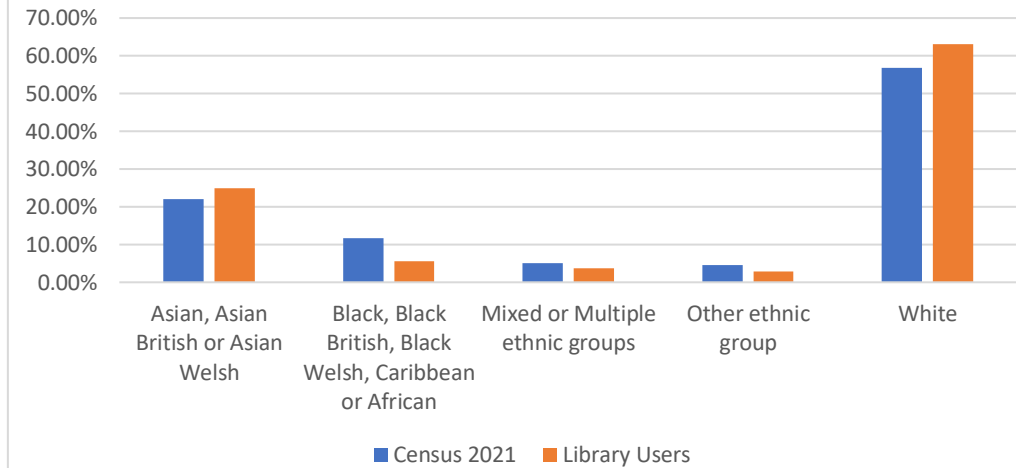


Knighton Library

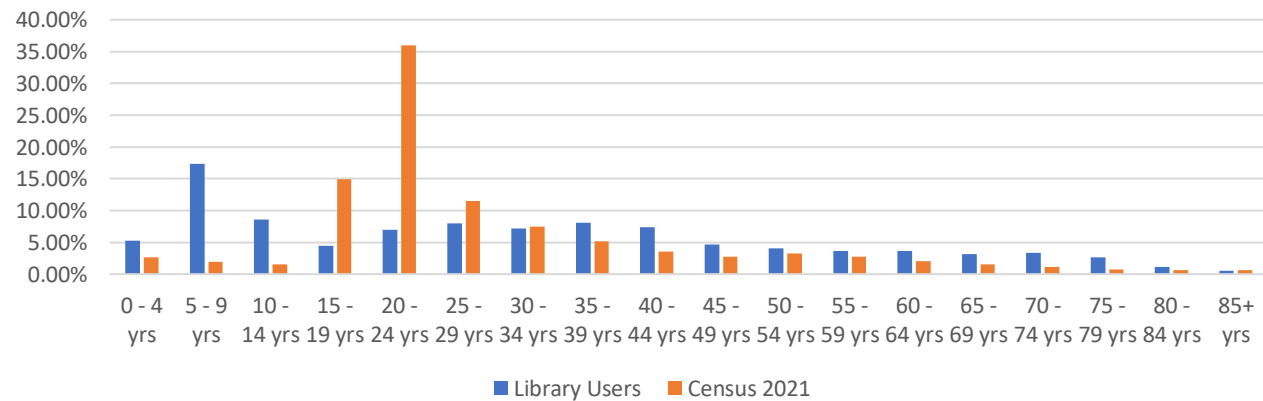
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Knighton Library vs. to CastleWard (Census 2021)



Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Knighton Library vs. Castle Ward (Census 2021)

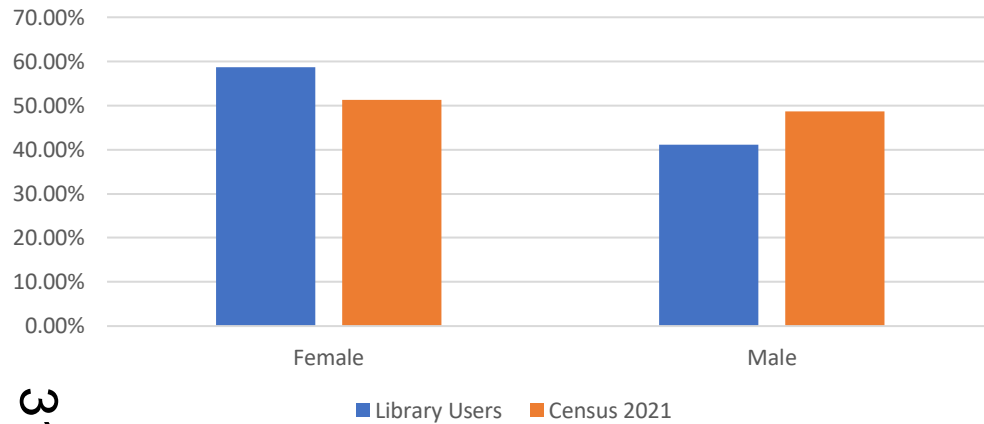


Comparison of Age Profiles: Knighton Library vs. to Castle Ward (Census 2021)

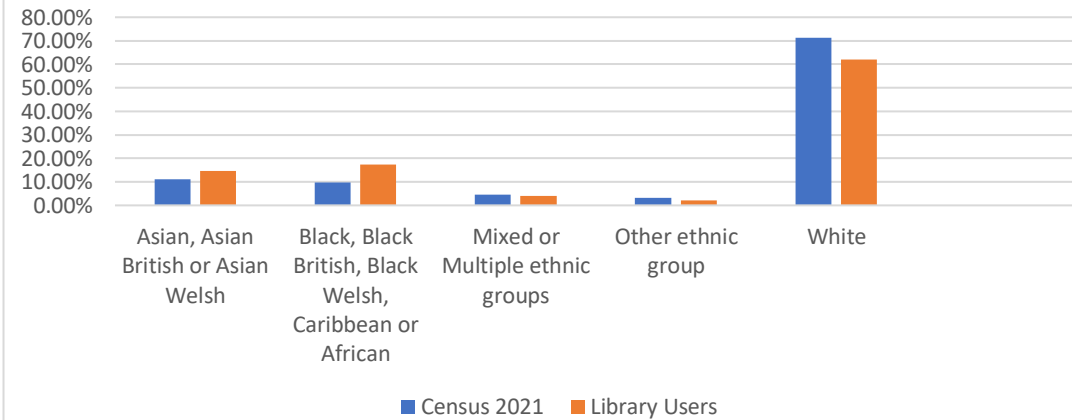


New Parks

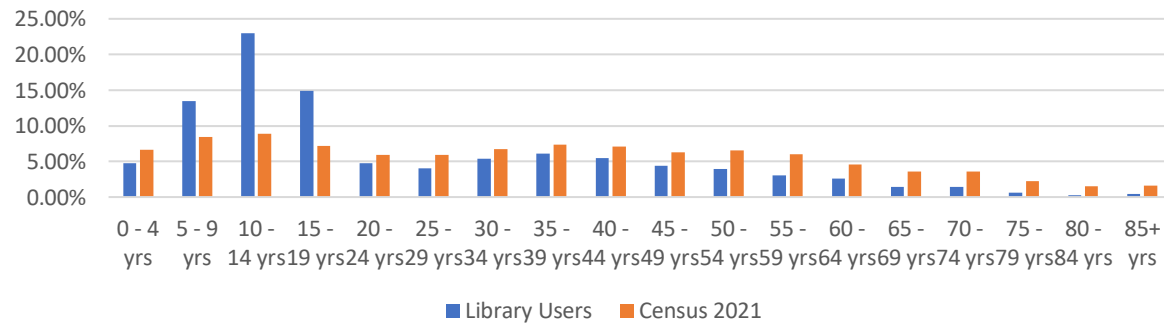
Comparison of Gender Profiles: New Parks Library vs. Western Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: New Parks Library vs. Western Ward (Census 2021)

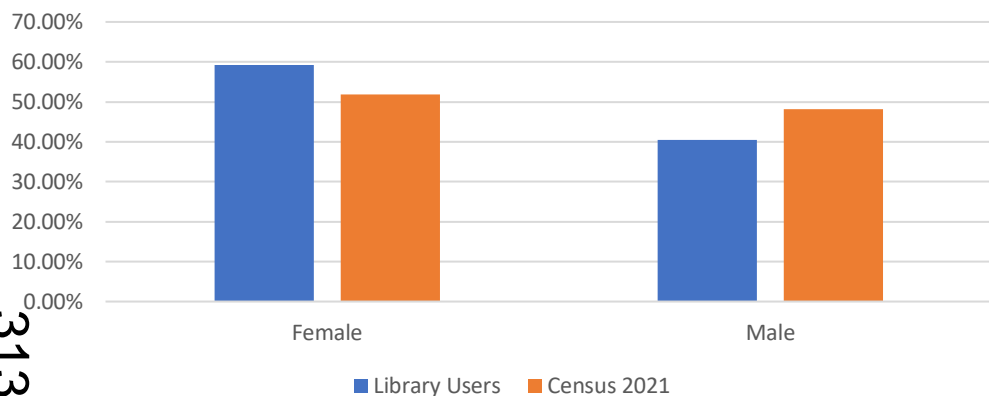


Comparison of Age Profiles: New Parks Library vs. Western Ward (Census 2021)

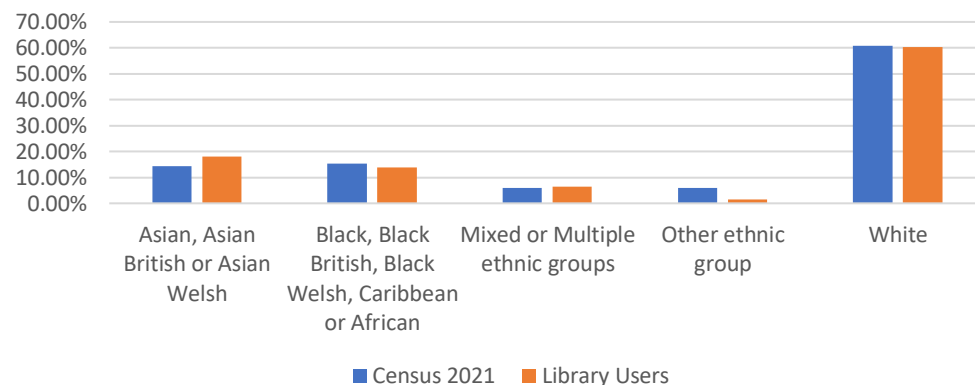


Pork Pie

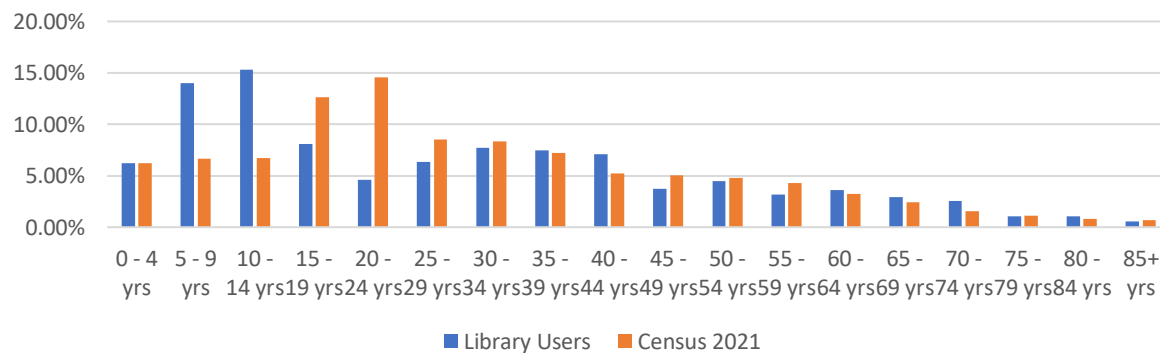
Comparison of Gender Profiles: Pork Pie Library vs. Saffron Ward (Census 2021)



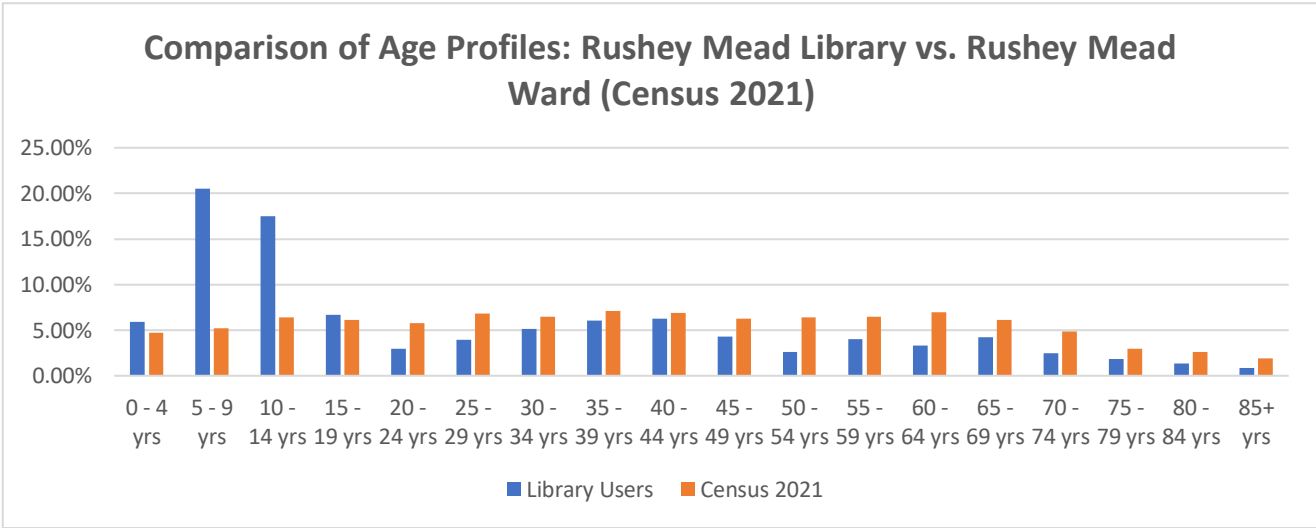
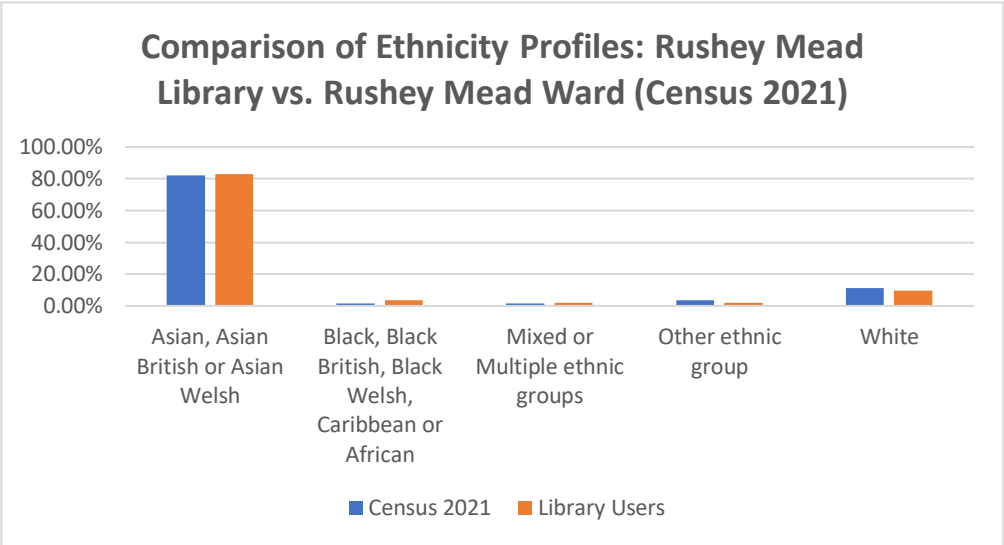
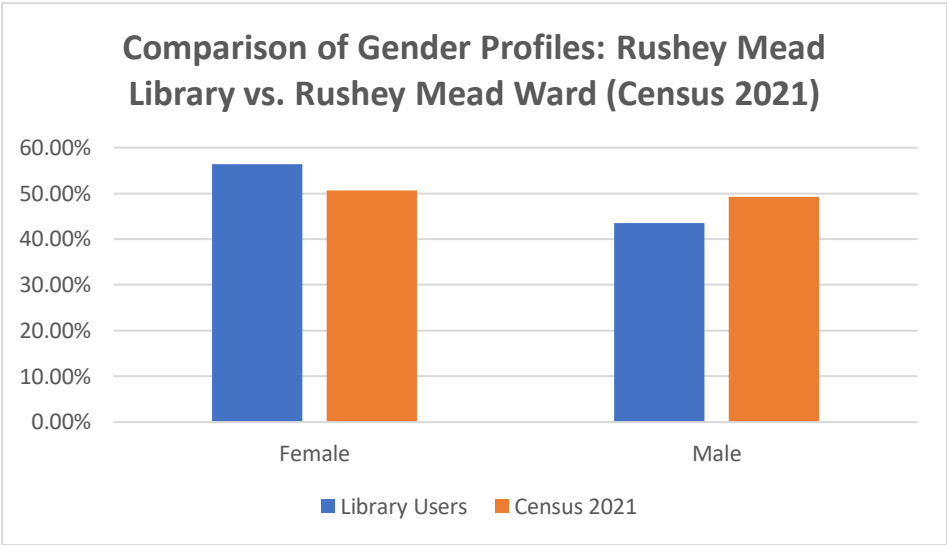
Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Pork Pie Library vs. Saffron Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Age Profiles: Pork Pie Library vs. Saffron Ward (Census 2021)

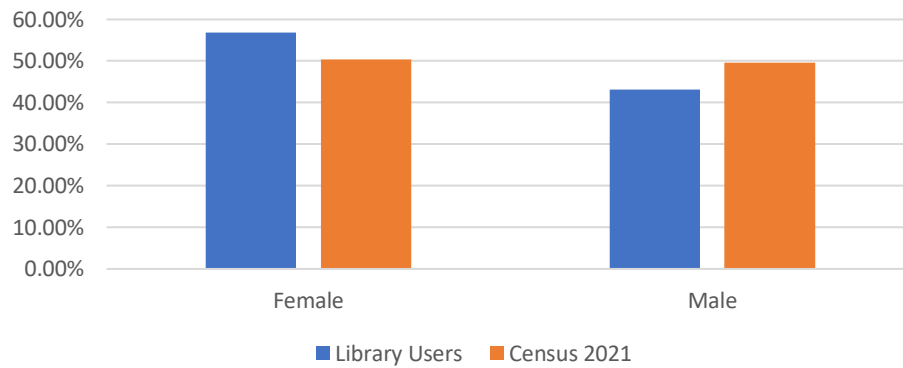


Rushey Mead Library

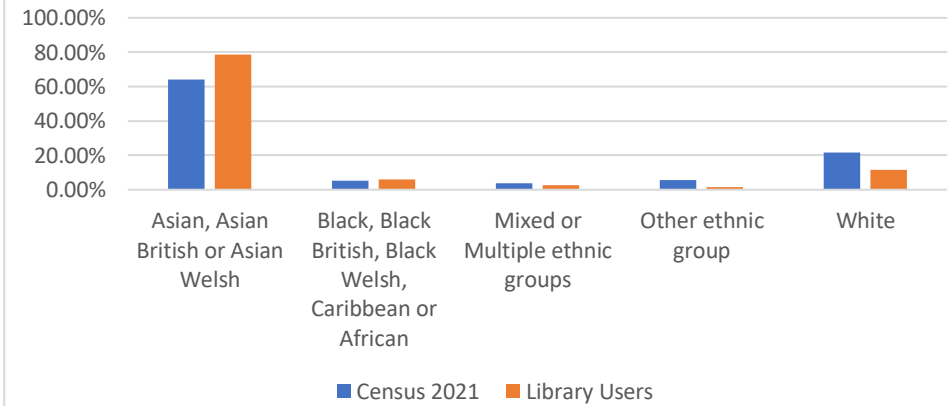


St Barnabas Library

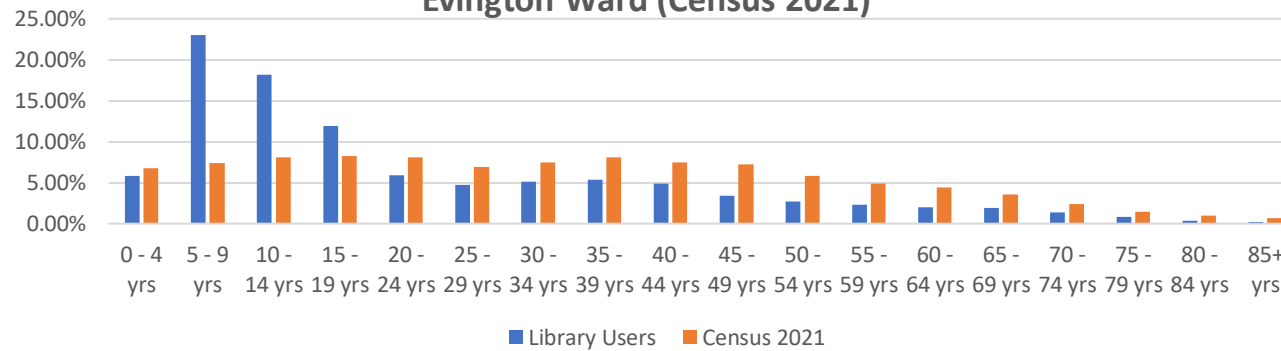
Comparison of Gender Profiles: St Barnabas Library vs. to North Evington Ward (Census 2021)



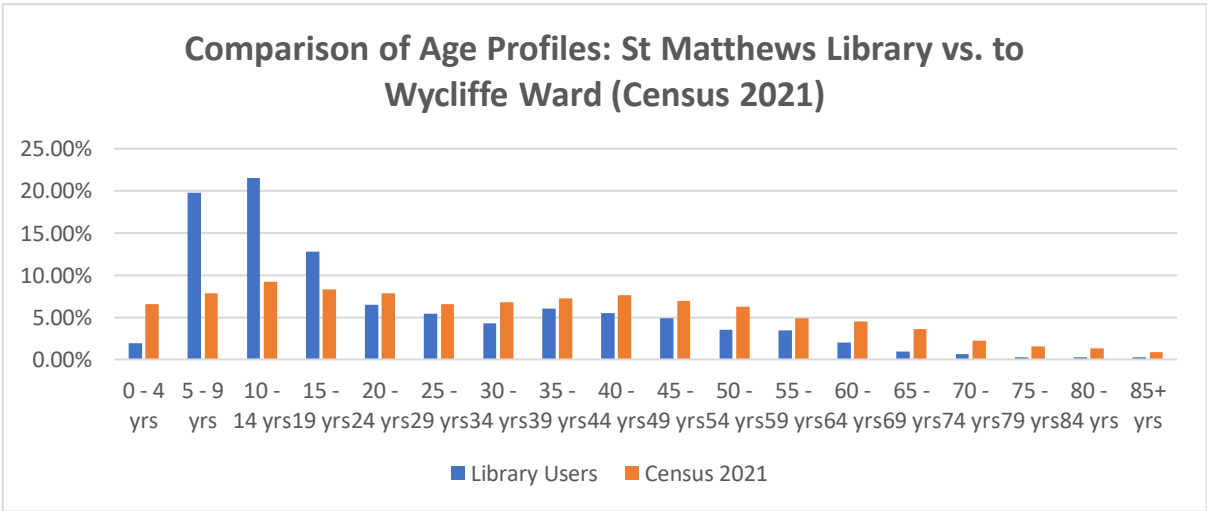
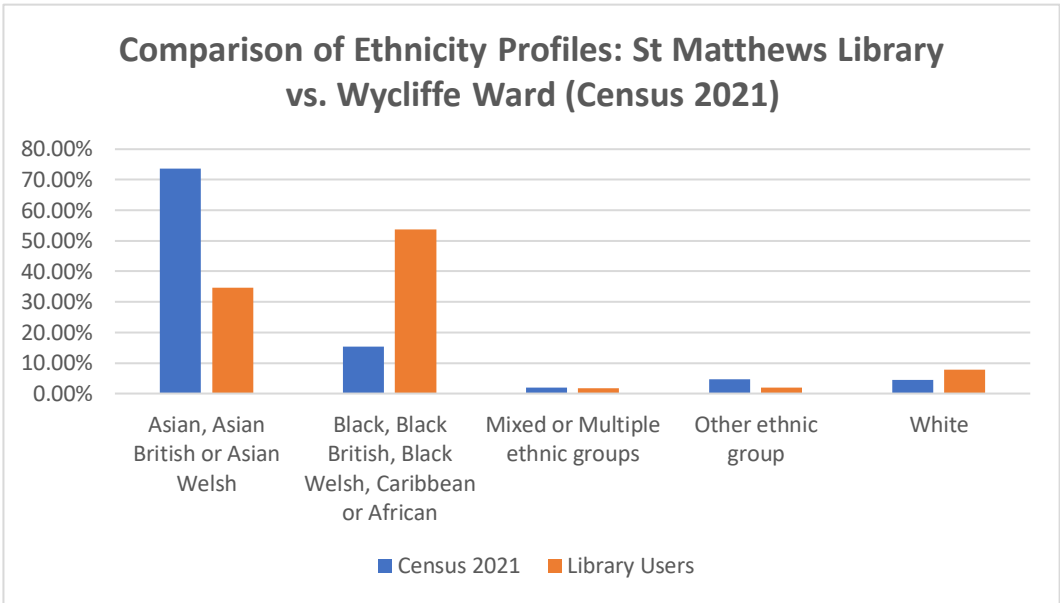
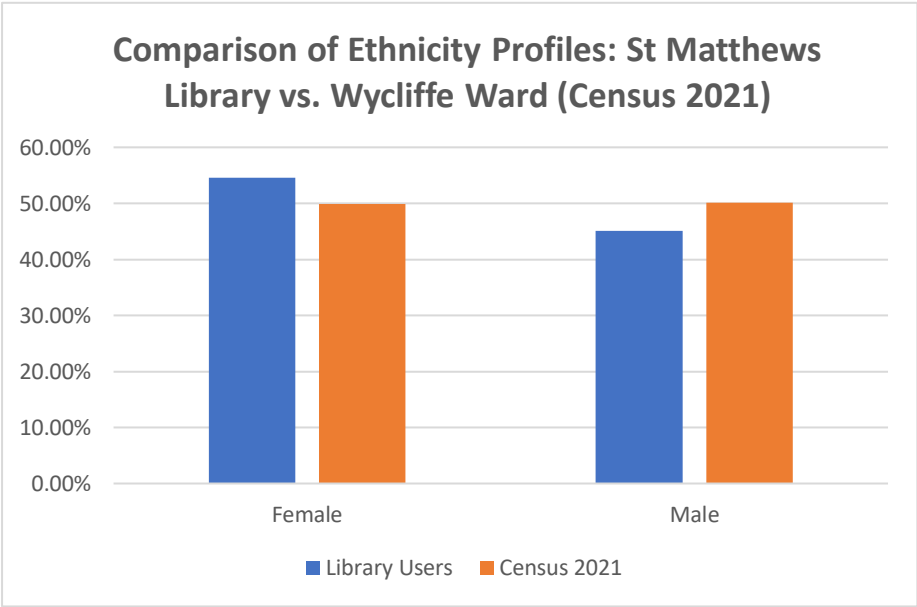
Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: St Barnabas Library vs. Rushey Mead Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Age Profiles: St Barnabas Library vs. to North Evington Ward (Census 2021)

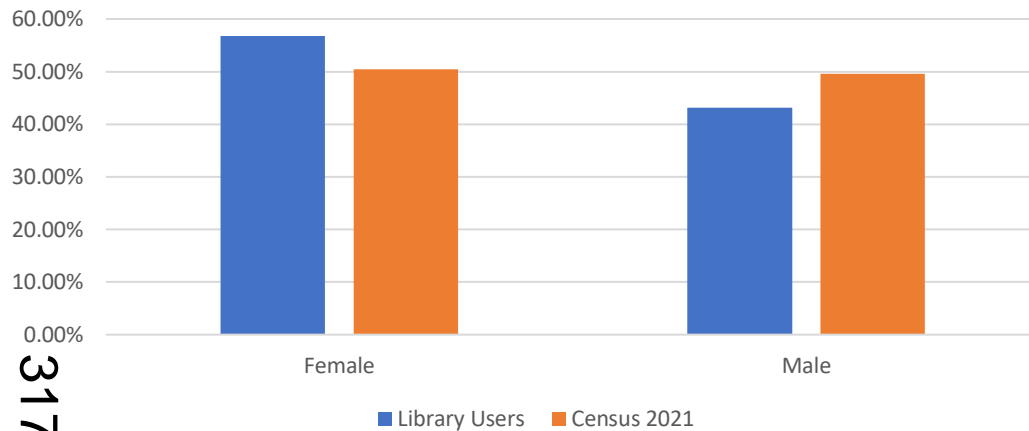


St Matthews Centre

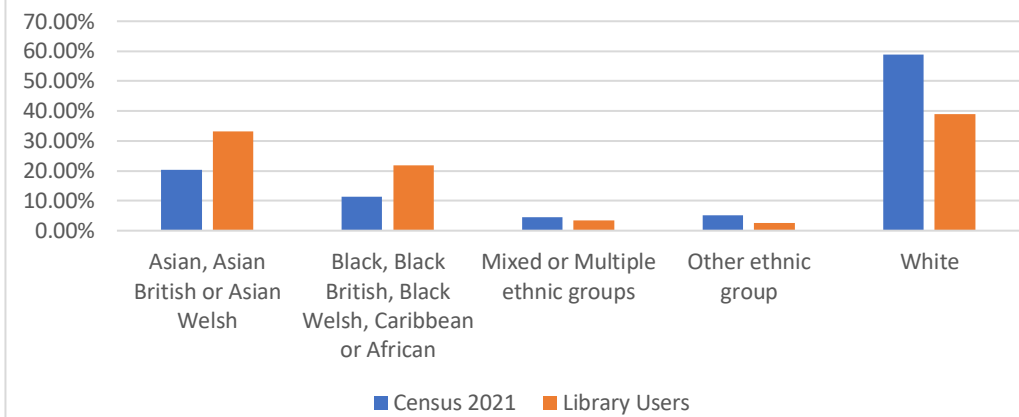


Westcotes Library

Comparison of Gender Profiles: Westcotes Library vs. to Westcotes Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Ethnicity Profiles: Westcotes Library vs. Westcotes Ward (Census 2021)



Comparison of Age Profiles: Westcotes Library vs. to Westcotes Ward (Census 2021)

