

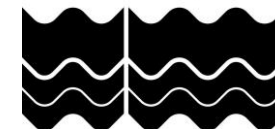
## Equality Impact Analysis Template

**Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) (or Equality Impact Assessment) aims to make services and public policy better for all service-users and staff and supports value for money by getting council services right first time.**

We use EqIAs to enable us to consider all relevant information from an Equality requirements perspective when procuring or restructuring a service, or introducing a new policy or strategy. This analysis of impacts is then reflected in the relevant action plan to get the best outcomes for the Council, its staff and service-users.

EqIAs are used to analyse and assess how the Council’s work might impact differently on different groups of people. EqIAs help the Council to make good decisions for its service-users, staff and residents and provide evidence that those decision conform with the Council’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

<b>Title of Project/Service/Policy</b>	Libraries Capital Program 2024-25 Bexhill Library
<b>Team/Department</b>	Library and Information Service
<b>Directorate</b>	Communities, Economy & Transport
<b>Provide a comprehensive description of your Project (Service/Policy, etc.) including its Purpose and Scope</b>	<p>In 2024-25 the service will undertake a partial refurbishment of Bexhill library. The proposed works will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s Capital Strategy which states investment will be undertaken in order to maintain libraries in a safe and suitable condition from which to deliver the outcomes of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy (LSCS).</p> <p>For further information on the analysis undertaken please refer to <a href="#">Technical Appendix 1 of the Strategy– Needs Assessment in the new strategy</a>.</p>



## Initial assessment of whether your project requires an EqlA

When answering these questions, please keep in mind all legally protected equality characteristics (sex/gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity) of the people actually or potentially receiving and benefiting from the services or the policy.

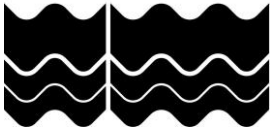
In particular consider whether there are any potential equality related barriers that people may experience when getting to know about, accessing or receiving the service or the policy to be introduced or changed.

Discuss the results of your Equality assessment with the Equality Lead for your department and agree whether improvements or changes need to be made to any aspect of your Project.

	Question	Yes	No	Don't Know
1	Is there evidence of different needs, experiences, issues or priorities on the basis of the equality characteristics (listed below) in relation to the service or policy/strategy area?	Yes		
2	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect how services are run and/or used or the ways the policy will impact different groups?	Yes		
3	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect service-users/staff/residents directly?	Yes		
4	Is there potential for, or evidence that, the service/policy may adversely affect inclusiveness or harm good relations between different groups of people?		No	
5	Is there any potential for, or evidence that any part of the service/aspects of the policy could have a direct or indirect discriminatory effect on service-users/staff/residents ?		No	
6	Is there any stakeholder (Council staff, residents, trade unions, service-users, VCSE organisations) concerned about actual, potential, or perceived discrimination/unequal treatment in the service or the Policy on the basis of the equality characteristics set out above that may lead to taking legal action against the Council?		No	
7	Is there any evidence or indication of higher or lower uptake of the service by, or the impact of the policy on, people who share the equality characteristics set out above?	Yes		

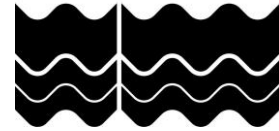
If you have answered “YES” or “DON'T KNOW” to any of the questions above, then the completion of an EqlA is necessary.

The need for an EqlA will depend on:



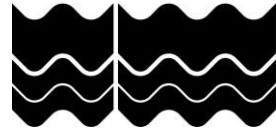
- How many questions you have answered “yes”, or “don’t know” to;
- The likelihood of the Council facing legal action in relation to the effects of service or the policy may have on groups sharing protected characteristics; and
- The likelihood of adverse publicity and reputational damage for the Council.

Low risk	Medium risk	High risk
x		



## 1. Update on previous EqlAs and outcomes of previous actions (if applicable)

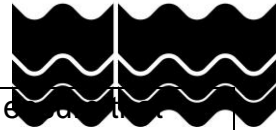
<b>What actions did you plan last time?</b> (List them from the previous EqlA)	<b>What improved as a result?</b> What outcomes have these actions achieved?	<b>What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take?</b> (add these to the Action Plan below)
Not applicable: no previous EqlA on these proposals		



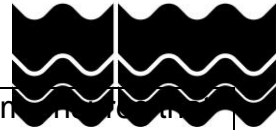
## 2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Consider the actual or potential impact of your project (service, or policy) against each of the equality characteristics.

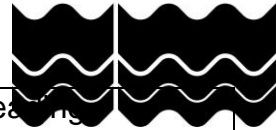
<b>Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010</b>	<b>What do you know?</b> Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	<b>What do people tell you?</b> Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	<b>What does this mean?</b> Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	<b>What can you do?</b> All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advance equality of opportunity,</li> <li>• eliminate discrimination, and</li> <li>• foster good relations</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<p>Data from our latest strategy states that 45% of regular adult visitors to libraries in East Sussex are aged 65 and half are retired.</p> <p>We also have results from the Oct 2021 Plus survey (undertaken every three years). Please note this survey is undertaken with all those physically visiting a library, therefore does not take into account those accessing e-offers and resources. 33% of visitors to Bexhill library during the</p>	<p>For some older residents, visiting the library and engaging with staff may be one of a few, if not the only, interaction during their day. The role of the library building and overall service is to provide an inclusive environment and provide services that encourages older residents to continue visiting.</p> <p>Older residents have advised that the library service is one of few places they can receive the advice and assistance they require to</p>	<p>Given that almost half of frequent users of libraries are aged 65 and over, those in this age category have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the building as a result of delivering the capital program. However older people (aged 75+), are likely to be most affected by the changes due to the increased likelihood of reduced mobility. Changes to the internal layout of the library building must take this into account when</p>	<p>Accessibility – an access audit will be undertaken as part of assessing the proposed works. This will include a review of physical accessibility to the library space. Corporate Property teams will review in conjunction with the LIS to ascertain what works can be brought into scope.</p> <p>Stock will be assessed by the librarian team as part of the refurbishment to understand how it is used by local residents. The internal fit out of the</p>



	<p>surveying period were aged 65-74. With 13% aged 35-44 and 13% aged 55-64 respectively.</p>	<p>access materials or services that are solely available online. Therefore access to our public computers remains key to customers in this age group.</p> <p>Young adults (16 – 24-year-olds) disproportionately underuse the library service. Having sought feedback from younger stakeholders, they would like to see the LIS provide wider range of materials regarding mental health support as well materials relating to environmental concerns. This is an issue recognised nationally by library services.</p>	<p>planning and designing the space.</p> <p>Those aged 75+ are also known to be less likely to use the internet, and therefore the eLibrary, due to a lack of skills. Age is a key factor in people’s level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. Buildings must therefore continue to access public computers as well as facilitate space for training (e.g. IT for You) to enable older residents to access resources provided within the building.</p>	<p>library will ensure that stock is not placed too low or too high that would cause certain age groups to struggle to access stock. Stock editing will take place of unused or out of date material and replaced with stock suited to all customers in the reader base of the area. Stock reports will be undertaken to carry out this work effectively and aim to better meet the needs of customers.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>The results of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy consultation, held in 2017, showed that 15% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability, compared to</p>	<p>Library staff have highlighted that some customers who have mobility issues have indicated accessing some buildings is difficult and enough to put some</p>	<p>The needs assessment has identified that there are health and wellbeing needs which the Library And Information Service can meet by running a number of initiatives within the building.</p>	<p>The service will continue to work with Property Services to consider and/or address any building amendments required to provide or ease access to our buildings to ensure that</p>

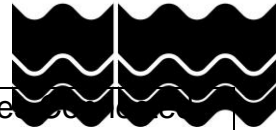


	<p>20.3% of residents of East Sussex who have a long-term health condition or disability.</p> <p>For comparison the Plus survey highlighted that 26% of respondents stated that they had a disability which is higher than previous surveys have reported.</p>	<p>off from using the facilities.</p>	<p>For example IT for You partners with NHS to signpost users in need to library activities/ getting people online to reduce digital exclusion, improve connectivity with friends and family and add digital skills to administer appointments online where needed.</p> <p>We are keen to work and build upon relationships with partners to offer a variety of initiatives within the building that will go some way to improving lives of disabled individuals within the area with disability issues.</p> <p>The Service is committed to increasing this where possible to improve and support local customers where we can. E.g. health information stands, health checks etc.</p>	<p>the program at Bexhill Library is compliant where possible, making reasonable adjustments to support customers accessing the service where possible.</p> <p>The library has level access on the ground floor. There is an accessible toilet located on the ground floor, and a lift for customers and staff to access the first floor. As part of scoping works toilets will be reviewed to understand if works could be included to change a cubicle to a Changing Places toilet to improve access.</p> <p>We will support disabled children and adults with disabilities and with long-term health conditions, such as visual impairments, to be confident using</p>
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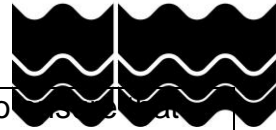


				<p>adapted reading materials and technology.</p> <p>In 2022 all libraries were fitted with hearing loops at the counter to support those with hearing impairments as part of on-going work to improve accessibility.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<p>Census 2021 has recorded 0.28% of residents in the Rother area responding as their gender identity is different from sex registered at birth.</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>	<p>The LIS is committed to making trans-inclusive spaces. Given lack of current information, the service will explore this characteristic further and take this into account with any proposed capital works going forward.</p>	<p>The LIS will continue to work with local and national partners to ensure the service provides a welcoming environment for transgender and non-binary people.</p> <p>The LIS team support the corporate LGBTQ+ group with team members within the group and staff in libraries wearing lanyards where possible. We will showcase events that are inclusive and continually review how we operate to support these groups within our communities in line with</p>

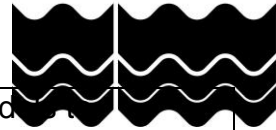




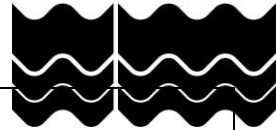
				<p>the Libraries will have a universal calendar. We will create inclusive book displays and signpost to events across the county, bringing in partners and VSCE groups to support.</p> <p>The customer toilet is gender neutral and will continue to be so after the refurbishment.</p> <p>Options for the staff toilets are included in the scope, but the initial survey indicated that due to a budget restriction and limitations with the building structure, it is likely that only refurbishment will be possible.</p>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	No data available from previous surveys.	For individuals in this category, the access and use of lifts within library buildings is critical. The service will retain an open plan floor to support easy access with buggies/ pushchairs.	<p>Lifts, easy access to seating to rest/ feed babies is important to provide throughout library buildings.</p> <p>Additionally any mother/ parent or carer can feed</p>	<p>We will design our spaces so that pregnant/ new mothers have adequate spaces to sit/ stay/ feed within the library.</p> <p>We will continue to work with colleagues in</p>



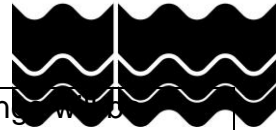
			<p>their baby in a library at any time.</p>	<p>Property to be maintained. Lifts are serviced in accordance with the term maintenance program and endeavour to fix issues promptly as and when they arise.</p> <p>The revised library layout will include a complete re-design of the children's area of the library, utilising s106 funding, and aim to improve access and events (such as Rhymetime and Storytime) for young children.</p>
<p><b>Race (ethnicity)</b> Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers</p>	<p>The response rate from all white respondents to 2018's PULSE survey was 94%.</p> <p>This is nearly identical to the most recent census data from 2021 of 95.6% in the Rother area.</p> <p>The Plus Survey in Oct 2021 found that again 98% of Bexhill</p>	<p>Feedback from schemes the LIS have initiated, including the work with refugees based at Hastings Library, has been overwhelmingly positive.</p> <p>Hastings and Eastbourne have higher pockets of residents with English as an Additional Language (EAL). These are our</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users from different ethnic backgrounds as buildings will continue to offer flexibility of space for any planned library initiatives.</p> <p>Thoughtful and considered design is how we can better</p>	<p>Consider future possible activities in the delivery of LSCS and ensure that buildings are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Aim to position the library as available to all through marketing campaigns. Ensure marketing is representative. (June 2022 E Sussex campaign recently had</p>



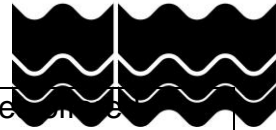
	<p>respondents were White British.</p> <p>These three datasets are helpful in understanding the changing landscape within Bexhill.</p> <p>During the development of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy in 2018, a need was identified to support reading and literacy among refugee families in some communities. The service is aware of an increasing requirement to work with people of different races and ethnicities.</p> <p>Adequate agile spaces in buildings will continue to be important to deliver key outcomes of the LSCS.</p>	<p>busiest libraries, so we will endeavour to facilitate sessions in our buildings for this cohort.</p> <p>Funding has been secured for Librarian work to support these groups for a period of two years. This work will span across the county and the individual will work with colleagues to support/ target in-need groups, sitting within the corporate Migrant Officer Group gaining support from corporate services and VCSE groups as needed. .</p> <p>EAL stock can be delivered E.g. Libraries are supporting Ukrainian refugees with books, resources responding to the sponsoring scheme.</p>	<p>accommodate activities and events within Bexhill to further support the Library Strategy's aims.</p>	<p>BAME mod (to showcase diversity within the campaign).</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<p>From 2018's PULSE survey, 56% of those who stated a religion or faith indicated they were a Christian. The next</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users with different religions.</p>	<p>Staff will continue to promote an inclusive environment for people of all faiths and beliefs.</p>



	<p>most selected answer was 'No religion' which was selected by 38% of those who completed the survey.</p> <p>In the Oct 2021 Plus survey 60% of Bexhill customers stated they were Christian with 36% stating they had no religious affiliation.</p>			
<b>Sex</b>	<p>The results of the 2018 consultation showed that 68% of respondents were female. Similarly, data from other user surveys indicates that on average 69% of library users are female. Women therefore have the potential to be disproportionately affected by changes as they represent a higher number of our customers.</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff. We survey regularly looking at varying areas of satisfaction with the service. We have had no comments in relation to the offer/ building in relation to gender to date</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sex/gender.</p>	<p>Buildings that are maintained to a good standard will allow events to be hosted throughout the year including Men's Health Week and Women's History Month to promote inclusivity.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<p>The Census 2021 for the Rother area reports 89.8% of the population straight or heterosexual, 2.6% lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+),</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sexual orientations.</p>	<p>The LIS will continue to work with local partners to ensure a safe and accessible environment is open to the LGBTQ+ community.</p>



	<p>and with 7.7% not answered.</p> <p>The statistics for current library users, collected in 2021, are similar to the most recent census data for East Sussex.</p>			<p>The buildings will be maintained to an acceptable standard and will continue to operate as safe spaces which can host events and activities.</p> <p>The LIS team continue to work with corporate LGBTQ+ working group to support and promote this group's needs where possible.</p>
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	<p>There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users of different relationship statuses including those married or in a civil partnership.</p>	<p>No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.</p>
<b>Armed Forces</b>	<p>There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.</p>	<p>No feedback received from service users or staff.</p>	<p>The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users of Armed Forces.</p>	<p>No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.</p>
<b>Impacts on community cohesion</b>	<p>The Library and Information Service has recently applied to be recognised as part of the Libraries of Sanctuary, providing safe spaces for refugees, working</p>	<p>Staff have advised that events such as Rhymetime and Storytime in library buildings have a positive effect in terms of community cohesion by</p>	<p>The maintenance and upkeep of library buildings provides the physical safe environment for the activities for local community groups to</p>	<p>Undertake annual maintenance on LIS property and ensure the Capital Program is delivered in a timely manner.</p>

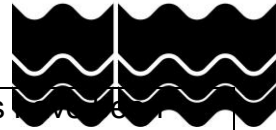


	<p>alongside key partners and community groups.</p>	<p>presenting an opportunity for families to meet.</p> <p>The 2021 Plus survey also asked a question about loneliness after Covid 19 and numerous lockdowns. On average 40% of Bexhill respondents felt lonely often, some of the time, or occasionally. (weighted E Sussex average was 39%)</p>	<p>access. The universal offer afforded to the public by the service affords access to everyone, and the Library Strategy aims support community, wellbeing and hard to reach groups.</p>	<p>The facilities within a library help combat loneliness by providing a meeting point, events, and activities to take part and meet people. The LIS also offers a safe space to connect with others via the public computers with friends/ relatives or a meeting opportunity within the library itself.</p> <p>The internal fit out for Bexhill will include a soft furnishings, to support areas where people can meet and relax. This will support events and activities which the Service is keen to promote to combat loneliness within the community.</p>
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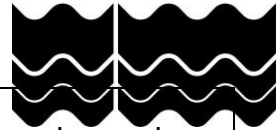
**Additional categories**

(identified locally as potentially causing / worsening inequality)

Characteristic	What do you know?	What do people tell you?	What does this mean?	What can you do?
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<b>Rurality</b>	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users from rural areas.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.
<b>Carers</b>	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	The LIS Capital Program is not considered to have an impact for library users who are also carers.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage.
<b>Other groups that may be differently affected</b> (including but not only: homeless people, substance users, care leavers etc)	No specific data about other groups available from previous surveys	Partners in health care and social services have identified the library buildings as important spaces for the wellbeing of homeless and rough sleepers. Clients do not want to be identified but can be supported if needed. It is a warm, safe and welcoming space for individuals to have as much or as little interaction as they choose.  They are a diverse range of ages and backgrounds.	The organisations working in this area see the creation of relaxed drop in areas as a way of supporting homeless and rough sleepers.  Library buildings are centrally located, warm and can easily facilitate this when working in partnership.	As above, the maintenance of library buildings is key to continuing to deliver the LSCS priorities in supporting these groups within the wider community, working with both internal and external stakeholder to promote the service offer which is available for all to access.

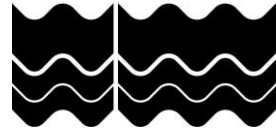


**Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations** - include assessment of cumulative impacts (where a change in one service/policy/project may have an impact on another)

2021 Bexhill Plus Survey Comments: [Bexhill PLUS comments](#)

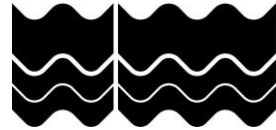
Comments received as part of the PLUS survey have been reviewed as part of this EQIA and the internal fit out proposals for the library. This survey takes place every three years and allows the LIS to review operational activity and make changes where possible. This data has been analysed and is available for review here: [EastSussex Headline Report PLUS](#)





### 3. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EqIA

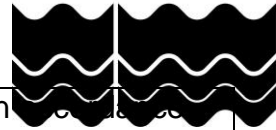
Source and type of data (e.g. research, or direct engagement (interviews), responses to questionnaires, etc.)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
PLUS survey	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Public Consultation – Libraries Strategy	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Consultation with LIS staff	Aug – Sep 2021	There were some protected characteristics that no verbatim, anecdotal feedback was provided about.	It was identified that staff did not regularly log issues, both positive and negative, regarding the use of LIS by people who share varying protected characteristics. From 2022, staff will be encouraged to do this.
Plus survey	2021	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	This has been a helpful comparison to the 2018 dataset. We will review when latest Census statistics are available.



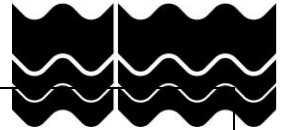
## 4. Prioritised Action Plan

NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
<p><b>Age:</b> Older people may find changes to the library layout difficult to navigate</p>	<p>Ensure that access audit considers age of customer. Also work with library design specialists who understand the profile of library users in East Sussex to create a design that works for residents.</p>	<p>Improved layout of library as a result of refurbishment</p>	<p>No complaints/ issues raised by public as a result of changes in library layout.</p>	<p>Annually in accordance with the program.</p>
<p><b>Age:</b> younger people less likely to use the library <b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity:</b> access to books and resources</p>	<p>Consider improved/ appealing spaces for young people and comfortable seating areas for those pregnant/ feeding a child.</p>	<p>Make this library more attractive for younger customers aiming to support the underrepresentation of this age group.</p> <p>Increase provision of spaces to bring young children and promote early years access to literature and materials.</p> <p>Increase provision of literature for those who are pregnant/new parents</p>	<p>Increased numbers of younger users and access by new/expectant parents.</p> <p>Increased participation in Rhyme Time and Story Time.</p>	<p>As part of refurb, then ongoing monitoring and promotion of events and activities.</p>



<b>Disability:</b> Access audits are on a rolling program undertaken by Property. These are not always available in conjunction with the Capital Program	Libraries to commission accessibility audits as part of capital program and recharge Property, to ensure works are compliant and needs assessed.	Buildings are compliant with required standards where possible.	Completed access audit.	Annually in conjunction with the program.
<b>Disability:</b> provision for deaf and hearing impaired people	All libraries will be fitted with hearing loops at the counter to support those with hearing impairments.	Better access and support for deaf and hearing impaired people.	Works completed and in operation.	In 2022.
<b>Sexual orientation Gender reassignment:</b> A lack of information regarding those who use the LIS and whether this group has a barrier to the service as a result of the building.	Analyse the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment by the management team.	Any findings within the report that highlight there are barriers to certain public venues could be reviewed as part of forthcoming capital works.	Any proposed changes made to buildings as a result to be considered in line with the delivery of the program and incorporated where possible (in line with Capital Program parameters).	2022 – 2027.
<b>All:</b> ensuring stock meets diverse needs	Stock will be assessed by the librarian team as part of the refurbishment.	Opportunity to check stock reflects all library users needs and choices as well as possible.	Completion of review and responding to gaps.	As part of refurbishment.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity:</b> access and breastfeeding	We will design our spaces so that pregnant/new mothers have adequate spaces to sit/ stay/ feed.	Better support and spaces for feeding and seating.	Spaces reviewed/ improved and installed.	As part of refurbishment.
<b>All:</b> encouraging use of whole range of library facilities	Aim to position the library as available to all through marketing campaigns.	Wider range of people aware of what libraries	Library users and equality monitoring / feedback.	From library opening and ongoing BAU LIS activity.



		offer and confident to access.		
<b>Community cohesion:</b> combatting loneliness	Careful consideration to layout to support events and activities.	Generate events and activities to combat loneliness within the community.	New space in place and being used; activities and events being held and attracting wide range of people.	As part of refurbishment.

**(Add more rows as needed)**