

Libraries Consultation

East Sussex Libraries The Way Forward

Our proposals

Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018/19 to 2022/23

eastsussex.gov.uk/haveyoursay



Ends 14 December 2017

Why are we consulting?

We are asking for your views on our draft Strategy for East Sussex libraries over the next five years.

The draft Strategy sets out our proposed approach to provide a modern, sustainable Library and Information Service for the future, recognising the financial constraints which East Sussex County Council faces and also the changes in the way that people are using libraries.

Our draft Strategy presents proposals for a needs-based library service. This means a library service where we prioritise our resources to achieve outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex.

Our work to produce our draft Strategy shows that there are significant needs across the county, and especially within certain communities, around literacy, attainment, employment and ultimately health and wellbeing, which the Library and Information Service is ideally placed to help tackle.

You can read our draft Strategy and all of the evidence on which our proposals are based in full on our website at eastsussex.gov.uk/librarystrategy. Alternatively, you can request a paper copy by contacting us using the details below.

How to take part in this consultation

The consultation runs for 12 weeks, from 21 September to 14 December 2017. We would like to hear from you whether or not you currently use the Library and Information Service. We will do all we can to make it as easy as possible for everyone to have their say.

There are a number of ways you can give your views:

- By completing the questionnaire online at eastsussex.gov.uk/haveyoursay
- By picking up a copy of the questionnaire in a library
- By printing a copy of the questionnaire from eastsussex.gov.uk/haveyoursay and returning it to us
- By contacting us to request a paper copy of the questionnaire using the details below.

Completed surveys can be returned to the drop off points in East Sussex libraries or posted back to us at: Library Consultation, West D Floor, County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE.

If you have a question about this consultation, need help to take part or need a copy of the information in a different format or another language, please contact us by e-mail at library.consultation@eastsussex.gov.uk or by phone on 01273 335165 and 01273 335397.

What changes are proposed?

Libraries in East Sussex are a popular service with almost 1.5 million visits during 2016/17. However, the number of visits and the number of items issued in libraries have both reduced by around 40% over the past ten years. By comparison, the number of items borrowed online has risen, although these still represent a relatively small amount of our overall loans.

Our proposals would enable us to modernise the East Sussex Library and Information Service in order to respond to the increasing demand from customers to access library services online and the reducing number of people visiting libraries. They would enable us to cut our costs by having fewer libraries and to prioritise our resources to provide better support to people in East Sussex.

We propose to help improve literacy for adults and children and provide learning opportunities for people so that they can get on in life by having better skills and finding employment. By providing independent, reliable information and resources, we believe we have a key role to play in supporting the health and wellbeing of people in East Sussex. We also believe that libraries should continue to provide a way for people to get online if they cannot do so at home, or need help accessing the internet.

The majority of our customers use our libraries for the pleasure of reading and the benefits this brings. Although we propose a more modern library service with fewer libraries, we will continue to provide a highly accessible network of libraries containing all of the things people love about going to the library. Over 90% of our customers would still be able to use their current library in exactly the same way they do today.

The key **changes** we are proposing are:

- an **enhanced eLibrary**, continuing to expand the growing range of online services and materials we offer. As well as accessing materials online, the eLibrary allows people to manage their library loans anywhere, anytime, using the familiar 'click and collect' approach.
- a **greater focus on outreach provision**, by working more closely with other County Council services and partners. This will enable us to use limited resources more effectively to achieve better outcomes for those people who stand to benefit most from the service, but may be less able or inclined to visit a library.
- a **smaller network of 17 library buildings**, in appropriate locations across the county according to identified needs, which will continue to provide a comprehensive range of materials to borrow and resources to use. Our proposals ensure there remains a very high level of accessibility to a library by public transport or by car within a reasonable journey time of 20-25 minutes.
- to **no longer provide the Mobile Library Service**, or provide a supply of books for the Northiam Village Library. This proposal takes into account the fact that the 17 library buildings and the eLibrary provide a high level of accessibility to library services for rural communities, and are a more efficient way to meet needs for library services in these areas.

We fully recognise that, although our proposals will offer a more modern service overall, there is likely to be a greater impact for certain groups, particularly older people, people with a disability

and some people in rural areas. We are proposing measures to reduce the impact by supporting their particular needs. These include a Community Library Card, allowing community representatives to borrow a larger number of items for a long period to make available to their local community, e.g. in a village hall or community centre. Anyone who cannot easily use a library due to disability or frailty or caring responsibilities is able use the Home Library Service.

Further detail on the proposals themselves and our rationale for them can be found in the Strategy on our website at eastsussex.gov.uk/librarystrategy

How much will this save?

The proposals within the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy would enable us to make a saving of £653,000 per year by co-locating library services with other County Council services, income generation, and the reduced provision of library buildings, the Mobile Library and other services.

This would mean that the Library and Information Service has been able to identify total savings for the Libraries Transformation Programme of over £1.9 million toward an original savings target of £2 million. The Programme has included other changes to the Library and Information Service, including administrative and management savings and the reduction in library opening hours.

What happens next?

Our proposals have not yet been decided. East Sussex County Council's Cabinet have approved our draft Strategy so that you can have your say. Once the consultation is complete and the results have been analysed, the draft Strategy and all the supporting documents will be amended and updated proposals presented to Cabinet in March 2018. We aim to start implementing our new Strategy from April 2018.

Section 1 A needs based Library and Information Service

Our proposed Vision and Strategic Outcomes provide a clear direction for the delivery of the future Library and Information Service. They have been developed based on the evidence that libraries can and already do support a wide range of needs, directly and indirectly. Each Strategic Outcome would be met through a range of different offers, or services provided according to evidence of need.

Our Vision and Strategic Outcomes

We will provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives. We will prioritise our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes:

Improving child and adult literacy. We will provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading and the better life chances that literacy unlocks for people.

Supporting the economy. We will provide training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment.

Better health and wellbeing. We will promote reading as a source of wellbeing and provide reliable information and services to promote good health and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for.

Increasing digital inclusion. We will provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and paid access to printers, with training for people to use technology and the internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services, and participate in the benefits of the digital world.

We will ensure that in working to deliver our Strategic Outcomes we will meet our statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex.

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we are focussing our limited resources on the right areas, as listed above in our Vision and Strategic Outcomes?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't feel able to say

Space is available in Section 4 on page 9 to make comments or suggestions on any question

Section 2 Ways people would be able to use our proposed range of library services

Our proposals include an enhanced eLibrary, by continuing to expand the range of online services and materials that are offered in order to increasingly serve needs online. We also propose a greater focus on outreach provision, working closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we reach communities and individuals with the greatest needs.

We propose a network of 17 library buildings, in appropriate locations across the county according to identified needs.

The 17 libraries are Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Eastbourne, Forest Row, Hailsham, Hampden Park, Hastings, Heathfield, Hollington, Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Rye, Seaford, Uckfield and Wadhurst.

Over 90% of customers currently use one or more of these 17 libraries and are unaffected by the proposals. These 17 libraries are within a 20 minute journey by public transport for over 86% of all East Sussex residents and within a 20 minute car journey for over 99% of residents.

Q2. To what extent do you agree that our proposals provide a reasonable range of different ways for people to use the Library and Information Service according to their needs?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Don't feel able to say

Space is available in Section 4 on page 9 to make comments or suggestions on any question

We propose not to retain seven of our current libraries, based on the evidence of need in those areas, the fact that there are higher needs in other parts of the county, and the proximity and transport availability to other libraries. These libraries are Langney, Mayfield, Ore, Pevensey Bay, Polegate, Ringmer and Willingdon.

We also propose to no longer provide the Mobile Library Service, or provide a supply of books for the Northiam Village Library.

Q3. Have you used any of the following libraries in the last 12 months, or has someone used any of them on your behalf? (Please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Langney Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Ringmer Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayfield Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Willindon Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ore Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pevensey Bay Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Northiam Village Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polegate Library | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these (please go to Section 3 on page 7) |

Q4. If we no longer retain the libraries listed above, will you be able to use one of the following alternative services instead? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Battle Library
- ☐ Bexhill Library
- ☐ Crowborough Library
- ☐ Eastbourne Library
- ☐ Forest Row Library
- ☐ Hailsham Library
- ☐ Hampden Park Library
- ☐ Hastings Library
- ☐ Heathfield Library
- ☐ Hollington Library
- ☐ Lewes Library
- ☐ Newhaven Library
- ☐ Peacehaven Library
- ☐ Rye Library
- ☐ Seaford Library
- ☐ Uckfield Library
- ☐ Wadhurst Library
- ☐ eLibrary (includes reserving and renewing books online, downloading eBooks and/or eAudiobooks, using online reference and training materials)
- ☐ Home Library Service (for people who cannot easily use a library due to disability or frailty, or are caring for someone who cannot be left)
- ☐ None of these (please go to Q5)

Q5. If you answered “None of these” in question 4, which of the following best explain why you would not be able to use one of our other services instead? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ I am unable to travel to one of the remaining 17 libraries
- ☐ I do not have access to a computer or mobile device to use the eLibrary (online library)
- ☐ I do not know how to use the eLibrary (online library)
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

Section 3 Getting involved

We are proposing a number of ways in which people can get more involved to support the library service to increase our capacity and resources, so that we can support a wider range of needs in different communities. This includes more volunteering opportunities in existing and new roles within the service.

We would also welcome the opportunity to work with communities if they are interested in extending their local library opening hours on a volunteer basis, and working with communities to explore options for the seven libraries which we do not propose to retain.

Q6. Would you be interested in finding out more about any of the following volunteering roles, either on an occasional or regular basis?

- ☐ Computer Buddy (countywide)
- ☐ Rhymetime/Storytime sessions (countywide)
- ☐ Home Library Service (countywide, must have own vehicle)
- ☐ Bookends second-hand bookshop (Eastbourne Only)
- ☐ Study Clubs
- ☐ Coding Clubs
- ☐ Meeting and greeting customers and helping them find what they are looking for

Q7. Please tick how often you might be interested in volunteering.

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ One-off events

Please tell us your name and provide us with your contact details so we can get in touch and find out a bit more about what you would like to do.

Name:

Telephone number/email address:

Volunteer led opening hours and Friends Groups

We invite communities to come forward who wish to work with us to set up volunteer-run library sessions as a way of increasing library opening hours, if there is a desire within their communities to do so. Volunteers would need to be managed and coordinated by the community, with full training and support from the Library and Information Service. Similarly, if communities wanted to set up Friends Groups as a way of supporting the library service through fund-raising or volunteering, we would be very interested in hearing your ideas.

Options for community library provision

We invite communities to come forward to discuss potential options for keeping open the seven libraries that we are not proposing to retain within the East Sussex Library and Information Service, if they can be funded wholly by communities or other organisations. Alternatively,

communities or other groups or organisations may wish to take over the leases of buildings or purchase them, and run them as completely independent libraries or use them for other purposes. Additional information, including indicative annual running costs, are provided in the draft Strategy.

Q8. Please tick any of the following opportunities you might be interested in and supply your contact details so that we can get in touch. You are not committing yourself at this stage.

- ☐ Volunteer led opening hours
- ☐ Setting up a Friends Group
- ☐ Options for community involvement library provision

Q9. Please tell us which library you are interested in supporting?

Name of Library:

Name:

Telephone number / email address:

Section 4: Additional comments

Please use the following box to provide information related to any of your answers to the questions above or any other comments that you wish to make.

Section 5: About you

We wish to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally and that no one gets left out. That is why we ask you these questions.

We will not share the information you give us with anyone else. We will only use it to help us make informed decisions about our services and their likely impacts.

If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you do not have to.

Q10. Have you used the East Sussex Library and Information Service in the last 12 months, either for yourself or on behalf of someone else, or has someone else accessed for you? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Yes for myself
- ☐ Yes on behalf of a child aged under 16
- ☐ Yes on behalf of another adult
- ☐ Yes, someone else accessed the library service for me
- ☐ No

Q11. Do you have access to a car?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q12. Do you have access to the internet? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Yes at home
- ☐ Yes at work
- ☐ Yes on my mobile
- ☐ Yes in the library or in an public internet café
- ☐ No

Q13. What is your home postcode? (Please provide in the box below)

Q14. What is your age? (Please tick one box only)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 – 64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 – 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 – 74 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 – 84 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 – 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 + |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 – 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Q15. Are you?

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

Q16. Which of the following best describes you? (Please tick one box only)

- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other* (Please Specify)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

*

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted or is likely to last at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example) are considered disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q17. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Please tick one box only)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q18. If you answered yes to Q17, please tell us the type of impairment that applies to you. (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Physical impairment
- ☐ Mental health condition
- ☐ Sensory impairment
- ☐ Learning disability
- ☐ Long standing illness
- ☐ Other* (Please Specify)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

*

Q19. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong? (Please tick one box only)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Gypsy/Roma | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian other* (Please Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White other* (Please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Black other* (Please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed other* (Please Specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ethnic group* (Please specify) |

*If your ethnic group was not specified in the list please describe your ethnic group:

Q20. Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion or belief? (Please tick one box only)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q21. If you answered yes to Q20, please tell us the religion or belief that applies to you. (Please tick one box only)

- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Sikh

☐ Other (Please Specify):

☐ Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will be analysed along with all other responses and the results used to inform our amended Strategy, which will be presented to Cabinet in March 2018.