Shaping the future of Library Services

Public Consultation Report

March 2024

Shaping the future of libraries services - Results of the Public Consultation

Contents

Executive Summary

1. Suffolk County Council (SCC) has a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for the people who live, work and study in the local authority area.

2. The current Library service contract comes to an end on 31 May 2025.

3. A series of engagement events were held with stakeholders to help shape the current understanding of library service in Suffolk and the potential future opportunities. This also provided an opportunity to discuss the reason why a procurement was needed and the steps we are taking as part of the procurement process. Following the engagement events a formal consultation took place.

4. The consultation period was 13 weeks and incorporated easy read, different languages, a telephone line, paper questionnaires distributed throughout the county, an online questionnaire, easy read, and multiple language questionnaires.

5. A clear description of the services currently being offered was provided along with the current outreach service (Mobile libraries, Home Library Service and Pop-Up Libraries). Free text options enabled respondents to provide further clarification or alternative models for consideration.

6. A series of focus groups were held with users and non-users of library services (static and outreach), and protected characteristics groups.

7. The results of the 13-week public consultation undertaken between October 2023 and 26 January 2024 confirmed public support for the current scope of services commissioned by the County Council. The outcome in respect of the outreach services confirmed a preference to move to smaller mobile library vehicles to replace the current vehicles, and there was support the continuance of the home library service for those unable to access a library building. There was support for continuing pop-up libraries in their current funded model but limited support for pop-up libraries to be included in the contract.

8. A good spread of responses was received across the county.

9. Over 87% of all respondents had used a library building in the last 12 months.

10. Over 90% of respondents thought free access to printed books, free access to reference books, free access to internet and Wi Fi in a library building and opportunities for learning and skills development were very important or important aspects of the library service.

11. There was strong support for continuing to develop the library service and its offer to the community. Most people (85%) like the community feel and approach to library services with only a small number of people preferring the library service to only focus on books. The 35 – 54 age group (961 responses) was more supportive

of activities currently ongoing in library buildings and in particular 6% more supportive for activities that address wider social needs and response to specific local community needs.

12. Over 90% of the 5,078 respondents who answered very important /important thought better communication of services available was important to develop and over 80% wanted to see more focus on evidenced community needs, use of library buildings and development of digital skills and the use of technology.

13. 5,139 respondents replied to the question about being satisfied with the current library service of which over 90% were very satisfied/satisfied with the current library service in Suffolk. Comments from elected representatives were very supportive of the current library service.

14. 1,690 respondents had used outreach services in the last 12 month, and, of those, 1,604 respondents felt borrowing books was the most important service of the outreach offer. But all outreach services were highly valued and seen as important to users of outreach services.

15. It was concluded that the preference is for mobile library services to continue with a 16-to-60-minute range, although further exploration to see if the preferences were geographically concentrated will be discussed with the successful provider.

16. In terms of interest in Pop-ups, only 27% of all respondents had any interest, 41% neither agreed/disagreed and 32% disagreed/strongly disagreed. Pop-up users showed much higher levels of interest in Pop-ups than non-users (59 Pop-up user respondents strongly agreed/agreed with Pop-ups)) although only 34 Pop-up users strongly agreed/agreed with Pop-ups replacing mobile stops. Younger age groups also expressed more support for Pop-ups than all respondents, with 55% of this age group strongly agreeing/agreeing with Pop-up to be funded by the community and 22% preferring pop up libraries to be available after school.

17. The home library service could be enhanced. 402 comments were received with 47% (206) suggesting it should be promoted more. 46 respondents praised the service in its current form and 41 respondents suggested the home library needed more volunteers, by comparison feedback received from the current provider of the homes library service was able to clarify that they did not have a shortage of volunteers who could support the homes library service.

18. For those respondents to the questionnaire who stated they had a disability, this group consistently thought it was very important to develop all the services to a greater extent than all data respondents. They also reported that for those with dyslexia it can take longer to read books.

19. Focus group feedback from home library volunteers talked about how much the home library was appreciated by customers that saw very few people week on week, helping to reduce social isolation.

20. Focus groups held with protected characteristics groups were in general supportive of the current library provision and offered insight into small but impactful changes that would better support their needs; these will be shared with the provider as part of ongoing development of the service.

21. For all groups, (users, non-users, children, protected characteristics) better communication about the library service offer was key to understanding the full range of offers. There was further unanimous agreement that more join-up with services could provide additional benefits whilst acknowledging that space can be limited within library buildings, but it was noted that in some libraries this is already happening.

22. 133 organisations responded to the questionnaire with 89 of these organisations (79%) thought access to financial services were very important/important compared to 68% among all respondents.

23. The results of the consultation will be made available to potential bidders as part of the tender documentation ensuring that the consultation information forms part of the service's ongoing development strategy.

Introduction and background

24. At the Cabinet meeting on 11 July 2023, it was agreed that the Council would start the procurement of a new contract for the delivery of the library services across Suffolk. The contract has been held for 12 years by Suffolk's Libraries IPS, with the original 5-year contract being extended by 5 years and then again for 2 years during Covid. SCC is legally required to go out to competitive tender. A 10-month extension to the current contract with Suffolk's Libraries IPS was agreed, thus the contract end date is 31 May 2025 so that a procurement process including a public consultation, could take place.

25. There were 2 phases to the consultation:

   a) Pre-engagement which took place with key stakeholders during July - September 2023 to help shape the questions included in the public consultation and provide an opportunity to discuss the need for a procurement and what the process will entail.

   b) Public consultation which was open for 13 weeks from 31 October 2023 to 26 January 2024. This was to enable a broad range of stakeholders to share their views on how they use, would use the library service, what they value, what they would like to improve upon and to help shape the outreach offer.

26. The public consultation was designed to meet the requirements of the Gunning principles:

   1. The public consultation is undertaken at a formative stage

   2. Sufficient information is given to enable "intelligent consideration".

   3. There is adequate time for consideration and response

   4. "Conscientious consideration" will be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.

27. The Consultation Institute (tCI) was commissioned to Quality Assure the public consultation due to the level of public interest in the library service in Suffolk. tCI is a Not-for-profit membership body and international leader in consultation best practice. It has advised throughout the consultation process which is broken down

into 6 phases. The library consultation has successfully passed through 5 phases and this report on the outcomes of the library public consultation and the "You said, We did" report will form the Stage 6.

28. A [Needs Assessment](#) for the library service was published on 19 October 2023. This set out the context within which the library service is delivered and reviews the needs of Suffolk's residents, individuals who work in the county and those who are engaged in full-time education within Suffolk. The Needs Assessment provides data which can be used to ensure that the library service is relevant, sustainable, and fit for the future. It includes the most up to date data available on protected characteristic groups (as defined in the Equalities Act 2010, Disabilities, Age, Gender, Gender reassignment, orientation, Race, Religion or belief, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy/maternity). The Needs Assessment helped inform the questions asked in the consultation and the campaign to publicise the public consultation to ensure groups with protected characteristics and key users of library services were included.

29. The scope of the public consultation covered the library service currently funded by Suffolk County Council. Under s.7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 SCC has an obligation to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service' for all persons who wish to use it, and to ensure that facilities for borrowing books and other materials are available to all persons who live, work or receive full-time education in the area. The authority has wide discretion as to how to do this: it is stated in the Act that in doing so it should 'have regard to the desirability' of securing the facility to borrow books and other materials of a range and quality sufficient to meet the needs of adults and children; encouraging people to make full use the service and advising them how to do so' (s.7(2)).

30. The purpose of the public consultation before going out to procure library services in Suffolk, was to give an opportunity for Suffolk residents, workers and those in full time education to express their views on:

    a) what they value in the current service

    b) how they would like to see it develop in the future

    c) the acceptability of replacing the current mobile library vehicles with ones that are more agile, smaller, environmentally friendly, and easier to drive down Suffolk's rural roads

    d) the scope of services offered in rural outreach and if they should match those in static libraries.

31. The objective was to receive views from library users and non-users, businesses, schools, children, and those with protected characteristics, this would enable changing needs to be reflected in the tender documents and provide ongoing discussions with the successful contractor. The pre- engagement work helped to ensure that none of these groups faced any barriers to engaging in the public consultation enabling all views to be heard.

32. The high-level timetable was as follows:

August – September 2023: Pre-engagement to alert groups with an interest in library services that funding has been secured to maintain the same level of service and a public consultation would take place to consider the future of community outreach, primarily to explore the options for the replacement of aged mobile library vans.

October – January 2024: Public consultation

March 2024: Cabinet report and report on the public consultation

Preparatory work

33. Between August – September 2023 Pre-engagement with 40 groups with an interest in library services took place. Groups spoken to included Suffolk Library staff and Friends Groups, County Council Directorates and groups/charities comprising/representing those with protected characteristics (see Annex 1). A range of communication methods were used – face to face meetings, online meetings using TEAMS and data collection using a Microsoft (MS) form online questionnaire (emailed out).

34. Three MS Forms were used to get feedback from

    a) SCC staff network group representing protected characteristics.

    b) Children

    c) Schools (for teachers' views)

35. Information obtained helped shape the questions used in the public consultation and additional supporting material, identified additional groups to approach and dialogue mechanisms to include in consultation.

36. The pre-consultation engagement was an opportunity to:

    - Inform key stakeholders about the need to procure, the procurement process and to understand that funding has been secured to maintain the same level of service.

    - Receive feedback on how the service currently runs.

    - Collate ideas about the future development opportunities of the service, for the community outreach.

    - Understand how to make the public consultation accessible to those with Protected Characteristics, including asking them if they would or could help promote the public consultation through their organisation.

37. Annex 2 sets out the high-level messages obtained from the engagement work. Some highlight opportunities that other organisations could develop to make more use of the resources in libraries. Of note for testing further during the consultation:

    - Libraries see themselves as filling the gap (not by choice) created by organisations who are 'digital by default'; for example, by fulfilling requests to print tickets (train & flight) and timetables.

- Linking the mobile library service to the home library service (currently home library volunteers are supported by library building) to encourage more local volunteers to collect books from the Mobile library vehicle and deliver in their village.

- 'Users of mobiles are loyal and don't use statics'.

- Children like to go to a library building to access services but said the best way for them to answer the questionnaire would be by using a link sent to their phone.

Methodology for the public consultation

38. Using the feedback from the pre-consultation engagement and the context provided by the Needs Assessment, a mixed method consultation approach was designed that included a questionnaire survey, online focus groups, face to face meetings and opportunities for people to respond via letter or email.

39. The public consultation started on 30 October 2023 until 26 January 2024. The consultation was published on Suffolk County Council's website. And promoted through:

    I. **Media** – Press releases sent out and Column piece in East Anglian Daily Times.

    II. **Radio** assisted with the launch of the public consultation with an interview with the Cabinet member.

    III. **Social media** –campaign ran during the 13-week period to remind people to fill in the online form. "Boosts" were used to target messaging at men, younger age groups, and geographical areas where we had a lower response according to the postcodes of questionnaires returned - Lowestoft, Ipswich, Great Cornard and Brandon. In January 2024 a video clip Facebook post was targeted at areas of low response.

    IV. **Web landing page –** set out the reasons for the consultation and led to the online form.

    V. **Posters** – with QR code were sent to libraries, Parish Councils via the Suffolk Association for Local Council (SLAC), doctors' surgeries and offered to schools via Suffolk Headlines. Posters in 6 different languages (Portuguese, Romanian, Arabic, Polish, Ukrainian and Urdu) were provided to the Wellington Centre in Ipswich and the Be Well bus and made available for download from the website. Links to the translations were sent to minority ethnic groups in emails.

    VI. **Bookmarks**– put in library book reservations by library staff and handed out at events so people had the web address to be able to complete the questionnaire in the privacy of their own home.

    VII. **Email -** The web landing page address and copy for newsletters was emailed direct to all involved in the engagement phase plus other groups recommended as we spoke to focus groups (See Annex 3).

40. Focus groups were determined based on the protected characteristics, Public Health and Communities team contacted groups through existing partnerships and

those suggested via the pre-engagement events. A series of questions were posed to the group,

> 1) What to you currently use Library service for and what do you value about library services.
> 2) What would you like to see developed within library services?
> 3) Anything else you would like to share with us about your experiences, ideas you have on improving the service.

41. Prompts for each question were used to aid the flow of conversation if need and a full list of services currently offered was available to participants.

42. Focus groups were held with:

- LGBTQ+ with members of the public recruited via "Together for Suffolk" with the offer of a £10 gift voucher for participation. (6 attended)
- Black and minority ethnic with members of the public recruited via "Together for Suffolk" with the offer of a £10 gift voucher for participation. Two groups held. (3 & 4 attended)
- Disability - with members of the public recruited via "Together for Suffolk" with the offer of a £10 gift voucher for participation. (4 attended)
- Home library volunteers with the offer of a £10 gift voucher for participation. (5 attended)
- SCC Deaf network (8 people)

43. Face to face sessions were undertaken within key geographies and key cohorts where response rates to the questionnaire were low.

- library users and non users in the street with Be Well bus in Ipswich and Leiston.
- Children - Ormiston Denes High School spoke to 8 children
- Over 60s club (10 people)
- Rural - Mobile library users which consisted of two trips in different locations - Great Wenham – Wherstead (spoke to 24) & Rattesden (spoke to 19). Coffee caravan at Hintlesham Village hall (spoke to 11).
- Young mums/maternity –
  - Felixstowe parents Oaks Family centre (5 people)
  - Lowestoft Arc Family centre (4 people)
  - Bury St Edmunds Parents group (4 people)

44. The questionnaire was designed with preference statements for people to record their strength of support with an "Other" category to record free text additional comments. There were 29 questions in total:

Part 1 asked about use of library buildings;

Part 2 covered Outreach services, comprising Mobile libraries, home library service and Pop-ups (Pop-up libraries are currently community funded, weekly services provided in Red Lodge, Shotley and Rushmere, in a community

building hall for 3-4 hours offering book browsing, pick up of reservations and regular sessions for preschool and older people);

Questions 22 to 29 were optional asking about gender, age, disability, ethnic group, religion and sexual orientation.

45. Contextual information was provided in the questionnaire and a more detailed [Background document](#) was also available giving the reasons for public consultation and supporting information for every question, explaining in more detail specific terms used including the nature of current activities in libraries e.g. "Tot Rock" active songs and rhymes sessions for Pre-school children.

46. The questionnaire was in two parts and the responder could answer one or both parts.

47. The survey was available in a range of formats:

  I. **Digital** - the main means of collecting feedback, using an online form with mostly pre-set options, with some free text boxes to allow capture of ideas.

  II. **Language Translations -** The Questionnaire and background document was translated into Portuguese, Romanian, and Arabic because these are the translations most requested in Suffolk following local experience. The Poster was translated into Portuguese, Romanian, Arabic, Polish, Ukrainian and Urdu at the request of the Family Centres in Suffolk. The printed public consultation form included a box with a statement in different languages advising someone in their own language how they can request a full translation. This could be via a translator that would read out the form for them in their language so they could complete it online.

  III. **Easy read** version was made available on 29 November 2023 on the website. It is was a [word document](#) 48 pages long but could be filled in online, saved and sent to libraries.consultation@suffolk.gov.uk

  IV. **Childrens questionnaire –** after reviewing the easy read version it was agreed to reduce the length of the document. An 8-page version with 15 questions was produced in Smart survey for children to complete online.

  V. **Printed paper copy** of the questionnaire - 4,500 were distributed to libraries, mobile libraries, for those without internet access, particularly meeting the needs of older people. Pre-paid envelopes were available.

  VI. **Audio –** details on how to use the audio option were explained on the landing page.

  VII. **Phone line –** A phone number was provided for people who preferred this method of communication. The phone line was supported by the SCC Customer Services Team. This was charged at local call rates.

48. The response channels for questionnaires and comments included:

  - Online form (filled in on computer, phone or tablet)
  - Telephone (to give verbal response input into a form by Customer services)
  - Free post for paper copies of forms

- Collection in libraries and on mobile vans

- Face to face comments noted down at workshops and events

- Email of comments to libraries.consultation@suffolk.gov.uk

49. The aim was to get as many responses as possible via the online form and any given on printed copy were input into Smart survey. Any responses received verbally or via workshop meetings during the consultation period were noted on a spreadsheet. Two officers attended each meeting wherever possible so independent verification of the key points made and captured on the spreadsheet, could take place.

50. The age of respondents was monitored during the public consultation and Facebook boosts were targeted at young age groups and the children's questionnaire launched in December.

51. The online questionnaires returned were monitored as they came in against the performance measures set for the following reasons:

- Total questionnaires returned 2,000 – reasonable expectation for Suffolk compared to other surveys.

- Library use – distribution of library visits in 2022/23 (% of total) were calculated proportionately to 2,000 respondents to give a target number of respondents for each library used.

- Men - Although the population of Suffolk is 50 % men and 50% women, library data for 2022/23 with gender information shows that 75% of issues of books were to women and 25 % to men/boys. In terms of numbers of active card holders in 2022/23 33% were men/boys so a target of 30% was set.

- Age groups - According to 2022 Mid-year estimates of the proportion of the Suffolk population by age in the following groups were:

		Target number
Under 15	17%	340
16 -64	59%	1180
65+	24%	480

- Sexual orientation – According to the 2021 census, 1.3% of Suffolk's population are Gay or lesbian and 1.1% Bisexual. Percentages were used to monitor response levels because the proportion of 2000 would be so low.

- Ethnicity – This was viewed as difficult to measure in Suffolk due to a high proportion of the those enumerated in the 2021 census that are not White in Suffolk being in the military bases (2 USAF) or prisons which are not served by Suffolk Libraries services. 12.68% are not White British and was used as a guide proportional to 2,000 respondents.

- Rural - The impacts of the services covered in the survey are more likely to be experienced in rural areas so as 40% of the population live in rural areas (see Needs Assessment p38 2021, as defined by the 2011 ONS rural/urban classification)) we aimed for 800 responses to Part 2 of the questionnaire.

- Disability groups were emailed direct during the consultation to request they passed a link out to the questionnaire, highlight the easy read version available, include in bulletins, Facebook pages etc and were also invited to attend a focus group for those with disabilities. A wide range of response mechanisms were provided, and these were detailed in the webpage for the public consultation. No easy read versions of the consultation were returned. Customer services filled one questionnaire in online with someone that phoned.

- Annex 6 presents a summary of the feedback received via emails and the numbers that were engaged at face to face or online events. 27 queries covered requests for print copies, posters, and comments on the survey itself. Over 350 people were engaged in groups or events, using focused questions that varied with the group involved.

- Online focus groups aimed to collect richer data about protected characteristic groups for example disabilities, LGBT+ and Black Minority ethnic communities. Engagement in towns were aimed at nonusers of the library service and most would only have a quick conversation that focused on why they did not use the library and if anything would encourage them to do so.

Table 1: Performance measures

Measure	Target	Level achieved
Total questionnaires returned	2,000	5,415
30% response from men	600	922
Under 15 (children questionnaire)	340	557
16- 64	1180	2,093
65+	480	1,748
Gay or lesbian	1.3%	1.17%
Bisexual [1]	1.1%	2.65%
Libraries	Individual	All exceeded
Not White British	254	295
Rural	800	1,575

[1] Suspect some respondents misunderstood this term

Results

52. The adult questionnaire received 5,415 responses, of which 825 came in as print copies. The children's questionnaire received 557 responses, all of which were completed online. No Easy read or translated versions of the questionnaire were received. The results of the adult questionnaire are shown in Annex 4 – comprising the Smart survey tables and the analysis of the free text comments. The responses were checked for duplication and a 10% sample of the manual transcription by officers of the data from print copies checked for accuracy.

53. The full results are referred to below as 'All Data'. The results are set out for individual questions, referring to the numbers and % responding and highlighting some of the free text responses received as appropriate. Significant finds from subsets of data are referred to separately.

54. Subsets of the data for the following groups were examined, comparing them to the full response ("All Data"):

- Age 34 and under
- Age 35 -54
- Age 55 – 64
- Age 65-74
- Age 75+
- Disability
- Male gender
- Mobile users
- Pop-up users
- Rural postcodes (using ONS rural/urban classification for Lower Super Output Areas.)
- Static library users
- Nonusers of library services
- Organisations

55. Face to face and focus groups comments were captured and thematically analysed to provide qualitative set of results a total number of 112 people engaged in the consultation via this route.

56. Comments from the focus groups have been reviewed and included in the EIA under the relevant protected characteristic. Emailed comments about future library priorities have been categorised into 8 groups, 2 of which are about the home library service (covered in paragraph 133) and 3 Protected characteristic groups that have been fed into the relevant groups. Other comments have been included in the cross-cutting themes below.

57. The questionnaire gave 3 options for response: as an individual, on behalf of an organisation/business or as an elected representative. Numbers of responses from organisations were monitored and emails sent to remind District and Borough Councils, schools, business organisations and charities to respond.   94 answered on behalf of an organisation or business and 38 as elected representative. No questionnaire responses on the behalf of District Councils were received. Online discussion had taken place with all Districts during the engagement phase when a lot of detailed comments were received, and these have been included in Annex 2

58. 182 provided more details of their representation in the questionnaire responses, but this included 49 "as self". 133 organisations could be identified included schools, town councils, libraries, community groups, councillors, and businesses (See Annex 4 Question 1). 89 of these organisations (79%) thought access to financial services were very important/important compared to 68% of "All data". The inclusion of some business organisations in this subset did lead to a higher level of support for more services to workers and businesses (64% very important/important compared to 49% "All data").

Who responded - Demographics

59.   **Figure 1** shows the distribution of responses received across Suffolk and **Figure 2** per 1,000 population. A good spread of responses was received across the County. Levels of response are lower in Ipswich and Lowestoft. Facebook boosts were targeted at these areas for a number of weeks and face to face engagement sessions took place in both towns. Feedback was received from tCI that we had we had achieved good representation across Suffolk's population.

60.   574 people responded to the adult questionnaire saying they had a disability within the Equalities legislation defining a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (last or expect to last 12 months) and has an adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. However, 680 indicated that they had a disability. 39% had mobility issues and 36% a long-term health condition.

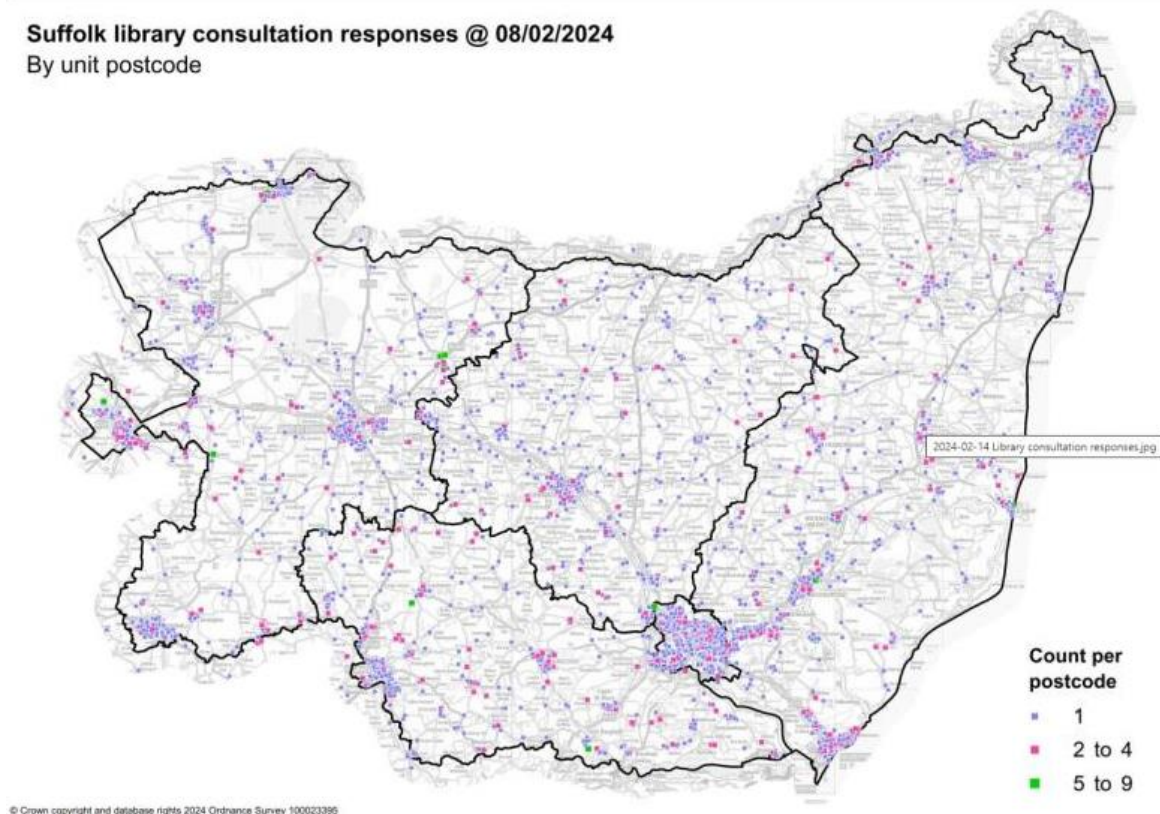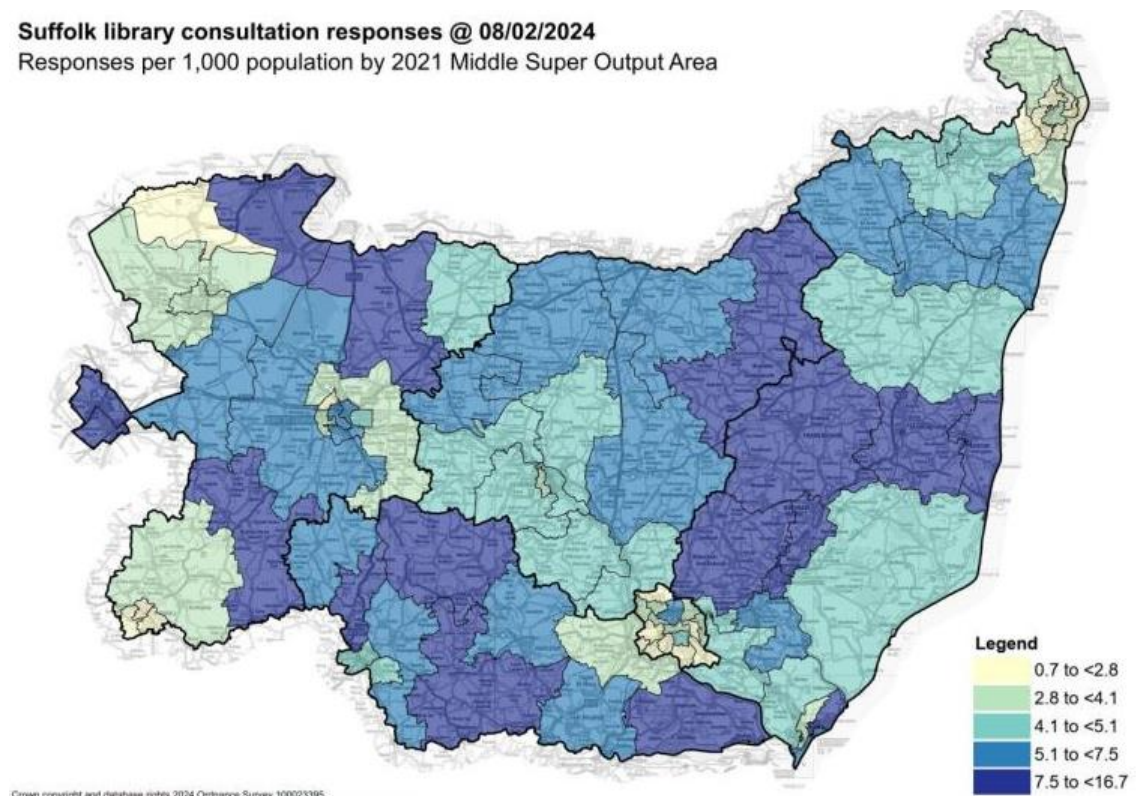**Figure 1 Distribution of responses to the adult questionnaire**

Figure 2 : Responses per 1,000 population

Suffolk library consultation responses @ 08/02/2024
Responses per 1,000 population by 2021 Middle Super Output Area

Legend
0.7 to <2.8
2.8 to <4.1
4.1 to <5.1
5.1 to <7.5
7.5 to <16.7

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61. Adult questionnaire (All data) respondents:

a) 98% answered as individuals.

b) The other 2% was made up of schools, town councils, Library Friends Groups, charities, businesses (including an enterprise agency, teaching business and training provider) and elected councillors. Numbers were too small for analysis by individual subgroups, however the qualitative and qualitative data will be shared with the successful provider to support service development discussions.

c) 75% were female, in line with 75% of book issues being to women (based on annual library statistics for 2022-23).

d) 45% of the respondents were aged 65+ (compared to 24% of the population). Although lower percentages of the younger age groups responded there were still high numbers (see **Figure 3**) enabling us to look at how age groups varied from "All Data". This is reflective of the age demographic of library users and we would expect to see a higher response from those over 65. Age group responses received were broken down into the following;

- 34 and under**,** 329 responses received, 56% of this age group said they had a mental health disability (36% above the total response)
- 35- 54 age group, 961 responses received, 0% fewer with hearing disability and 9% more with mental health disability
- 55 – 64 age group, 749 responses received,
- 65- 74 age group, 1007 responses received
- 75+ 718 responses received

Figure 3: Respondents by age band
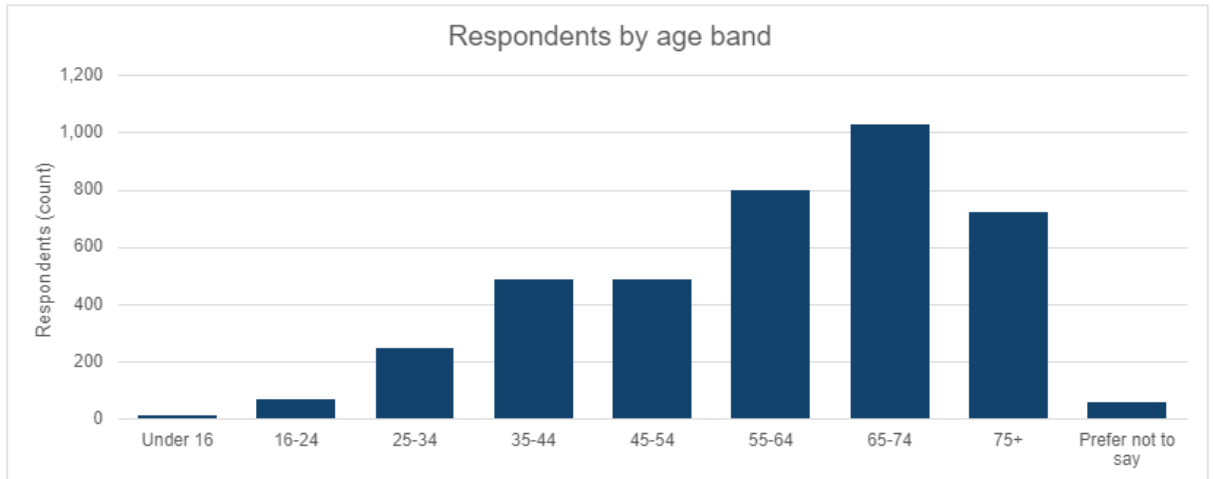
62. On sexual orientation, 65% of those responding identified as Bisexual, gay man or woman and no sexuality. A sub analysis of the adult question excluding those who identified as being heterosexual and having non sexuality showed, 58% were under the age of 55 so a younger age demographic compared to the total questionnaire.

63. 15% (574) had a disability, of which this was mobility for 39% (267) and a long-standing health condition for 35% (248). Respondents could have more than one disability. With More people aged 35 – 75 than all data who had a disability.

Figure 3: Types of disability reported.
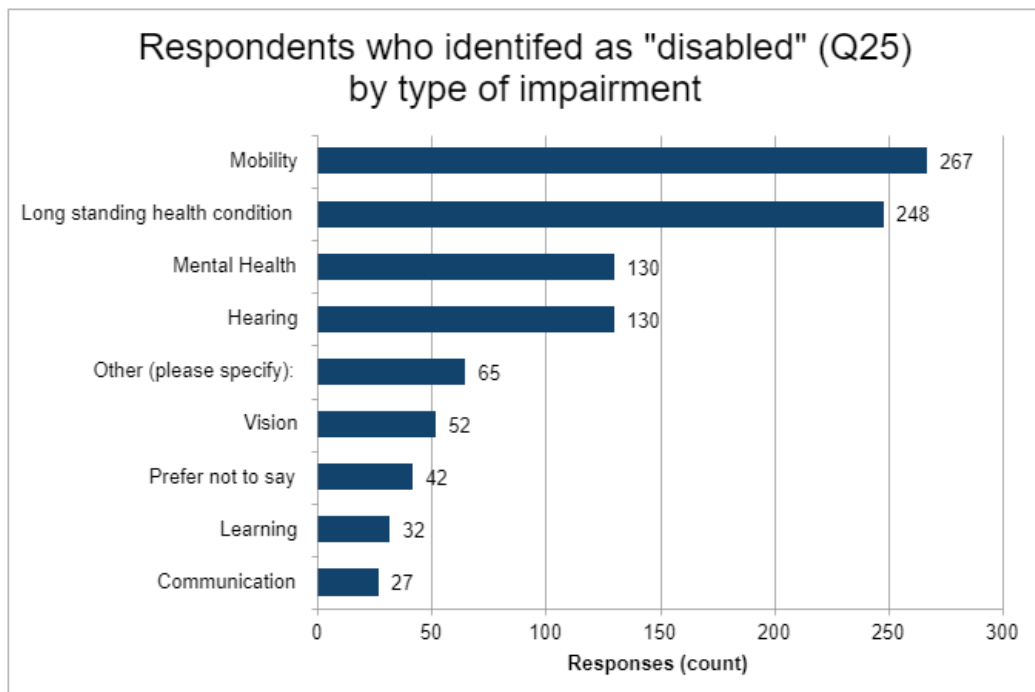
64. 3,871 answered the question about religion or belief with 50% of those responding being Christian and 39% had no religion. Although the numbers were low there were 62 responses from other religions Baha'i, Buddhism, Hindu, Judaism, Muslim,

and Sikh. There were no statistically different views from this group compared to all data group, but their free text comments have been captured throughout.

65. 3,926 answered the question about race. 87% were White English or British. 2% were non-white (83 respondents) and their results were examined as a subgroup (see paragraph 98).

66. 83% of respondents were heterosexual, 9% preferred not to say. 8% reported another sexuality the highest being 2.65% Bisexual (100). Comments in the 'Other' category suggested some respondents were unsure of the meaning of some of the categories.

67. Over 900 men responded to the survey, 87% of which had used a library in the last 12 months (same proportion as women). In terms of the importance of current aspects of library provision:

68. A sub analysis of the adult question excluding those who identified as being heterosexual and having non sexuality showed 91% had used a library building in the last month, 45 libraries/Pop-ups had been used by a member of this group, none of the responses to questions were significantly different to the total questionnaire response.

69. The adult questionnaire response has been analysed to see if there are any significant differences between All data and mobile library users, as mobile users are largely living in rural areas. Many more people answered the questions about outreach services that did not necessarily live in rural areas or have any knowledge of the current services. 720 responded saying they had used a mobile vehicle in the last 12 months.

70. The questionnaire did not ask respondents of their pregnancy or maternity status, however, attendance at 3 parent and toddler groups in different parts of the County, not all held in libraries, were an attempt to engage with this group. Nine parents provided us with their view but not all were library users.

71. Focus groups were undertaken with parents in low-income socio-economic groups, and engagement with people in Ipswich town centre and Lowestoft (both areas of deprivation) was undertaken. People were engaged on two occasions in Ipswich using the Be Well bus (Supported by NHS and providing access to different services on different days). At Burlington Road in Ipswich (high multi-cultural area) bookmarks were given out to encourage parents coming out of school with children to take part in the survey online and through conversations only one suggestion was provided by this group, 'that more bilingual books would be helpful in libraires'.

72. Comments from elected representatives were very supportive of the current library service. One noted that there are no Friends of Mobile libraries, and that Parish Councils may be a good focal point for arrange friend groups. Another suggested outreach services could provide "explainers of how to best use book ordering and the digital services offered". It was suggested volunteers may be able to do collections and drop off if parish councils were asked. It was also suggested by one respondent that pop-ups should be funded by the County Council and maintained according to need in the community.

Part 1 Services in Library buildings

Library use

73. Library building users are such a big subset of "All data" there are very few differences between the data sets. Library building users feel more strongly that all the current services in libraries are Very Important while non-users of library buildings (651 in total) rated much lower. 67% of the non-users of library buildings used mobile vehicles and in terms of development felt more strongly about having more opportunities to return books and less concerned about making more use of library buildings. They also expressed less support than 'All Data' for Pop-ups with 45 % strongly disagree/disagree.

74. Part 1 of the questionnaire asked about use of library buildings in the last 12 months. The 45 libraries and 3 Pop-ups were provided as a list and respondents could tick all that they had used. 4,644 answered this question, indicating they had used 7,012 buildings (average 1.5 each). For those who responded who reported a disability 85% had used a library in the last 12 months- very similar to All data. And all libraries had been used by people with some form of disability.

75. Over 87% of all respondents had used a library building in the last 12 months.

76. As **Figure 4** shows all 45 static libraries and 3 Pop-ups at Rushmere, Red Lodge and Shotley had respondents that had visited. Some respondents used more than one library. Ipswich County, Bury St Edmunds and Woodbridge were the most mentioned with over 500 respondents each. High levels of response were received from Ixworth and Newmarket i.e. 0.65% of the total number of library visits in 2022-23 in Suffolk were at Ixworth but 4% of the questionnaire response was from Ixworth and for Newmarket 3.2% of the total visits compared to 8% of the questionnaire response.

Figure 4: Libraries used by respondents.
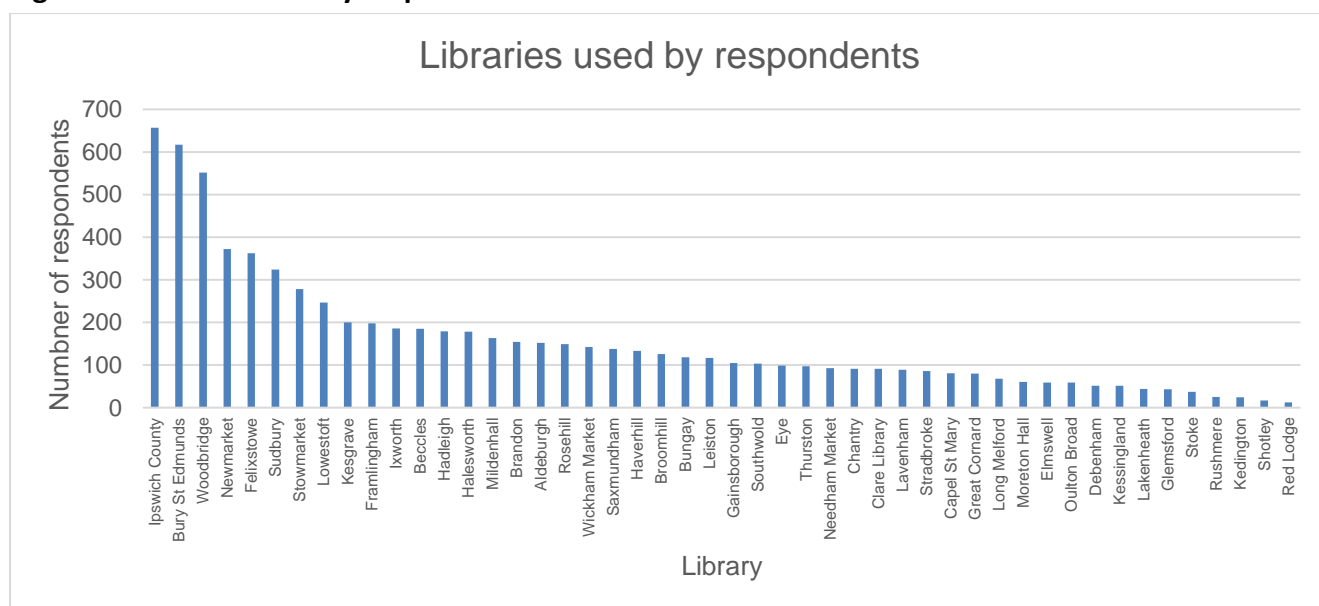
77. 73 respondents used other libraries, 66% of which named mobiles. 17% of respondents used libraries outside the county (13 respondents); Norfolk (9 respondents), Diss (3), Cambridgeshire (3) and Essex (1).

78. 87% of those with a rural postcode had used a library building in the last 12 months compared to 88% of all users.

79. In Ipswich on the Cornhill with the Be Well bus for the day afforded opportunities to speak to homeless people and non-library users. Themes mentioned included:

- Library valued as a safe space.
- Health issues were mentioned 8 times, including diabetes and cancer and the need for support groups.
- Mention made of not being able to afford to buy books.
- The service and was a good place to take children.

80. 82 non white respondents had used a library building in the last 12 months.

What would encourage non-users to use library buildings in the future?

81. 651 respondents had not used a library building in the last 12 months and of 527 who answered the question what would encourage them to use libraries in the future:

- Nothing (88 respondents)
- if a branch was more local or a mobile library stopped closer to where they live (73 respondents)
- preferred to use mobile or home library services (72 respondents)
- specific book event (47 respondents)
- Other points mentioned in the questionnaire: more information about what's available, evening opening hours, easier/free parking, and more books.
- Points mentioned in face-to-face discussions with non-users: lack of time, no need as use tablet or kindle, or no need for services.
- Children's reasons for not using libraries focused on the quality of books available, opening hours and transport.

Most important aspects of the library service

82. The questionnaire included a list of 16 features of the current library service and asked respondents to indicate level of importance on a 5-point scale from Very Important, Important, Neither important nor not important, not important, not important at all. These aspects were put together because of the Pre-engagement discussions. **Figure 5** shows a high level of support was expressed for the whole range of current services on offer. Looking at very important and important together the range across all services was 99% to 68%.

Figure 5: Importance of aspects of the current library service
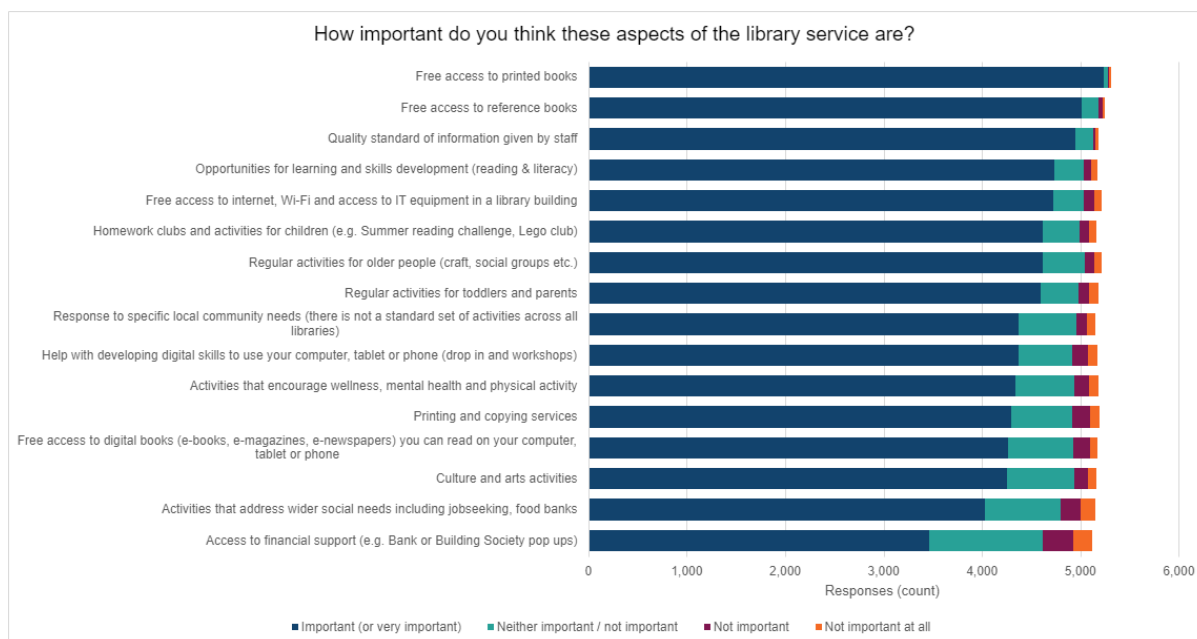
83. Over 90% of respondents thought Free access to printed books, free access to reference books, free access to internet and Wi Fi in a library building and opportunities for learning and skills development were very important or important aspects of the library service. Slightly lower levels of support were expressed for activities that address wider social needs including job seeking (78% very important/important) and access to financial support (68% very important/important).

84. Interestingly age groups 34 and under, 35 – 64 and 55 – 64 were 11% and 6 % more in support of wider social activities being available in library buildings whilst 65-74 didn't comment on this although preferred more access to public services, Age group 75+ were 9% less supportive of addressing social needs through the library service.

85. 482 people chose to comment on additional aspects they valued in the current service and the aspects mentioned most frequently were:

   - safe/neutral meeting place and provision of warm space (97 respondents)

   - access to local/ community information (72 respondents)

   - wide range of materials including newspapers (55 respondents)

   - Qualitative feedback from focus groups reiterated the value put on libraries being safe, non-judgemental spaces.

   - Minority ethnic groups particularly valued the quiet space and saw libraries as a place for research and information gathering.

86. men were **less strongly** supportive of access to the internet in libraries, printing and copying services, skills development and activities of children, older people but they did not think they were not important. 9% less supportive of making more use of the library. 11% less supportive of partnership with other services and 10% for

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information and guidance. A higher proportion of men were in the 65+ age groups compared to All Data.

87.   Rural postcode respondents rated the current services in library buildings slightly less highly than All data, and all 9 of the aspects suggested for development in them ranging from 2 -7% lower.

88.   Non-Library users and the homeless also commented on issues with getting a library card due to having no address. Concern for the cost of fines for not returning items on time and the need for lessons on computing and digital fraud avoidance.

Most important aspects for the library service to develop.

89.   As with the question on importance of the aspects of the current service, the question asking what areas are important to develop in future was guided by the Pre-engagement work and respondents asked to rate the level of importance.

90.   Looking at very important/important together, of 5,078 respondents, over 90% thought better communication of services available was important to develop and over 80% wanted to see more focus on evidenced community needs, use of library buildings and development of digital skills and the use of technology as illustrated in **Figure 6**. Disabled people "Consistently thought it **very important** to develop all the services to a greater extent than All Data with the single exception of more services to preschool nurseries, schools and colleges" (p10 of EqIA)

Figure 6: Areas important for the library service to develop.
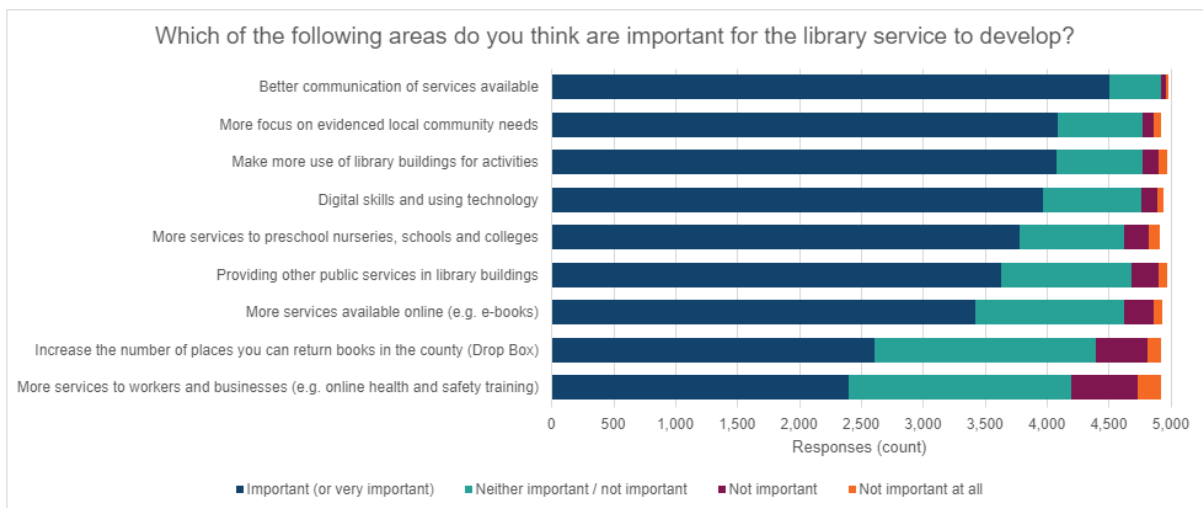
91.   Less than 50% thought more services for workers and businesses were important to develop and only 53% thought increasing the number of places you can return books was very important/important.

92.   260 gave comments on other aspects they thought could be developed, 26% saying it is important to keep doing all of them and 18% wanted a core library service i.e. more books. Some comments requested services that are already offered, such as

collective loans to book clubs. Annex 4 Question 6 lists other ideas given including more quiet spaces to be allocated, particularly for those with autism needs so they can concentrate (EQIA), more DVDs and audio books and support for those whose first language is not English.

93. For disabled respondents they consistently thought it was very important to develop all the services to a greater extent than All Data respondents with the single exception of more services to preschool nurseries and colleges. And 8% higher response level (very important/important) for increasing the number of places you can return books.

94. For age the 34 and underage group they were 8% less supportive for developing digital skills whilst 35 – 54 and 55 – 64 age groups were not statistically different in their responses to All Data responses. 65 - 74-year-olds were 4% more supportive for developing services providing digital skills and using technology, this increased to 6% for 75+ and included free access to digital books wifi and internet.

95. Comments made at the protected characteristics group on sexual orientation and in the questionnaire, highlighted a need to develop more opportunities for a sense of community for people with protected characteristics over books. For example, a LGBT+ book club and a neurodivergent book club. They also felt that there were not many books or magazines for gender queer or diversity more would make them feel more included Need for more books about identity and on discrimination law. From the pre-engagement work staff from the library service told us that people from this group preferred to access online content for books of this nature.

96. A subset of the results was reviewed for those with a religious belief that was not Christian, 62 respondents were identified. None of their free text comments specifically to religious activities. Nonetheless, this group had used 27 libraries of the 48 libraries (including pop ups) in Suffolk in the last 12 months, 7 had used a mobile library service and none had used home library or pop-ups, 14 supported smaller vehicles and only 7 supported pop-ups.

97. Non white groups provided additional free text information on their suggestions for improving the service.

   a) Impartial financial advice

   b) Opportunities for English for Speakers Other Languages

   c) More access to British Sign Language users, and easier ways to find books while at the library itself.

   d) Libraries in more diverse areas should also develop their services to multilingual users. There are many speakers of additional languages in Ipswich who would benefit from ESOL support, e.g. classes and learning materials.

   e) Organise a library impact day in each town. Organise roadshow to go to schools, nurseries, factories, offices, care homes.

   f) Learn from other countries e.g. Sweden class teacher took class to the library every week.

   g) "…library is open to everyone, so there is no stigma or anxiety attached to going there. This is why libraries play such an important role - they allow connections to

be made across a whole community and in doing so they become the heart of that community."

h)   Not enough books in Cantonese

98.   From 2 focus groups held with non-white participants, they suggested.

a)   More information on UK cultural background and life in the UK about ideologies

b)   Information on getting British citizenship.

c)   Need for parents' group for those with children with autism organised by non-white so appeals to non- white communities.

d)   More books on other cultures would make non white people feel more included.

e)   "People may be deterred from using a library due to having difficulty understanding and navigating Public Library policies"

99.   Comments from the protected characteristic 'pregnancy and maternity' highlighted a low level of knowledge of library services by this group including activities relevant to babies (weighing, activities). There was also concern from this group that toddlers will rip books and parents would be charged and finally there was concern that toddlers will make too much noise in a library.

100.   Lack of time was cited, in the free text responses, as a reason why under 34s age group don't currently use the service but suggested that clothes swap, longer opening hours and better co locations with other services would be welcomed with toys form the children centres being made available when the children's centre is not open

Satisfaction with library services

101.   5,139 respondents replied to the question about being satisfied with the current library service of which over 90% were very satisfied/satisfied with the current library service in Suffolk, of which 61% were **very satisfied** (see **Figure 7**). Nearly 2,000 (47%) praised the library service, 569 respondents (14%) appreciated the wide-ranging and inclusive service and 254 (14%) borrowing/reserving books for free.

102.   Only 108 respondents said they were not satisfied or not satisfied at all (2%) and Annex 4 Question 8 shows the range of negative comments received. Not enough books/wider range of books was mentioned by 140 respondents (3%), not enough publicity, longer opening hours, more activities needed especially for those of working age were also mentioned.

103.   70% of the 32 and underage group thought regular activities for toddlers and parents were very important. But 86% also sited better advertising and communication of service was important in the future. While 84% thought providing more services to pre-school nurseries and schools and colleagues was very important/important,

Figure 7: Satisfaction with the current library service in Suffolk
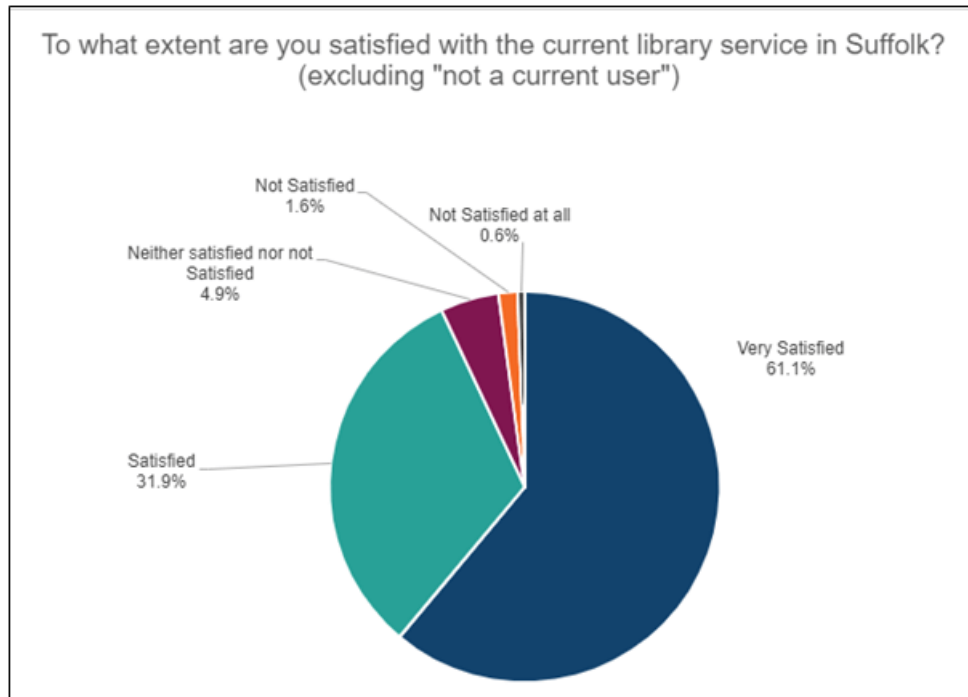
Further comments on the library service

104. Over 2,100 respondents made additional comments about library services.

    - 37% gave praise for the service.

    - 14% valued libraries as community hubs and safe and warm spaces

    - 8% mentioned the good range of free services for all ages.

    - The need for better publicly was mentioned by 4% (106 respondents) and was echoed in qualitative feedback from focus groups.

    - People with ADHD/mental health issues find it difficult to manage books and not incur fines.

105. There further free text comments which provided suggestions for improvements, many of which were unique to the individual. These included:

    - Comments about the Mildenhall Hub expressing frustration that the library does not have full autonomy around its offer, needs to think about children more and the need to address design challenges that have resulted with some shelving under stairs.

    - Wasted space in libraries.

    - Need for longer loan periods for people with special needs, and people with ADHA and mental health issues find it difficult to manage books to not incur finds and suggested da reminder system be put in place. Whilst people with dyslexia wanted longer loan times as their condition means they take longer to read books.

    - Lack of toilets or a requirement to ask staff for a key to the toilets.

    - Charges for overdue books/interlibrary loans being too high.

- Qualitative feedback included issues with access to libraries for meetings e.g. for autistic minority parents to meet or for 1 to 1's between council staff and members of the public.

106. Focus group comments from people with disabilities included.

- An app to show the busy periods for people with autism to enable the to mange the times they access the library service.

- A sunflower lanyard and more training for staff on how to help people with hearing loss this will show more awareness for this type of disability and reduces the onus on the service user to have to declare their disability, and where hearing loops are available the are valuable and all library building have hearing loops.

- Deaf people can be more sensitive to noise in the library awareness of this can help shape library buildings.

107. Focus group comments from people with Gender reassignment.

Very low numbers chose to identify themselves as non-binary or gender non-conforming in the questionnaire survey. The focus group with LGBT+ noted:

- Not many books or magazines for gender queer or diversity - more would make them feel more included.
- Issues of bullying and harassment from other library users because people stand out from what they wear.
- The small sample did not provide any free text comments unique to this group on why not use library.
- Deliver programmes to help with inclusion and diversity.
- Safe, warm space, free
- Provide non-judgemental services.

108. An organisation representing businesses suggested "It would be good to look at the model that is delivered through the BICP, the model in Norwich is interesting and builds on the position of 'city of sanctuary'. They have a range of services that are built and supported by key stake holders and partners. This is a successful model with community embedment." It was also suggested that libraries needed to "shake off the old person -stuffy …be quiet ssshhhh image to re-engage with some parts of community to be more a hub of activity than a quiet space. Another organisation representing businesses suggested business data such as Mintel is useful but also thought libraries should not try to do too much and it was important to focus on local community needs. This organisation also though marketing of libraries needs to be reviewed to overcome perceptions of who uses them. Ideas from these business organisations for outreach included working in partnership with/have a referral route to other initiatives such as good neighbour schemes and the ability to help with mobile banking, council tax, and other public sector services, NHS and credit union.

109. People from the pregnancy and maternity group suggested a dedicated and clearly marked out noisy area for children and babies, damaged books to be used for arts and craft sessions – recycle in a constructive way. For Library services to

communicate permission that it is OK to make noise and finally to demonstrate join up with other organisations using the library by advertising their activities on the library website e.g. Family hub sessions

110. Future priorities suggested in the emailed feedback also included building more links with health and wellbeing, for example library staff being trained to administer C-cards (contraceptives) building on the safe space reputation of libraries. An Archdeacon from the Church of England offered to help facilitate a meeting to discuss promotion of mobile library services and join up with voluntary activities in villages as part of a long term strategy. One person suggested linking libraries with Archives more closely especially in the light of closing the Archive office in Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft. A letter from a Friends group highlighted the role of Friends Groups in the Suffolk Library service, gave an example of a newsletter providing good local communication and suggested exploring a Cultural Partnership Board to get more services online. The idea of a creche desk was also sent in, suggesting it would help single parents use facilities in libraries to find jobs.
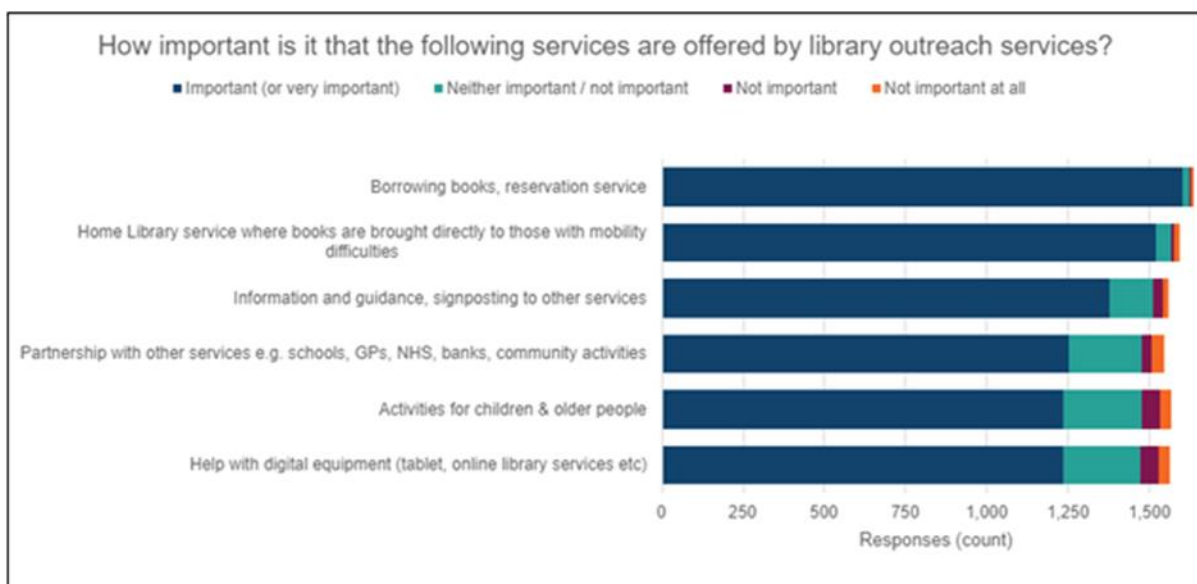
Part 2 Outreach services

Who responded.

111. Outreach services consist of Mobile library vehicles, Pop-Up libraries and Home Library Service and a description of each was provided in the questionnaire. Nearly one third of the respondents answered the questions about outreach services. Out of 1,690 respondents who had used outreach services in the last 12 months, 43% (720 respondents) had used mobile library vans, 6% (93) the home library service and 5% (88) had used Pop-up libraries.

Most important services offered by library outreach services.

112. Respondents were asked how important they thought it was that the outreach service offered 6 services suggested in the Pre- engagement work. **Figure 8** illustrates the level of support from 1,654 respondents that answered the question on which outreach services are very important/important to them. 98% (1,604) responded Borrowing books, 95% (1,519) Home library service. Support for everything suggested was high, with the lowest being 79% (1,236) for help with digital equipment and for activities for children and older people.

113. The 34 and under age groups showed a higher support for partnership with other services for outreach than any other age group.
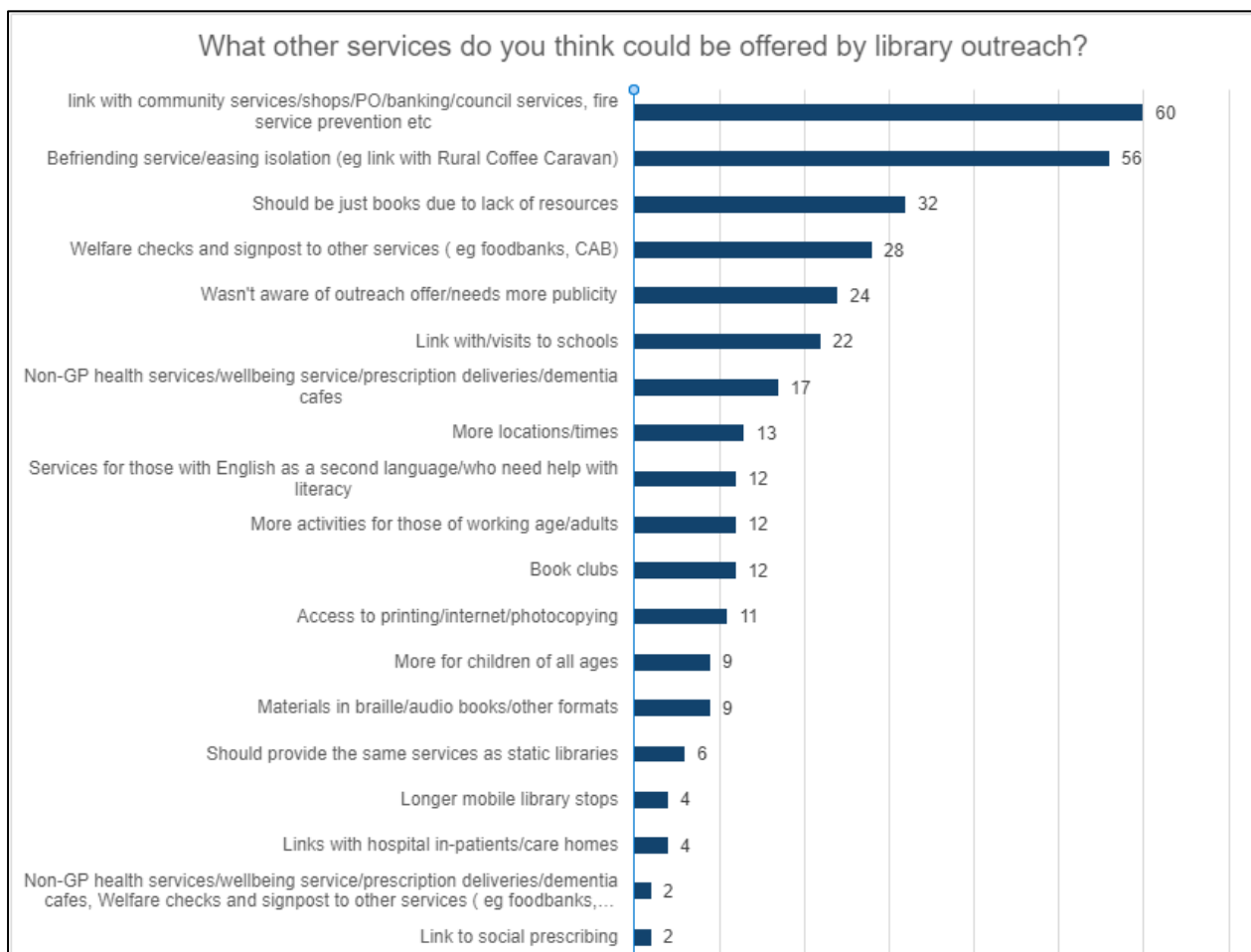
Figure 8: Importance of services offered by library outreach.

Other services suggested for outreach

114. 424 respondents suggested other outreach services that could be offered. Linking with community services/shops/banking/ council services was the most mentioned (64 respondents) followed by befriending service/ easing isolation (e.g. link with Rural Coffee Caravan) (60 respondents). 34 respondents commented that the focus should be just on books due to lack of resources. Annex 4 Question 13 summarises the wide range of other areas suggested, and **Figure 9** shows responses mentioned by more than 1 person.

Figure 9: Other services that could be offered by library outreach

What other services do you think could be offered by library outreach?

Service	Count
link with community services/shops/PO/banking/council services, fire service prevention etc	60
Befriending service/easing isolation (eg link with Rural Coffee Caravan)	56
Should be just books due to lack of resources	32
Welfare checks and signpost to other services (eg foodbanks, CAB)	28
Wasn't aware of outreach offer/needs more publicity	24
Link with/visits to schools	22
Non-GP health services/wellbeing service/prescription deliveries/dementia cafes	17
More locations/times	13
Services for those with English as a second language/who need help with literacy	12
More activities for those of working age/adults	12
Book clubs	12
Access to printing/internet/photocopying	11
More for children of all ages	9
Materials in braille/audio books/other formats	9
Should provide the same services as static libraries	6
Longer mobile library stops	4
Links with hospital in-patients/care homes	4
Non-GP health services/wellbeing service/prescription deliveries/dementia cafes, Welfare checks and signpost to other services (eg foodbanks,…	2
Link to social prescribing	2

115. Disability respondents felt that library service should offer more for people living in rural areas who have a disability.

116. 36 libraries and I pop up had been used by non white respondents. And 59 (73%) thought free access to digital books was very important compared to 53% in the total questionnaire.

117. Non white respondents to the questionnaire suggested more cultural activities for mid age people, Information to be provided on how to claim benefits and improved linked to CAB, SEND groups and were 10% more supportive of libraries providing culture and arts activities.

Mobile libraries service

118. The question on the duration of mobile library stops was intended to test if there was any support for fewer, longer stops offering a wider range of services. 1,511 responded to this question. 33% replied mobile library stops should be 16 -30 mins long while a further 33% thought 31-60 minutes was the most appropriate duration. There was very limited support for stops over 2 hours. These results were compared with the views of the 720 respondents that said they had used a mobile library in the last 12 months. Mobile library service users most preferred stops of 16 -30 minutes 48% (333 respondents) and 27% (189 respondents) 31-60 minutes. It was concluded that the preference is for the mobile library services to continue with the 16-to-60-minute range. Mobile library users qualitative comments

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included huge satisfaction with the existing service, valued the number of stops and feared losing the service. They appreciated the consistency of timings i.e. coming every month at the same place and time. They valued the opportunity to talk to other users and the librarian, making much use of the reservation service.

119. The current mobile library vans are all large diesel vehicles and over 14 years old. 1,521 responded to the question on whether smaller vehicles (that would be more environmentally friendly) are preferred to the current larger vehicles. 49% (751) respondents preferred smaller vehicles. 35% (537) preferred larger vehicles and 15% (233) 'other', with the largest number under other suggesting a mixture of both for flexibility (see **Figure 10** for other suggestions). There was one suggestion for more seating in mobile libraries.

Figure 10: Other suggestions for mobile library vehicle size
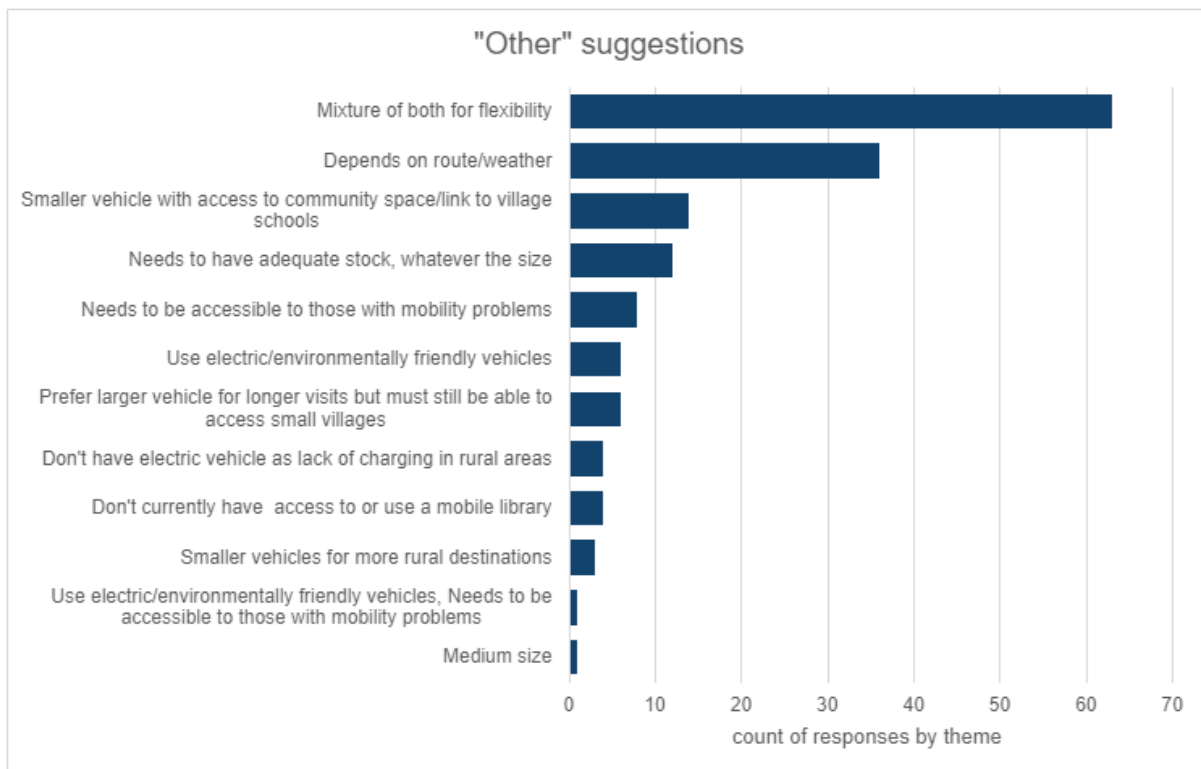
120. The detailed analysis undertaken for the Equality Impact Assessment revealed mobile users and those aged over 75 were 12% more likely to support larger mobile vehicles than all data groups with 14% more of the over 75 age group using mobile library services compare to the total response. 55- 64-year-olds showed 8% less support for larger vehicles preferring smaller vehicles or other options. Younger age groups showed more support for longer stops for mobile vans with 35 – 64 year olds showing 6% more support for 1 – 2 hour stops and 10% for 16 30 minute stops compared to all data. Under 35s were not statistically different.

121. Only 7 non white respondents had used a mobile library in the last 12 months however they dd support longer mobile library sops this was 14% higher for a stop to last between 31 – 60 minutes and 10% higher for a stop to last 1- 2 hours.

122. When mobile library users were asked face to face on the vehicles, they preferred larger vans because they wanted the larger number of books to browse. The figures

were all close to 50% of each of the respective groups so it is proposed that smaller vehicles are considered, as a mix of large and small will be difficult to schedule and any benefits of smaller vehicles will be lost. Smaller vehicles will mean less book capacity for browsing but mitigation is available as books can be reserved online or via the librarian on the mobile vehicle. Consideration could also be given to changing the mobile library vehicle stock regularly.

123. When analysing the data subset for rurality 71% of mobile users had also used a library building in the last 12 months. The significant differences from all data responses were:

- 16% fewer mobile users had used a library building in the last 12 months.
- Mobile users rated all activities in library buildings except free access to printed books and quality of information from staff as lower important/very important than the total response. (9% less for printing and copying and 8% less for Culture and arts).
- 6% higher response to increase the number of places you can return books than All data.
- 4% higher very satisfied/satisfied with the current library service than All data.
- Rated Help with digital equipment and Activities for older people in the outreach service as 12% and 11% less very important/ important than the total response. i.e. 67% of mobile users said Help with Digital equipment was very important/important compared with 79% of the total response. Feedback given by customers on mobile vehicles was that they were aware that this would take more time and they realised there had to be a trade- off - that there is currently a delicate balance between the number of stops and time.
- 15% higher response for 16-30 mins and 9% lower for 1-2 hours. 48% of mobile users opted for 31-60minutes, making it by far the most popular time.
- 15% higher response for larger vehicles meaning that 51% of the mobile users responded to larger vehicle compared to 35% of the total response.
- Mobile users were more strongly opposed to the idea of pop-ups, particularly Pop-ups that replaced mobile library stops with 67% of mobile users disagree/storing disagree compared to 47% in the total questionnaire.
- 23% more mobile users heard about the public consultation from the library/mobile and 16% less Facebook compared to the total survey.
- 11% more mobile users were in the 75+ age group.
- 14% more mobile users had mobility issues compared to all data responses.

124. From the free text responses 16 responses wanted the mobile library service to link with schools close to their stops. And 8 comments related to a focus on books. Comments from this group cover the full range of things as in the full freetext analysis in Annex 4.

Pop-up libraries.

125. Pop-up libraries are available in three localities across Suffolk (Rushmere, Shotley, and Red Lodge) and are funded outside of the SCC budget for library services. A question was included in the public consultation to gauge the level of support for this type of library service provision, to help commissioners understand whether this type of outreach provision should form part of the library services core offer.

126. Three options for Pop-up libraries were set out. One was to gauge interest generally in the concept and the other two to see if people liked the idea but though the community should fund it or if they should replace mobile library stops.

127. The results showed that there was not a strong interest in Pop-up provision with 41% (592) neither agreed/disagreed and 32% (460) disagree/strongly disagree. Only 27% (390) strongly agreed/agreed. Mobile library users and those aged 75+ disagreed even more strongly with the idea of Pop-ups. Younger age groups expressed more support for pop-ups with 55% of 35 and under age group respondents strongly agree/agree with Pop-up funded by a community and 22% preferring afterschool but still 45% of respondents had no preference. The 35 – 54 age group were 11% more supportive of Pop-ups supported by community funding and 8% more support for after school (20% of 35- 54 age group), whereas 55-64 age group had a stronger level of feeling for neither agree not disagree with pop-ups.

128. Disabled respondents (7%) strongly disagreed with replacing mobile libraries with pop-ups.

129. The views of the Pop-up users were examined as a subset of data. Over half of the 88 Pop-up users also used mobile library services, over a third used the Home Library Service and many made use of other library buildings. Pop-up users showed much higher levels of interest in Pop-ups (59 strongly agreed/agreed) although only 34 strongly agreed/agreed with Pop-ups replacing mobile stops. There were some individual comments about difficulties of transport and why Pop-ups are important to them, illustrating that Pop-ups play an important role in their current locations but the overall results suggest that expansion of the concept is not something that is supported and will not form part of the core library offer going forward. Existing Pop-up services may continue if the provider is willing and community funding is secured.

130. 7 respondents who identified as having a religious belief that was not Christian supported pop-up provision in Suffolk.

131. Non white respondents showed a higher level of support for Pop-ups, with 50% of non-white groups supporting Pop-ups provided by external funding (compared to 38% All Data), but fewer people use outreach services so this does not change the overall conclusion that Pop-ups are not the way forward.

Home library service

132. A free text question was included asking how the home library service could be enhanced. 402 comments were received with 47% (206) suggesting it is promoted more. 46 praised the service and 41 suggested it needed more volunteers. Areas for development included linking up with care homes, more services to prevent

isolation, and other items to borrow – see Annex 4 Question 18. Focus group feedback from home library volunteers talked about how much the home library was appreciated by customers that saw very few people week on week, helping to reduce social isolation.

133. Discussion with Home library volunteers suggested there was not a shortage of volunteers at the moment. Generating laughter and making people feel involved with the outside world illustrated the value customers get from home library visits leading to high levels of praise and appreciation for the service. Comment was made that not all people want to talk about health issues on book exchange visits - customers welcome the opportunity to talk about something other than health.

134. For those who reported their sex(gender) they commented that the home library should have better integration with NHS Home care arrangements and care homes and more publicity of home library service should be provided.

What people told us about outreach services.

135. A free text question was included to ask if there was anything else respondents would like us to consider when reviewing outreach services. 352 provided further comments about outreach services, including 104 asking to ensure the mobile service/pop-ups continue and 39 praising mobiles and outreach services. 38 wanted better publicity of dates/routes of mobile libraries and what they offer and 37 suggested more could be done to ease isolation for all ages. Additional comments can be found in Annex 4 Question 19.

136. 35 and under age group wanted longer opening hours that fit with their schedule, a better understanding of 'knowing what's on' , better transport to access libraries, did have enough time to be able to attend, whilst some suggested creche desks in libraires and the provision of public toilets.

137. 35 – 54 age group felt having work space that is away from home would b useful and catering for people for this age groups, but this group did site that the ' "library is often the last place people can socialise (and learn) for free is INVALUABLE" a suggestion was made to team up with universities to help people improve their language, essay-writing, critical thinking, communication and research skills; Provide access to services withdrawn from rural areas and more advertisement of Home Library service.

138. Apart from a larger selection of books, additional comets on the support for mobile library services and warm spaces all remaining age groups supported aforementioned points.

How people heard about the public consultation

139. A question was included to find out how people heard about the public consultation, identifying 12 options (see **Figure 11**. Of the 4,845 respondents to the question about how they heard about the consultation, 33% heard on Facebook and 31% from their local library or mobile, reflecting the effectiveness of Facebook and the boosted posts. 14% received notification via email reflecting the effectiveness of the Pre- engagement work where groups were asked to send on emails to their networks. 479 heard by 'Other' means with including from school, college email or newsletter, via work or staff newsletter.

140. Rural postcode respondents were more likely to have heard about the consultation from their local library or mobile. Facebook was the most common means of hearing about the consultation for All Data.

Figure 11 How respondents heard about the consultation.

How respondents heard about the consultation (Q21)

- 1.3%, Twitter (X), 62
- 0.3%, Radio, 13
- 2.0%, Local press, 97
- 0.2%, Letter, 12
- 2.0%, Parish newsletter, 99
- 4.3%, Nextdoor app, 209
- 33.4%, Facebook, 1,618
- 5.2%, Poster or bookmark, 252
- 8.2%, Word of mouth, 395
- 9.9%, Other (please specify):, 478
- 14.0%, Email, 678
- 30.8%, Local library branch or mobile library, 1,490
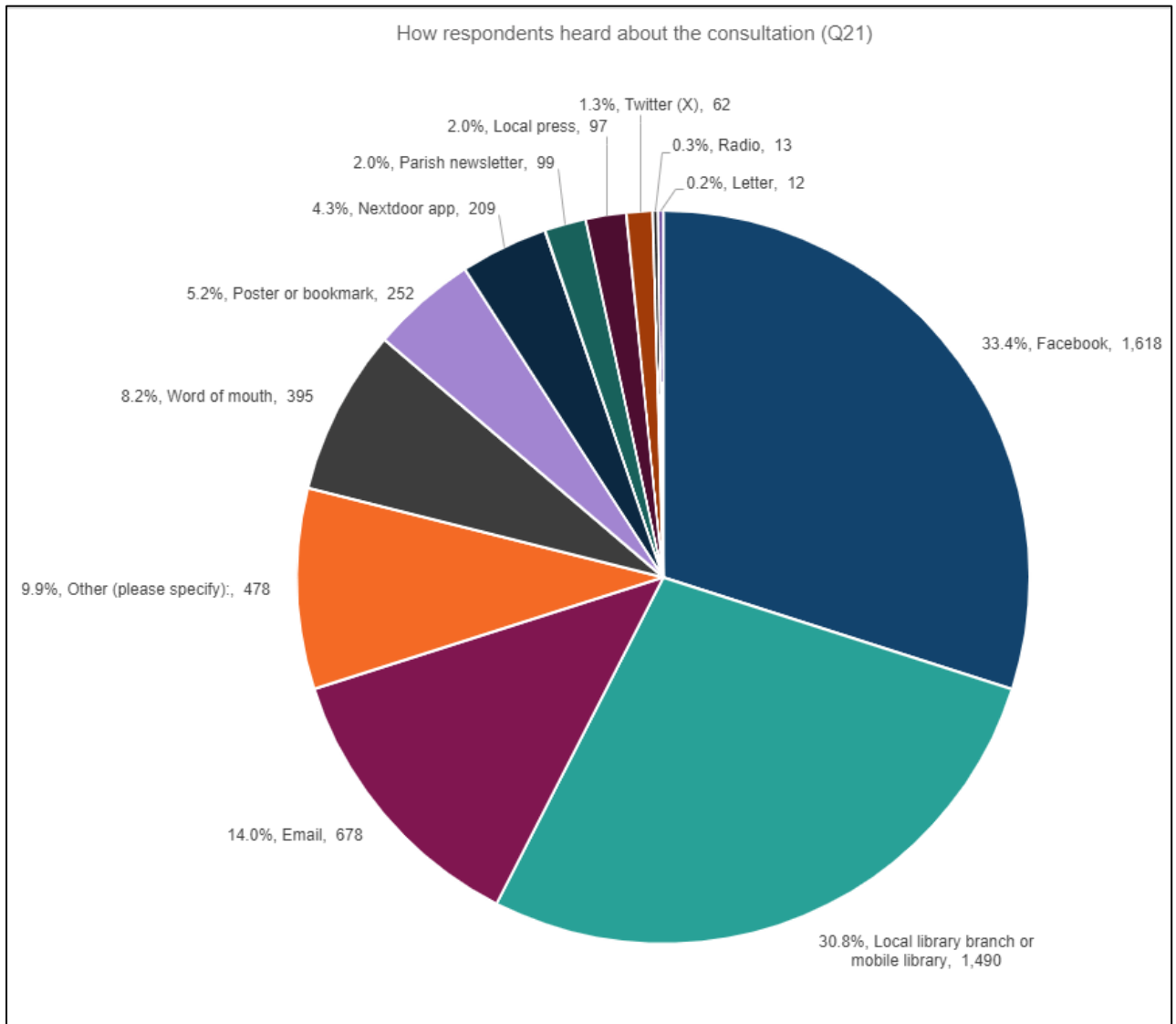
Protected Characteristics

141. The results assisted the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA looks in detail at the relevant subsets of data for age groups, disability, gender, rural residents (mobile library users and rural postcodes), socio-economic disadvantage (as last 2 are important in Suffolk) and highlights differences that are statistically significant differences compared to "All data". Ideas for the future gathered from quantitative and qualitative data for each characteristic has been included in the cross cutting themes (page 37).

142. Information about people's relationships was not collected in the consultation. People were encouraged to respond as an individual even if they used the same services and shared the same views.

143. Views of respondents from the protected characteristic groups have been presented in the document throughout.

Results of the Children's Questionnaire

144. The Childrens questionnaire comprised of 13 questions and was promoted for response online. It went out in December and was promoted to schools via SCC 's Suffolk Headlines before and after Christmas 2023. 557 responses were received (Annex 5). Of those who provided further details about themselves:

   a) A similar level of girls (217) and boys (195) responded.

   b) 224 were aged 0-11, 234 aged 12-15 and 26 aged 16 -24

   c) A less even geographical distribution across the County was achieved with groupings in Newmarket and Lowestoft due to localised take up of schools that took classes into the libraries

   d) 60% (331) had used a library building in the last 12 months and 40% (219) had not, creating a good-sized sample of non-library users.

What would encourage non-users to use library buildings in the future?

145. 77 non-users responded that more/specific books/ better looked after books/ comics would encourage them to use library buildings in the future, and 9 respondents, if the building was more welcoming /attractive/ bigger.

Childrens' Use of library buildings

146. Of the 60% (331 respondents) who had used a library building in the last 12 months, none reported using 9 libraries in the list and 30% (95) had used Newmarket library and 23% (75) Lowestoft (see **Figure 13**).

Figure 13: Libraries used by children responding to the Children's questionnaire.
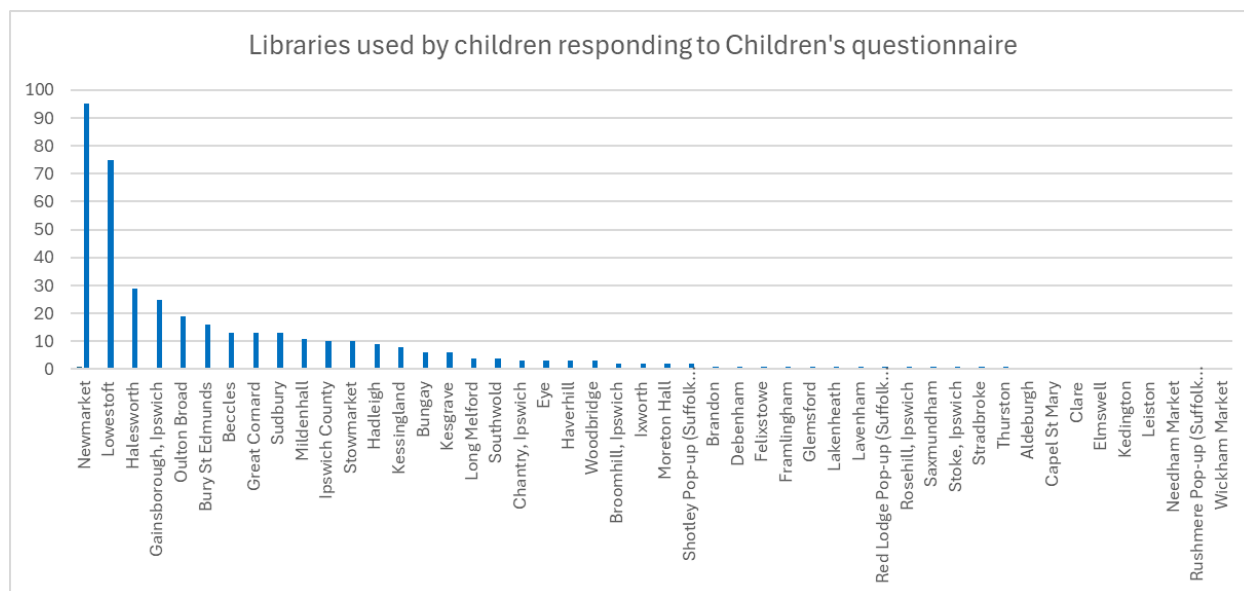
Most important aspects of the library service

147. The question on important aspects of the current library service included 12 used in the adult questionnaire. Borrowing books for free, opportunities to learn to read and write and activities to keep your mind and body healthy were very important/important to 80% of children responding. The lowest level of support

was for 'Help to use your computer, table or phone' (Technology help in **Figure 14**) and 'Digital books' with 60% rating these very important/important.

Figure 14: Importance of library services to children

Importance of library services (Children, Q4)
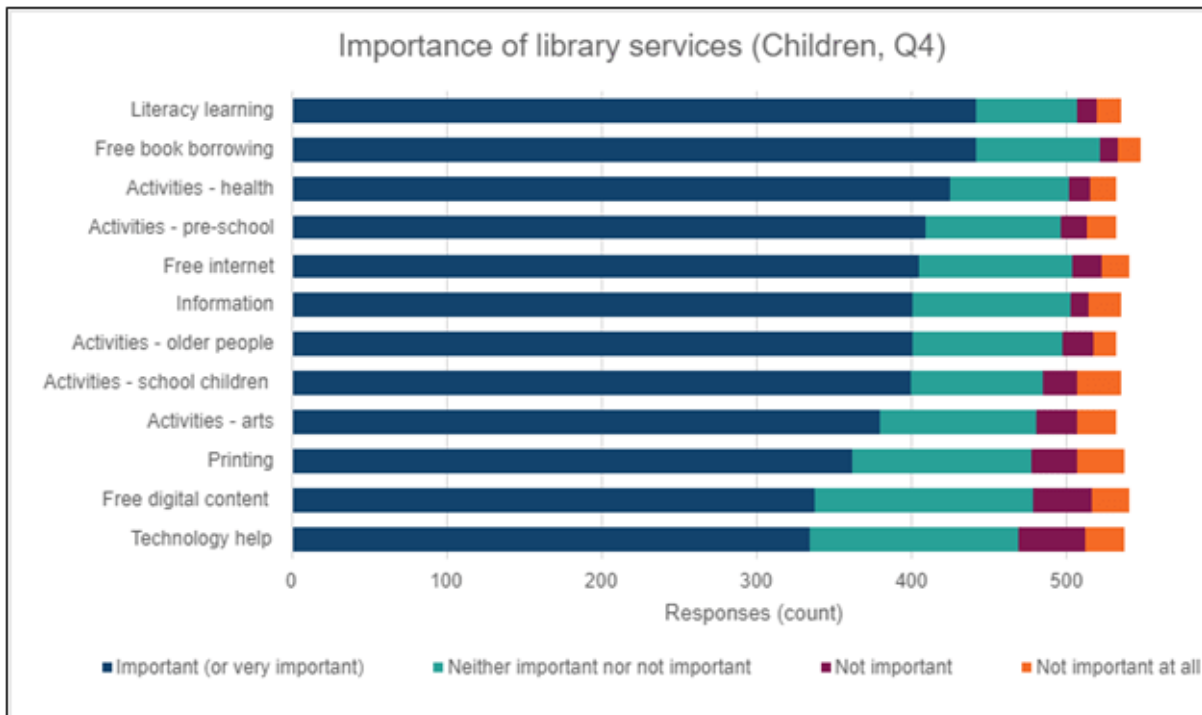
Most important aspects for the library service to develop.

148. The most important aspect for development from the children's perspective was to offer more services to preschool nurseries, schools, and colleges (80%) as shown in **Figure 15**.

Figure 15: Importance aspects to develop – children's view.

How important is it for the library service to do the following? (Children, Q5)
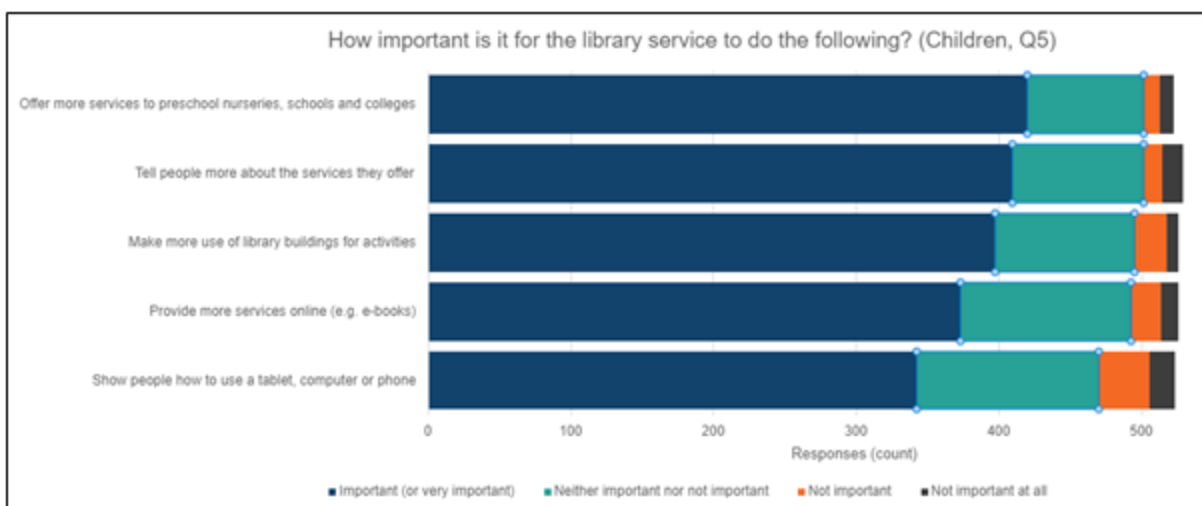
Level of satisfaction with the library service

149. 71% were very satisfied/satisfied with the current library service. 77 children made comments praising the service and staff and 22 had suggestions for improvement

including "more variety", stricter punishments for people that vandalise books, and more seating areas.

Figure 16: Children's satisfaction with current library services

Are you satisfied with the current library service in Suffolk?

- 175 Very Satisfied 32.3%
- 210 Satisfied 38.8%
- 126 Neither Satisfied nor Not Satisfied 23.3%
- 8 Not Satisfied 1.5%
- 22 Not Satisfied at all 4.1%
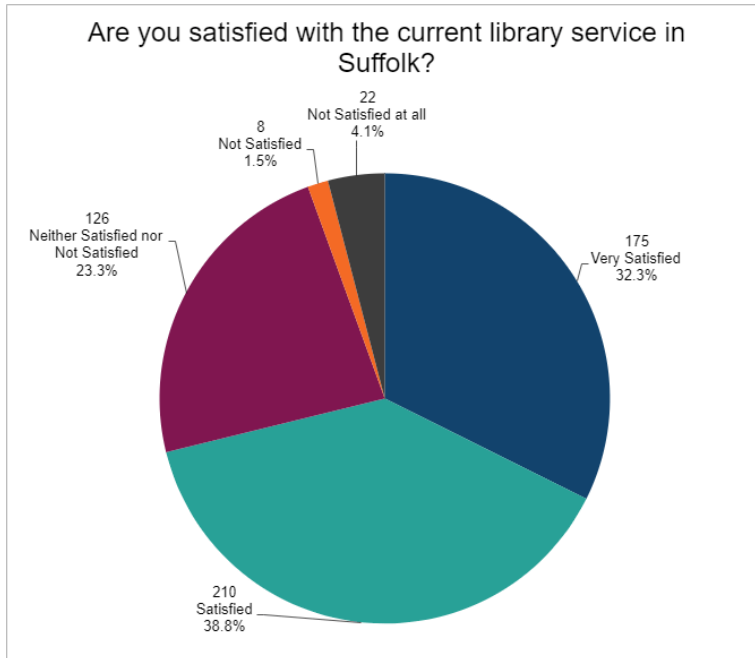
Services for children not living near a library.

150. Children considered it very important/ important for the library to provide activities for children after school, in holidays or at weekends and rated this slightly higher than borrowing books as shown in **Figure 17**. There was also a lot of support for continuing the home library service but as 101 children said they used this service and this does not check out with known users of the service, it is likely there was some misunderstanding. In terms of future developments, children asked for a book delivery/pick up service and more mobile library visits/Pop-ups especially to schools.

151. At a focus group held with children in a Lowestoft secondary school ideas for future development included more books on other cultures, updated IT and opening hours that did not overlap with the school day.

Figure 17: Children's view of importance of services if you don't live near a library building.

If you don't live near a library building, how important are these services?
(Children's survey Q9)

Legend: Important (or very important) | Neither important or not important | Not important | Not important at all
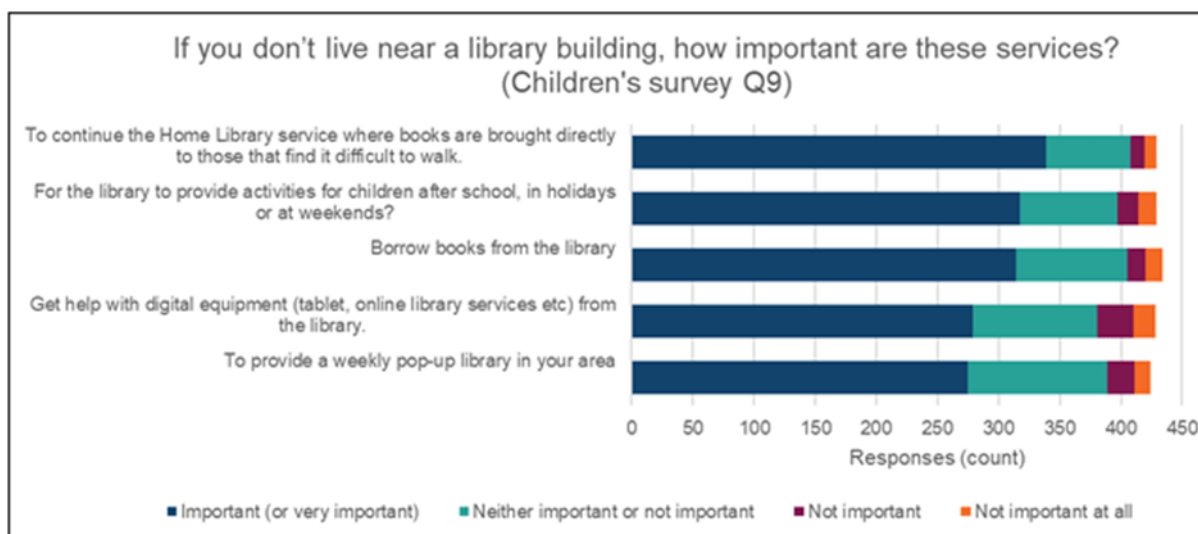
Cross cutting themes

152. The following themes bring together:

- comments made in the questionnaire response.

- qualitative information gathered in the pre-engagement conversations with organisations.

- qualitative information gathered from focus groups, face to face meetings and emailed in during the public consultation.

153. It is intended to be a summary of ideas raised that will help inform future service providers of aspirations in Suffolk.

Digital services

154. Digital services are already a feature of the library offer. Access to digital books is currently rated very important/important by 82% of respondents, slightly less **important** than access to printed books. Support for digital books is highest with those aged 35-55 years old. Older age groups are less keen on digital books but more interested in getting digital skills, including learning about how to avoid fraud. Concerns were expressed about e-books expiring too quickly.

155. There was support across the board from all age groups for free access to the internet and computers in libraries. Some children would like to be able to borrow computers and tablets. Older people would like help with using phones, apps and computers. There was not strong support expressed from individuals for the development of digital training to help employees, although business organisations suggested online databases could be of value.

156. Nearly 80% of those responding to outreach services thought help with digital equipment was important. Other comments about digital services included:

- Need for additional technology to help those with special needs e.g. visual disabilities, photophobia.

- An app to show when the library is less busy for those with autism.
- Regular technology courses
- Reminder system for those with ADHD/special needs to help them avoid fines.
- Ability to be able to apply for a library card online.
- Need for staff to have IT skills to help support people with apps and tablets because of many public and commercial services being 'digital by default'.

Use of buildings

157. There was more support for making use of library buildings for activities (82% respondents thought very important/important) than for providing other public sector services in library buildings (73%). Comments received suggested a range of activities:

- Link to Family hubs.
- Link to children not attending school - (absent children and home educated)
- Links to CAB, benefit advice
- Link to Archives - family history.
- Health checks, healthy lifestyle
- Parcel collection/ delivery
- Lack of public toilets, disabled, or need to ask staff for key.
- Make greater use of green space available.
- Photography and art exhibitions
- Speakers once a month – like U3A and prepared to pay.

158. There were some comments about use of space and facilities in libraries:

- Quiet areas and noisy areas space allocation
- Privacy for computer users
- Too much wasted space in library buildings
- Sensors on doors to assist child security and SEND groups.
- Creche desks
- Need for hearing loops in all libraries.
- Easier parking

Health

159. Libraries already offer a range of activities to encourage wellness, mental health and physical activity. The offer varies from building to building. 83% respondents thought these activities were very important/important. 22 respondents suggested links could be made to non-GP health services, wellbeing services, prescription deliveries and dementia cafes. 21 comments were concerned about duplication of service offers. However, 80% of children responding to the children's questionnaire thought that activities to keep your mind and body health was very important/important and consideration needs to be given to the range of activities that are available that address this for children.

Activities

160. Activities for older people, toddlers and homework clubs offered as part of the current service were strongly supported. Ideas for new activities included:

- Book events, book clubs
- Support for those whose first language not English.

- Facilitate marginalised groups to meet in libraries, including heath care groups (e.g. cancer suffers)
- Access to impartial financial advice
- Organise a Library impact day in each town, roadshows to schools, nurseries, factories , offices, care homes
- Childrens clothes swap
- Digital fraud check ins
- Training on how to use mobile phone/apps.
- Reading mentors for adults that want to improve literacy skills.
- Support local writers/ artists through events.
- Access to Credit Union
- Cooking and preparing meals.

Resources

161. Printed books are core of the library service. A few comments were received from adults and children about the range of books, both fiction and non-fiction.

- Retaining the core classics
- Retaining all the books in a series
- Larger selection of big print books
- Bilingual books
- Audio academic books
- Books on identity and discrimination law
- Magazines for diversity groups - gender queer, minorities
- Information on how to access the vote.
- Information on getting British citizen ship, UK cultural background
- How to donate books to the library (from authors and children)

162. Printing and copying services were generally highly valued in libraries, particularly by children and working age people, less so by those aged over 65. 95% of respondents thought the quality of information from staff was very important/important although those aged 34 and under, rated this lower.

Communications

163. Over 90% of respondents thought there was a need for better communication about aspects of the current library service. Clearly few respondents were aware of the home library service and many commented that there is a need for better publicity of dates and routes of the mobile libraries and what they offer. Suggestions for improvements included:

- Do not only promote on social media.

- Home library – service offer and to attract volunteers.
- Mobile library service, and links to traveller sites
- Local information board in library – bus timetables, activities
- More access to British Sign language users and easier ways to find books in the library
- Role of libraries in filling the gap as more organisations are 'digital by default' e.g. closure of train ticket offices and need to print tickets
- Suffolk Libraries website difficult to negotiate
- Get information to parents about range of services available
- Clarity of library policies and how to join

Evidence of Local needs

164. Response to specific community needs was a question in the adult survey testing how far people valued the variation in service delivery across libraries in Suffolk or if they wanted a more uniform service offer. 85% of respondents thought responding to local needs was very important/important and 83% thought this was something we should develop. 72 respondents suggested access to local community information could be provided in libraries.

Wider social needs

165. Support for activities that address wider social needs such as job seeking and food banks was much higher for those in the working age groups (aged under 54). 89% of those aged under 34 thought this was very important/important compared to 78% of all respondents. It was suggested that more help with managing personal relationships and linking vulnerable/at risk people to relevant organisations was a consideration for the library service, particularly how you could offer this from the outreach provision.

Mobile library - Home library links

166. The Home Library service is currently run through the branch libraries. Comments were received about linking Home library volunteers to mobile libraries. Volunteers could pick up books from the mobile library vehicle and walk to customers to save driving to branch libraries. This would be in addition to informal activities currently happening as neighbours help each other in the event of illness preventing people from returning books.

Sustainability/Environmental considerations

167. Transport was a factor mentioned as a reason why people do not use library buildings. It is a particular issue for those in rural areas that have seen bus services decline or disappear completely. Lack of public transport to Capel St Mary was mentioned in focus group discussions. Parking availability and cost was also an issue. For those living in rural areas and have given up their car, the mobile library is a lifeline to bring not only books but social interaction.

168. 7 respondents suggested consideration should be given to electric or environmentally friendly vehicles to replace the existing vans. 4 respondents cautioned that there is lack of charging points in rural area.

169. Comments made on the use of libraries as warm spaces were made by 357 respondents indicating how much they valued the promotion of libraries in this way. There were some discussions in the engagement phase about how green space could be used to promote biodiversity. In some locations where libraries are on urban routes there were concerns about safety, security, and anti-social use of green space.

Policy

170. Many ideas for the future to service have resource implications but some are policy considerations, using available resources. Points raised include:

- Dogs in libraries especially welcoming guide dogs
- Warm spaces
- Longer loan periods for people with special needs
- Dealing with bullying and harassment between customers
- Clarity of public library policies, how to join etc.
- Use of space for Council staff to have meetings 1 to 1
- Use of specialist apps e.g. to help with photophobia.
- Opening hours, particularly to give more access to school children.
- Training on deaf awareness
- Charges for overdue books/ interlibrary loans too high
- Introduce Friends of Mobile libraries

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Pre -engagement contacts

Annex 2: High level messages from library pre-engagement

Annex 3: Consultation distribution

Annex 4: Shaping the future of library services - Final results

Annex 5: Children's questionnaire response – Final results

Annex 6: Qualitative feedback summary

Sources of further information

a) Equalities Impact Assessment -March 2024 search for 'Library Procurement Public Consultation Outcomes Full EIA'

b) Libraries Procurement - Cabinet paper 11 July 2023

c) Needs Assessment for Library services - updated March 2024

d) Libraries Connected - Independent charity that represents public library services in England.

Annex 1: Pre -engagement contacts

Group	Representative of	Contact type
Suffolk's Libraries staff	Current provider staff including mobile van drivers	Face to face
Suffolk's Libraries Friends Group	Community involvement in delivery of library services	On Teams
Mobile library service users	Mobile library service users	Face to face
Collaborative Communities Board	District Councils, public sector and voluntary organisations officers	On Teams
SCC Adult and Community Services Management team	Adult Services providers, officers	On Teams & MS Forms
SCC Children & Young People Leadership team	Children's services providers, officers	On Teams & MS Forms
SCC The Hold	Suffolk Archives – historical record use	On Teams
NHS	NHS & Suffolk and North East ESSEX Integrated Care Board	On Teams
District Councils	Each District in Suffolk	On Teams
SCC Directorates (Others)	Officers & organisational priorities	On Teams
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	Parish Councils in Suffolk	On Teams
Community Action Suffolk	Needs of rural communities	On Teams
Voluntary & Community Sector Leaders group	Voluntary sector organisations	On Teams
Children/teenagers	Holiday Club group at Stowmarket library	Face to face
Children in school	Children	MS Form
SEND Young people	Specialist needs	MS Form
Looked after Children	Specialist needs	MS Form
SCC Network groups: Neurodivergent Network Vegan Network Christian Fellowship Women's Network Young Adults' Network Black and Asian Network Mental Health Network disABILITY Network Deaf Network LGBT+ Network Carers Network	Protected characteristics and also asked for their views on care leavers, military veterans, socio-economically deprived and rural communities.	MS Form
Engaged Communities Group	Voluntary sector organisations	On Teams
MPs	Political interest	Letter
Suffolk Chamber of Commerce	Businesses & workers	On Teams
MENTA (Business advice organisation)	Advice and training to businesses	On Teams
Library users	Current library users	On Teams
Library non users	Non users of library services	On Teams
Suffolk Parent Carer Forum	Specialist needs SEND carers	On Teams
ACE Anglia Disability Advocacy	Needs of people with disabilities	On Teams

Military veterans	Needs of Military veterans	Face to face
Department for Work and Pensions	Workers	On Teams
Colleges	Needs of young people	MS Form
Schools	Needs of teachers and pupils	MS Form

Annex 2: High level messages from library pre-engagement

Children

- CYP -desire to link with family hubs also could do more for Children in Care?
- Children not attending school should be encouraged to use libraries (children absent from school and those being home-educated)
- Suffolk Libraries want to be able to support home educators more
- Range of activities for children beyond standard reading based – e.g. art, craft, competitions etc
- Need to offer more for older children/teenagers - could create teenage hubs, especially for those revising for exams?
- No school library service so could be greater provision for schools going forward
- Provision of books in different languages for asylum seekers (unaccompanied children)

Businesses

- Don't currently have a use for libraries – would use online services if required

Communication

- Library branches communicate separately – have own Facebook pages so not obvious what is going on overall (website holds details of activities at all branches)
- General lack of knowledge about Home Library Service, mobile library stops and what services libraries offer
- Communication needs to be clear that libraries are not just about borrowing books

Adults/general

- Libraries as possible way to provide support for those with learning difficulties for support and networking
- Possibility of further links with CAB
- Services for under-represented groups e.g. Gypsy, Roma, Traveller community, Ukrainian refugees, ethnic minorities – could mobile libraries expand their reach? (some libraries already offer activities aimed at some ethnic groups)
- Possibility of sharing facilities e.g. Mildenhall Hub, Moreton Hall
- Links with archive branches
- Need to promote services for those looking for work

- Libraries could do more for those on benefits – e.g. help with transfer to Universal Credit, host job fairs
- Potential to use libraries as health hubs for various health services e.g. health checks, healthy lifestyle advice (would need space for privacy, also staff to provide information)
- Archive hubs in libraries/train library staff in family history
- Need to recognise role of friends groups/volunteers in running of branches (also running of home library service)
- Need to understand that each branch has its own specific needs – issues around space in branch, inability to expand etc
- Libraries see themselves as filling the gap (not by choice) made by organisations being 'digital by default'
- Closure of Tourist Information Centres mean libraries are trying to fill that gap
- Potential closure of ticket offices at stations - libraries may find themselves being asked to print tickets
- Appointment system may be needed for specific help/services
- Staff recognise a need for providing support to users of IT in libraries, but don't feel they have the skills/feel they need to be upskilled to provide this as a service
- Most activities take place during working hours – seems to be very little for those who work/events in evenings
- Perception that not all events are on libraries' website – County Library has noticeboard advertising several events not shown online (Need to check if these events are run by Suffolk Libraries or are they run by other organisations using a space in the library?)
- Could do more to support adult literacy (reading mentors, spaces where people could go for help in branch)

Mobiles/outreach

- Mobiles could visit community groups rather than villages -potential link with e.g., Rural Coffee Caravan, existing book exchange schemes
- Mobiles could mirror offering of static branches
- Greater promotion of mobile library stops to boost usage
- Potential to link mobiles with Home Library Service (most HLS volunteers linked to a static library) – could extend remit?
- 'Users of mobiles are loyal and don't use statics.' (could be linked to access – lack of public transport from rural areas)
- Mobiles could do more for rural communities - look at Rural Coffee Caravan, also loss of banks in rural areas and digital support for older people
- Gypsy and Roma Travellers do not have access to libraries – could access outreach services (but often have issues with connectivity due to location)

- As above – outreach could link with hard-to-reach communities and provide health services e.g. vaccinations
- Explore potential of village halls for outreach/mobile stops
- Possibility of link between community transport and mobile/outreach – need to recruit more volunteers for this to be effective
- Park and Ride sites as drop-off points for books?
- Mobile useful for social interaction between users/exchange of local information
- Wider choice of materials to borrow
- Better promotion of what is offered on mobiles – could do more for children/families/playgroups
- Some mobile library users also use static libraries – also mobile libraries used to collect reservations
- Mobiles could sell items (e.g. stationery)

Libraries Pre-engagement – Children's and Young People's views

10 children and young people responded in total

About you generally (library usage and where you live)

All 10 answered this question and results are summarised below:

About you generally	No.
I have used a library in the last year - I live in a town	6
I have used a library in the last year -I live in a village/countryside	2
I have never used a library -I live in a village/countryside	1
I have used a library in the last year	1
Total	**10**

Only 1 of the children/young people have never used a library.

What would you like to borrow from the library in the future? (You can include any of the items listed above, or something else. You can list as many or as little as you like)

9 completed this question and commented they would like to:

- Borrow books (story books, bedtime picture books, books to help with homework, books 'based on real life')
- Borrow ebooks/audio books
- Access to the internet
- Download music with their library card
- Take part in activities
- Have access to a space designed for young people with staff trained in 'youth work'

What activities could a library offer that would interest you? (You can include any of the activities listed above, or something else. You can list as many or as little as you like)

7 completed this question and said they would like:

- Storytelling or puppet sessions
- Reading challenge
- Craft clubs
- Lego building
- Children's activities during school holidays/at weekends
- Information area for young people

How would you like to get to a library service?

All 10 answered this question – some chose more than 1 option, so total adds up to more than 10.

How would you like to get a library service?	No.
Go to a library building	8
On my phone	3
On a computer	3
Village hall pop up (weekly)	1

When are you most likely to use a library?

9 children and young people answered this question, as follows:

When are you most likely to use a library	No.
Saturday	3
After school	2
School holidays	2
Sunday	2

Most popular time is Saturday, and if you add in the figure for Sunday, 5 out of the 9 would visit at the weekend, with after school and school holidays both receiving 2 responses.

What is the easiest way for you to respond to a survey about libraries?

All 9 children and young people who answered this question chose 'On my phone (sent a link to a form to fill in)'.

Annex 3 Consultation distribution

	Stakeholder Group	Communication method	What sent	Date sent 2023
	Press	Email	Press release (PR)	30-Oct
MPS	MPs	Email	Briefing	30-Oct
SCC	County Councillors Posters in Councillor area for pick up	Email	Briefing note	30-Oct
	SCC staff	Inside SCC	News item	01-Nov
	Conservative Group	Online	Meeting	9 Nov
	Conservative Group	Online	Meeting	14 Nov
	Greens, Lib Dems and others	Online	Meeting	9 Nov
	Directorate management teams CYP - sent to all staff	Email	Message	02-Nov
	ACS Directorate management team - Went in ACS update to all staff	Email	Message	02-Nov
	CYP Strategic Commissioners group	Online	Meeting	08 Nov
	Homes for Ukraine newsletter	Email	Newsletter copy	02-Nov
	ACS Provider networks	Email	Newsletter copy	02-Nov
	SCC Network Groups	Email	PR, Newsletter	02-Nov
	Archives service	Email	PR, Newsletter	02-Nov
	Family hubs - Posters & Facebook	Email	Newsletter copy	02-Nov
	Park and Ride	Poster	Posters	01-Nov
Districts	District Councils	Email	Briefing	30-Oct
	West Suffolk	Posters	5 Posters	01-Nov
	East Suffolk District Council	Posters	7 Posters	01-Nov
	Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council	Posters	5 Posters	01-Nov
	Ipswich	Posters	5 Posters	01-Nov
	DC Locality officers	Email		01-Nov
Suffolk Libraries	Suffolk's Libraries	Email	Copy of briefing to staff	30-Oct
	Suffolk Libraries staff / mobiles	Internal post	Briefing note	30-Oct
	Suffolk Libraries Friends Group	Email	Press release	02-Nov
	Mobile library users	Posted to SL	Print copies questionnaire	08-Nov
	Home Library	Email	Print copies	03-Nov
Public Sector	Collaborative Communities Board	Verbal	2 Nov Board meeting	02-Nov
	Gypsy & Travellers	Email	Briefing & print copies	06-Nov
	Engaged Communities Group	Email	Briefing	01-Nov
	Social Prescribing teams	Email	Briefing	07-Nov

Groups	Community Action Suffolk	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	30-Oct
	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	Email	Newsletter included in their Bulletin	31-Oct
Health	Integrated Care Board	Email		07-Nov
	NHS - surgeries	Email	Screens for GP surgeries	06-Nov
	NHS	Email	Newsletter copy	07-Nov
	ICB weekly newsletter to public 1,000 recipients	Email	Newsletter copy	16-Nov
	GP surgeries - Sent to East and West	Posters	Posters - laminated	08-Nov
	PPG Patient groups in GPs	Email	Briefing	07-Nov
	Health watch	Email	Press release & newsletter copy	15-Nov
	Suffolk & North East Essex Dementia Forum	Email	Newsletter	01-Nov
	Suffolk & North East Essex Integrated Care Board	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Ipswich Christchurch mansion Free Wellbeing event	Face to face	Distributed book marks	6 Dec
	St Elizabeth Hospice	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
Rural	The Rural Coffee Caravan	Email	Press release	02-Nov
	Women's Institute	Email	Press release & newsletter copy	06-Nov
	Communities together	Email	Press release & newsletter copy	06-Nov
	Community Action Suffolk	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
Religious	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocese	Email	Press release & newsletter copy	06-Nov
	Together for Suffolk	Email	Social media content	31- Oct
	Together for Ipswich	Email	Press release & newsletter copy	06-Nov
	Emmaus Suffolk.org.uk	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	East of England Faiths Agency	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	BSC Multicultural services (Muslims)	Email	Newsletter copy	21 Dec

Disability	Suffolk Coalition of Disabled People	email	Press release & newsletter copy	06-Nov
	Suffolk User forum (Disabilities)	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	Suffolk Parent Carer Forum & SEND	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	ACE Anglia	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	Autism and ADHT.org	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	West Suffolk Disability Forum	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	Leeway Domestic Violence and abuse services	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
LGBT	Outreach Youth for LGBT 16 -21. PRIDE	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	06-Nov
	Suffolk Pride	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	06-Nov
Business	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce	Email	Newsletter	02-Nov
	Menta	Email	Newsletter	02-Nov
	Department for Work and Pensions - Put in monthly newsletter to 200 partner organisations	Email	Newsletter and social media copy	01-Nov
	Suffolk Agricultural association	Email	Press release	06-Nov
	Military veterans	Email	Newsletter copy	02-Nov
	Combat coffee	Email	Newsletter copy	02-Nov
Children & Young People	Suffolk's Libraries staff give Q to children in library activities	Email	Face to face by library staff	Dec 2023 - Jan 2024
	CYP Children in care	Email	Child Q link	18 Dec
	Schools	Headlines	Child Q link	12 Dec
	Colleges	Email	Link to Q	18 Dec
	Looked after Children - Foster carers	Email	Child Q link	18 Dec
	Children's centres	Email	Child Q link	18 Dec
	Social care field work children	Email	Child Q link	18 Dec
	SEND Young people	Email	Child Q link	18 Dec
	Innov8workshops.com	Email	Press release	13-Nov
	Achievers Ipswich	Email	Link to Q (before child version)	23-Nov
Men	Men's Sheds	Email to CAS	Press release	14 Nov
	Suffolk Mind - Men's Day at Hold Sunday 19 Nov	Email	Translations and Newsletter	16-Nov
Minority groups	GYROS (migrant support org)	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov

	Lets Ipswich	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Victim Support	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	ACCE Suffolk (Chinese community)	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Bangladeshi community	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Indian community	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Phoebe (Multicultural organisation)	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Ipswich & Suffolk Council for Racial Equality	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Homes for Ukraine	Email	Translations and Newsletter	2 -Nov
Non users	Newmarket Locality and Youth action Group meetings	Face to face	Press release	23 Dec
	Sudbury CAB	Email	Translations and Newsletter	14-Nov
	Brandon Garden club	Face to face	Distributed book marks	27 Nov
	Brandon Christmas fayre	Face to face	Distributed book marks	02 Dec
Other	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	Online meeting	Web page link	11 Oct
	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professional (CILIP)& Libraries Connected	Email	Press release and web page	12 Dec

Annex 4: Shaping the Future of Library Services - Final results

1. In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?		

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	As an individual		98.30%	5323
2	On behalf of an organisation or business		1.74%	94
3	As an elected representative		0.70%	38
			answered	5415
			skipped	0

Please use this box to provide the name and type of organisation or business you are responding on behalf of or, further details if you are responding as an elected representative: (194)

194 people answered this question, although 12 did not provide any further information. The remaining 182 have been categorised as follows:

Capacity	No. of responses	% of responses
As self	49	26.8%
A school (pre-school, primary or secondary)	21	11.5%
A town/parish council	19	10.4%
A library branch/mobile library	15	8.2%
Community/social group	12	6.6%
Other	11	6.0%
Library friends group	10	5.5%
Library user	9	4.9%
County/district/borough Councillor	7	3.8%
Health/wellbeing organisation /charity	7	3.8%
Book group	6	3.3%
A library volunteer	4	2.2%
Reading charity	3	1.6%
Church of England group	3	1.6%
Environmental organisation	3	1.6%
The Co-op	3	1.6%

- The most common answer – 49 responses (26.8%) is those who are responding as themselves, for example those who provided their name or occupation

- Second highest with 21 responses (11.5%) was 'A school (pre-school, primary or secondary)'
- Third highest with 19 responses (10.4%) was 'A town/parish council'
- Those categorised as 'Other' – 11 responses (6.0%) were more diverse and included an enterprise agency, a teaching business and a training provider

2. Have you used a library building in Suffolk within the last 12 months?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		87.73%	4654
2	No		12.27%	651
			answered	5305
			skipped	110

3. If you answered NO can you tell us what would encourage you to use library buildings in the future?

	Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	527
		answered	527
		skipped	4888

Although 651 answered 'No' to Q2 – Have you used a library building in Suffolk in within the last 12 months?, only 527 chose to answer this question and their responses are shown in the table below:

Comment	No. of comments	% of comments
Nothing/not sure/no response/would not use/have no need to use a library	88	16.7%
If branch nearer where I live/if mobile stopped near me	73	13.9%
Prefer to use mobile library/Home Library Service	72	13.7%
Specific book/event/activity (e.g. for different age groups)	47	8.9%
Greater accessibility/more inclusive (for elderly or those with health/disability issues)	38	7.2%
Don't have time/hope to use when have more time	35	6.6%
More information about what's available at the library	26	4.9%
More varied or longer opening hours (e.g. evenings)	25	4.7%

Easier parking/free parking	25	4.7%
More books available	21	4.0%
More welcoming environment (e.g. quieter especially for study)	20	3.8%
Only use library online	19	3.6%
If there was a cafe/free food/art gallery/cinema/toilets/something else included	15	2.8%
Other	13	2.5%
Wider choice of materials (e.g. ebooks, videos, music, audio books/newspapers/magazines)	10	1.9%
Total	**527**	**100%**

- Most popular answer with 88 responses (16.7%) was 'Nothing/not sure/no response/would not use/have no need to use a library'
  Sample comments:

  'I can think of no reason why I would need to use the library services.'
  'Nothing if I want a book I go out and by one'
  'Nothing, waste of tax payers money'

- Second popular answer was 'If branch nearer where I live/if mobile stopped near me' with 73 responses (13.9%)
  Sample comments:

  'I am unable to walk and go everywhere on my mobility scooter and the library is 6 miles away'
  'My age and transport are no longer suitable to use library buildings'
  'No car, stuck in village very few buses'

- Third most popular answer was 'Prefer to use mobile library/Home Library Service' with 72 responses (13.7%)

  Sample comments:

  'I only occasionally use the main library as we have a mobile service for the village'
  'A mobile library would be better for me because I do not drive.'
  'I live in a village that has an excellent mobile service so I have no need to go to an actual building'

- The 13 comments categorised as 'Other' covered a wide range of more diverse topics unique to only a small number of individuals including:
  - Lower inter-library loan charges
  - The ability to apply for a card online without having to go into a library
 - Don't want to use a library but want them to be available for others

4. If you answered YES can you tell us which library locations you usually use?The library service in Suffolk has 45 buildings plus 3 Pop-up libraries in community buildings in Red Lodge, Rushmere and Shotley. This question only asks about your use of library buildings. You will be asked about use of the mobile library service later.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Aldeburgh		3.27%	152
2	Beccles		3.98%	185
3	Brandon		3.32%	154
4	Broomhill		2.71%	126
5	Bungay		2.54%	118
6	Bury St Edmunds		13.29%	617
7	Capel St Mary		1.74%	81
8	Chantry		1.96%	91
9	Clare		1.96%	91
10	Debenham		1.10%	51
11	Elmswell		1.27%	59
12	Eye		2.13%	99
13	Felixstowe		7.80%	362
14	Framlingham		4.26%	198
15	Gainsborough		2.26%	105
16	Glemsford		0.93%	43
17	Great Cornard		1.72%	80
18	Hadleigh		3.85%	179
19	Halesworth		3.83%	178

4. If you answered YES can you tell us which library locations you usually use?The library service in Suffolk has 45 buildings plus 3 Pop-up libraries in community buildings in Red Lodge, Rushmere and Shotley. This question only asks about your use of library buildings. You will be asked about use of the mobile library service later.

20	Haverhill		2.86%	133
21	Ipswich County		14.15%	657
22	Ixworth		4.01%	186
23	Kedington		0.52%	24
24	Kesgrave		4.31%	200
25	Kessingland		1.10%	51
26	Lakenheath		0.95%	44
27	Lavenham		1.92%	89
28	Leiston		2.52%	117
29	Long Melford		1.46%	68
30	Lowestoft		5.32%	247
31	Mildenhall		3.51%	163

32	Moreton Hall		1.29%	60
33	Needham Market		2.00%	93
34	Newmarket		8.01%	372
35	Oulton Broad		1.27%	59
36	Red Lodge Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.26%	12
37	Rosehill		3.21%	149
38	Rushmere Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.54%	25

39	Saxmundham		2.97%	138
40	Shotley Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.37%	17
41	Southwold		2.22%	103
42	Stoke		0.80%	37
43	Stowmarket		5.99%	278
44	Stradbroke		1.85%	86
45	Sudbury		6.98%	324
46	Thurston		2.09%	97
47	Wickham Market		3.06%	142
48	Woodbridge		11.89%	552
49	Another library (please give details):		1.57%	73
			answered	4644
			skipped	771

73 people chose 'Another library' but three of these gave no further details. The remaining 70 gave the following information (note: two people gave more than one answer so the total adds up to more than 70/100%):

Library used	No. of responses	% of responses
Mobile library	46	65.7%
Norfolk Libraries	6	8.6%
Online	5	7.1%
Diss	3	4.3%
Cambridgeshire	3	4.3%
All/any/most of the above	3	4.3%
Ipswich Institute	2	2.9%
Prison library	1	1.4%
Suffolk Archives	1	1.4%
Essex Libraries	1	1.4%
Lakenheath Base	1	1.4%

- Most popular answer with 46 responses (65.7%) was mobile library
- Second most popular with 6 responses (8.6%) was Norfolk libraries
- Third most popular with 5 responses (7.1%) was online

5. How important do you think these aspects of the library service are?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important / not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Free access to printed books	93.12% 4950	5.47% 291	0.75% 40	0.24% 13	0.41% 22	5316
Free access to reference books	78.64% 4130	16.81% 883	3.31% 174	0.82% 43	0.42% 22	5252
Free access to digital books (e-books, e-magazines, e-newspapers) you can read on your computer, tablet or phone	53.23% 2754	29.26% 1514	12.72% 658	3.32% 172	1.47% 76	5174
Free access to internet, Wi-Fi and access to IT equipment in a library building	66.95% 3490	23.63% 1232	5.91% 308	2.13% 111	1.38% 72	5213
Printing and copying services	46.43% 2411	36.26% 1883	11.96% 621	3.64% 189	1.71% 89	5193
Opportunities for learning and skills development (reading & literacy)	63.80% 3304	27.57% 1428	5.83% 302	1.51% 78	1.29% 67	5179
Help with developing digital skills to use your computer, tablet or phone (drop in and workshops)	50.20% 2595	34.32% 1774	10.64% 550	3.00% 155	1.84% 95	5169
Regular activities for older people (craft, social groups etc.)	60.26% 3146	28.25% 1475	8.16% 426	1.90% 99	1.44% 75	5221
Regular activities for toddlers and parents	62.00% 3212	26.79% 1388	7.28% 377	2.12% 110	1.81% 94	5181
Homework clubs and activities for children (e.g. Summer reading challenge, Lego club)	59.44% 3072	30.01% 1551	7.22% 373	1.72% 89	1.61% 83	5168

5. How important do you think these aspects of the library service are?

Activities that encourage wellness, mental health and physical activity	53.05% 2749	30.61% 1586	11.68% 605	2.91% 151	1.76% 91	5182
Culture and arts activities	46.74% 2414	35.55% 1836	13.34% 689	2.65% 137	1.72% 89	5165
Activities that address wider social needs including jobseeking, food banks	45.87% 2363	32.42% 1670	14.81% 763	4.06% 209	2.83% 146	5151
Response to specific local community needs (there is not a standard set of activities across all libraries)	49.67% 2559	35.21% 1814	11.47% 591	2.00% 103	1.65% 85	5152
Quality standard of information given by staff	67.57% 3506	27.81% 1443	3.60% 187	0.40% 21	0.62% 32	5189
Access to financial support (e.g. Bank or Building Society pop ups)	32.99% 1690	34.62% 1773	22.47% 1151	6.23% 319	3.69% 189	5122
					answered	5330
					skipped	85

482 people chose to comment further and their responses are summarised below (note: some comments covered more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 482/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Safe/neutral meeting space - also provision of warm spaces	97	20.1%
Access to local/community information/advice (e.g. CAB, councils, social services) for all ages	72	14.9%
Access to a wide range of materials including newspapers and magazines(especially for book clubs)	55	11.4%
Should only deliver core library services (other orgs provide the other services)	49	10.2%
All of the above	33	6.8%
Banking/post office facilities/access to financial advice	24	5.0%
Children's reading activities and links to schools/higher education/adult literacy	20	4.1%
Services should vary based on needs of local community	19	3.9%
Qualified/knowledgeable/experienced staff	19	3.9%
Activities for those of working age without children	15	3.1%
Quiet space to work/study	14	2.9%

Other	13	2.7%
Access to toilets/cafe or free refreshments	12	2.5%
Activities to support those whose first language is not English	9	1.9%
Access non-GP services e.g. eye tests., hearing tests, blood pressure checks	8	1.7%
Access to mobile library is important especially in rural areas	8	1.7%
Diversity and inclusion programmes (not just aimed at women)	7	1.5%
Need to deliver services for those shielding or housebound	6	1.2%
Negative comments about library services	6	1.2%
Longer opening hours	3	0.6%

- Most popular aspect was 'Safe/neutral meeting space - also provision of warm spaces' with 97 responses (20.1%)

  Sample comments:
  'A library is a safe space. Its the one place where there isn't an expectation to spend money. It's warm, friendly, and a social hug. Libraries are so important to people's wellbeing.'
  'Warm accessible public space, when you live on your own it's good to be able to share a serene space'
  'A place where you know you will be welcome, met with a smile, patience and offers of help'

- Second most popular aspect was 'Access to local/community information/advice (e.g. CAB, councils, social services) for all ages' with 72 responses (14.9%)

  Sample comments:

  'It is a vital community hub to gain information, access to books, Internet, music, local history and a social meeting place. It is vital for our community.'

  'Access to other local information such as parish councillors, health professionals, social prescribers'

  'In absence of a Post Office it is crucial the public have somewhere to go for information. Developing access to multiple services is something that needs to be considered especially in a rural area with limited public transport.'

- Third most popular aspect was 'Access to a wide range of materials including newspapers and magazines (especially for book clubs)' with 55 responses (11.4%)

  Sample comments:
  'Free services for book club members, very important'
  ' Access to newspapers/magazines and journals'
  ' Access to audiobooks and large print are very important. Access to range of books including graphic novels / graphic memoires etc. very important.'

- 13 comments (2.7%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a diverse range of topics and were made by only one person, including;
  - Provide training on use of mobile phones and apps

- o Baby classes are a vital resource
- o Support for local writers, artists etc through events
- The six negative comments (1.2%) are summarised as follows:
  - o Children's activities are too noisy
  - o Three comments suggested libraires are not needed and the money should be saved and not spent on them
  - o One comment wanted more films/DVDs that are less 'woke'
  - o One commented on the lack of privacy for those using library computers

6. Which of the following areas do you think are important for the library service to develop?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important / not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Better communication of services available	46.96% 2341	43.41% 2164	8.35% 416	0.78% 39	0.50% 25	4985
Providing other public services in library buildings	27.25% 1354	45.91% 2281	21.12% 1049	4.39% 218	1.33% 66	4968
More services available online (e.g. e-books)	26.97% 1331	42.43% 2094	24.32% 1200	4.86% 240	1.42% 70	4935
Digital skills and using technology	31.88% 1574	48.60% 2400	15.96% 788	2.57% 127	0.99% 49	4938
Make more use of library buildings for activities	38.84% 1930	43.31% 2152	13.97% 694	2.64% 131	1.25% 62	4969
More focus on evidenced local community needs	38.07% 1875	44.93% 2213	13.91% 685	1.83% 90	1.26% 62	4925
More services to workers and businesses (e.g. online health and safety training)	15.19% 747	33.56% 1651	36.57% 1799	10.98% 540	3.70% 182	4919
More services to preschool nurseries, schools and colleges	34.92% 1717	41.92% 2061	17.31% 851	3.90% 192	1.95% 96	4917
Increase the number of places you can return books in the county (Drop Box)	20.72% 1021	32.31% 1592	36.15% 1781	8.59% 423	2.23% 110	4927
					answered	5078

	skipped	337

Other: 270 people chose to comment further but 10 of these said 'No' or 'N/a' or gave no further details. The remaining 260 comments are summarised as follows (note: some people made comments covering more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 260/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
All are important/keep doing them	67	25.8%
Still want a core library service e.g. more books	47	18.1%
Share buildings with community groups/charities (including credit unions)	25	9.6%
Other	19	7.3%
Better publicity about events at individual branches	18	6.9%
Warm spaces/safe meeting spaces/cafe/free tea & coffee	13	5.0%
Need more quiet spaces (some activities too noisy)	12	4.6%
More evening/weekend events/opening (for those who work/those in their 20s and 30s)	10	3.8%
More connections with schools/colleges	10	3.8%
More DVDs and audio books/greater variety of materials	8	3.1%
Wellbeing support (for mental and physical health)	7	2.7%
Support for those whose first language is not English	6	2.3%
Access to more cultural activities	6	2.3%
Access to mobile library/outreach for rural areas	4	1.5%
Ability to return books to more locations (not just library branches)	4	1.5%
Negative comments about library service	3	1.2%
Encouraging parents to read to children	2	0.8%
Library app and digital library card	2	0.8%
Collective loans for book clubs	2	0.8%

- Most popular comment with 67 responses (25.8%) was 'All are important/keep doing them'

Sample comments:

'All the above are important- meeting the local needs, making the library the hub of village life, meeting local needs'

'I think developing community type services in the Library, as is being done, is very important for the community and the Library's future, i.e. story telling for children, book clubs, showing of films, exhibitions, Father Christmas, etc'

'Community needs can be hard to grasp, but I think it's good to have the power/skill to alter services in response to the public and local area need.'

- Second most popular comment with 47 responses (18.1%) 'Still want a core library service e.g. more books'

  Sample comments

  'The emphasis these days seems to be away from the traditional library function of book lending and moving to the more social areas that do not necessarily have to be done by a library. Do wish books were important again. There used to be 3 floors of books, now the area for books amounts to less than 1 floor. (Ips Co Lib)'

  'As I have already stated my feeling is that a library needs to remain a library, not a daycare centre or training hub.'

  'I think that fundamentally a library should be a library and at its core have the best possible collection of serious books for public education.'

- Third most popular comment with 25 responses (9.6%) was 'Share buildings with community groups/charities (including credit unions)'

  Sample comments:

  'Develop connections with other services such as citizens advice, food banks, social support groups'

  'Again, I would ask you to consider the addition of credit unions as an example.'

  'Other public services could include sessions on benefits advice e.g. CAB/Social care'

- 19 comments (7.3%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a diverse range of topics, including;
    - Provide digital learning skills for the elderly
    - Provide training to help with cooking and preparing meals
    - Use library branches for parcel collection and delivery
- Three negative comments (1.2%) are summarised as follows:
    - More places to return books would mean more would be lost or damaged
    - Libraries are not needed and should be closed to save money
    - A comment from a user with photophobia who asked for the use of free software to help with their condition but was refused

7. To what extent are you satisfied with the current library service in Suffolk?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very Satisfied		59.49%	3057
2	Satisfied		31.08%	1597
3	Neither satisfied nor not Satisfied		4.73%	243
4	Not Satisfied		1.56%	80
5	Not Satisfied at all		0.54%	28
6	I am not a current user of the library service in Suffolk		2.61%	134
			answered	5139
			skipped	276

8. Why do you say this?

	Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	4094
		answered	4094
		skipped	1321

4,094 people chose to answer this question but of these, 19 said 'N/a'. or did not provide any further information. The remaining 4,075 responses are summarised below (note: some made comments covering more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 4,075/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Praise for library service/individual branches/mobile service	1,932	47.4%
Service is wide-ranging and inclusive/serves all needs	569	14.0%
Borrowing/reserving books and other materials -this service is excellent (and free)	488	12.0%
Staff always helpful/friendly/knowledgeable	254	6.2%
Could be improved/negative comments about library service	247	6.1%
Not enough books available/need wider range of books for book clubs	140	3.4%
Good for children of all ages	124	3.0%
No opinion - don't use/don't use enough	88	2.2%
Not sure what/who service is for/not enough publicity about what's on	48	1.2%
Longer opening hours/more mobile stops/more libraries needed	41	1.0%
Use online services only	37	0.9%
Needs more funding	28	0.7%
Better online/digital offer required	23	0.6%
More activities needed (e.g. talks, book clubs) especially for those of working age	22	0.5%
Duplication of services provided by other organisations not necessary	21	0.5%
Cannot access services (due to health, disability or location)	12	0.3%
Other	12	0.3%

- By far the most popular comment with 1,932 responses (47.4%) came from those who used the opportunity to praise the library service

Sample comments:

'We use the library with our children frequently. It enables us as parents to instil a love of reading into our children without the expense of having to purchase new books. When big things are happening in the world, we find books that can help our children understand the situation which we couldn't afford to do otherwise.'

'It is the best thing we get for our Council tax. While other services go down libraries are getting better.'

'I have a valid comparison. My mother lives in a town in the north west of England. Her library services offer very little and cut-backs each year see more services cease. Services offered by Suffolk Libraries are, I think, excellent, easy to access and thoughtfully presented and carried out.'

- Second most popular comment with 569 responses (14.0%) was that the ' Service is wide-ranging and inclusive/serves all needs'

Sample comments:

'Our library has introduced many activities, groups and resources for our small village which are essential for the development of the community'

'From walking in the door, the services/events me and my family can access is so vast free, helpful and impactful on our wellbeing'

'Because libraries are the only free place available as a right to all people. They support learning, literacy, skills, citizenship:- They are the place of first and last resort for information, access to education, entertainment and a safe place to be.'

- Third most popular comment with 488 responses (12.0%) was 'Borrowing/reserving books and other materials – this service is excellent (and free)'

  Sample comments:

  'I love our library. And the website is brilliant. It always has up to date recommendations of new books, is so easy to use. I reserve books almost every week and they always have fantastic stock, new releases as well as classics. My children borrow audio books via borrow box with their library card every week, it's great that they have autonomy to choose what they want.'

  'I can always get the books I want by ordering online if they are not in stock. I am informed by email when the book is available. The system works perfectly.'

  'Free ordering service for books, does not disadvantage users of smaller libraries'

- 12 comments (0.3%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
    - SCC should take back control of Suffolk Libraries
    - Need more places to drop books
    - Regular technology courses in the library would be good

247 responses (6.1%) made comments that were categorised as 'Could be improved/negative comments about library service'. A large proportion of these were not specific – sample comments are:

'There is always room for development to address the local needs that are changing and to adapt to changing societal needs.'

'My local experience is good but there is always room for more development of provision.'

Some comments were about staff:

'Lack of Chartered Librarians to consult. Watering down of professional services.'

'I have yet to find the library lacking in its services but feel that with more (possibly voluntary) staff there is more that could be done'

'There always seems to be a lack of staff to run activities and those that work there currently do everything and earn a poor wage in exchange. They are not rewarded or valued for the important job that they do in our communities.'

The quality or quantity of materials available to borrow:

'I am finding the Libby App for e-books increasingly frustrating to use as many of the (usually non-fiction) books I want to borrow are shown as 'Not in Your Library's Catalogue'.'

'Only thing that could be improved is to get rid of the old poor quality books. I tend not to borrow books as they are often dirty.'

'The reservation system for print books is a bit clunky - you can't easily manage your reservations like you can online'

Other comments covered a wide range of topics including:

- Services/activities vary by branch
- Mobile library is too unreliable (breaks down, no way of knowing if not coming)
- Book reservations take too long to fulfil
- Libraries are too noisy (due to activities or other users)
- Lack of parking at branches
- Layout of books on shelves can be confusing
- Lack of tea/coffee facilities, toilets or seating areas for reading
- Library service not needed/is obsolete
- Comments about Mildenhall Library being 'a walk through corridor' and 'noisy & unwelcoming'

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about library services?		
Answer Choices	**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	2472
	answered	2472
	skipped	2943

2,472 people answered this question, although 274 of these said either 'No' or commented that they had nothing further they wanted to add. The remaining 2,198 responses are summarised below (note: some made comments covering more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 2,198/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Love/rate libraries very highly/praise for libraries	918	37.1%
Libraries are a community hub/asset/safe & warm space	357	14.4%
Good range of free services for all ages (borrowing books, access to magazines, children's activities)	201	8.1%
Negative comment about libraries/suggestions for improvements	155	6.3%

Better publicity needed around activities and to encourage use (especially children & young people)	106	4.3%
Good service received from all staff (but should be paid more/should not rely on volunteers)	88	3.6%
Need more/greater variety of books/materials/audio books	74	3.0%
More money needed/should be better funded/should not be a charity	64	2.6%
Should concentrate on core services only (especially borrowing books)	44	1.8%
Value online/digital service (but not enough materials)	32	1.3%
Other	29	1.2%
Value mobile library	28	1.1%
Inclusive and non-judgemental	21	0.8%
Need more activities (especially crafts/ cultural/arts events)	21	0.8%
Longer opening hours needed - including for mobiles (to suit people of working age)	16	0.6%
Some activities can be too noisy/distracting for other users	15	0.6%
Need more quiet workspaces/desks	11	0.4%
Libraries should not be outsourced	11	0.4%
Need more events in the evenings for those who work	9	0.4%

- Most popular comment with 918 responses (37.1%) was from those who 'Love/rate libraries very highly/praise for libraries'

  Sample comments:

  'I have only praise for the public library services. When times are hard, they form part of the local backbone that supports people.'

  'It was vital to me as a mum with my son and it was, and still is, a part of our routine. Also important as no costs involved'

  'The library service here in Suffolk is something we are and should be grateful and proud of when other counties have shut many libraries or are reliant on volunteer staff.'

- Second most popular comment with 357 responses (14.4%) was from those who said 'Libraries are a community hub/asset/safe and warm space'

  Sample comments:

  'is a hub of the community. provides excellant value for money. has brillant friends groups'

  'They are vital to the community, as a hub and place of safety '

'Libraries, in my experience, have been a safe, warm space. Either to simply borrow a book/s, study or take children along to early year activities. It provides a great source of community for everyone without discrimination.'

- Third most popular comment with 201 responses (8.1%) was that there is a' Good range of free services for all ages (borrowing books, access to magazines, children's activities)'

  Sample comments:

  'I use the free digital access services all the time, it is important to me that we keep this'

  'I love to be able to choose books that I'm unfamiliar with for free it expands my knowledge and breadth of reading if i had to buy the books i would only choose safe options'

  'The library service is a life line to so many people living in rural areas. Economically it is so valuable to borrow books rather than having to buy them. I regularly go to talks and a book group, and volunteer regularly.'

- 29 comments (1.2%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
  - Would be prepared to pay to reserve books
  - Better or more seating is needed in mobile libraries
  - Libraries should visit schools on a regular basis

- 155 responses (6.13%) made comments that were categorised as 'Negative comment about libraries/suggestions for improvements'. A large proportion of these were unique to the individual who made them, although there were small numbers who expressed a specific concern, for example:
  - Criticism of Mildenhall Hub -

    Sample comments:

    'Mildenhall Hub is a frustrating venue since the library does not have full autonomy around its offer'

    'Mildenhall Library needs to think about children more .The Hub are only worried about the look '.

    'The layout of Mildenhall library in a newly built building is very boor, no thought given to design resulting in some library shelving being under stairs and away from new area.'

  - There were also some negative comments about staff attitude
  - Comments that the service is a waste of money and not needed
  Sample comments

  'Suffolk county council should not be spending public money on library services'

  'Money could be better spent on other things'

  'Close them and save money'

- Other comments covered a wide range of topics including:
  - Too much wasted space in library buildings which could be better used
  - Lack of facilities in some branches to make users feel welcome (tea/coffee/seating areas)
  - Would like loan period to be longer than three weeks (one person who said this is dyslexic and takes longer to read books)
  - Buildings need updating/are not modern (especially Ipswich County Library)
  - Comments that books are not arrange din a way that makes what you want easy to find
  - Charges for overdue books/interlibrary loans are too high
  - Lack of public toilets or requirement to ask staff for a key to toilets
  - Suffolk Libraries website seen as difficult to negotiate

10. Would you like to provide feedback on Outreach Services?			
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1	Yes	31.89%	1575
2	No	68.11%	3364
		answered	4939
		skipped	476

11. Have you used Suffolk's outreach library services in the last 12 months? These include Mobile libraries, the Home library service and pop-up libraries.			
Answer Choices	**Yes**	**No**	**Response Total**
Mobile library vans	43.58% 720	56.42% 932	1652
Home library service	6.95% 93	93.05% 1245	1338
Community funded Pop-up libraries	6.65% 88	93.35% 1235	1323
		answered	1690
		skipped	3725

12. How important is it that the following services are offered by library outreach services?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important / not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Borrowing books, reservation service	87.73% 1437	10.20% 167	1.16% 19	0.24% 4	0.67% 11	1638
Help with digital equipment (tablet, online library services etc)	46.13% 721	32.95% 515	15.16% 237	3.45% 54	2.30% 36	1563
Activities for children & older people	49.78% 781	29.00% 455	15.49% 243	3.51% 55	2.23% 35	1569
Information and guidance, signposting to other services	52.59% 821	35.62% 556	8.52% 133	1.92% 30	1.35% 21	1561
Home Library service where books are brought directly to those with mobility difficulties	74.37% 1184	21.04% 335	3.08% 49	0.50% 8	1.01% 16	1592
Partnership with other services e.g. schools, GPs, NHS, banks, community activities	46.28% 715	34.82% 538	14.56% 225	2.01% 31	2.33% 36	1545
					answered	1654
					skipped	3761

13. What other services do you think could be offered by library outreach?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	494
		answered	494

13. What other services do you think could be offered by library outreach?		
	skipped	4921

494 people completed this question and of these 70 were either blank or said 'No' or that they had nothing to add. The remaining 424 responses are summarised below (note: some made comments covering more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 424/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Link with community services/shops/PO/banking/council services, fire service prevention etc	64	13.0%
Befriending service/easing isolation (e.g. link with Rural Coffee Caravan)	60	12.1%
Praise for mobile service/pop-up libraries	45	9.1%
Welfare checks and signpost to other services (e.g. foodbanks, CAB)	35	7.1%
Should be just books due to lack of resources	34	6.9%
Link with/visits to schools	27	5.5%
Wasn't aware of outreach offer/needs more publicity	25	5.1%
Other	23	4.7%
Non-GP health services/wellbeing service/prescription deliveries/dementia cafes	22	4.5%
Book clubs	15	3.0%
More locations/times	13	2.6%
More activities for those of working age/adults	13	2.6%
Services for those with English as a second language/who need help with literacy	13	2.6%
Access to printing/internet/photocopying	11	2.2%
More for children of all ages	10	2.0%
Materials in braille/audio books/other formats	9	1.8%
Should provide the same services as static libraries	7	1.4%
Links with hospital in-patients/care homes	6	1.2%
Longer mobile library stops	4	0.8%
Negative comments about the service	4	0.8%
Link to social prescribing	2	0.4%

- Most popular comment with 64 responses (13.0%) was' Link with community services/shops/PO/banking/council services, fire service prevention etc'

Sample comments:

'Perhaps mobile libraries, post office, banks, benefits agency etc could combine resources to offer their services from one vehicle for those in rural areas with limited access to transport to larger centres'

'Post office, those services that the charities won't bring to our villages because of client numbers. They say they won't cover an area because their isn't enough take up, so put them on the bus.'

'Fire service prevention work.'

- Second most popular comment with 60 responses (12.1%) was 'Befriending service/easing isolation (e.g. link with Rural Coffee Caravan)'

  Sample comments:

  'I feel that there could be lots more offered - perhaps linking up with the coffee caravan. The mobile library only stops for a short amount of time and could stop for longer to offer more of an opportunity for people to meet others or access some support.'

  'Links to befriending services maybe/well being services- housebound help'

  'Coffee/ cafe within mobile unit or coinciding with mobile library in local village hall to create local communities hub experiences. Or anything that reduces isolation and loneliness in the community'

- Third most popular comment with 45 responses (9.1%) was 'Praise for mobile service/pop-up libraries'

  Sample comments:

  'I am 90 and soon will not longer be able to drive as mist of my contemporise. So a mobile library in more villages would be very important for a lot of people with no transport'

  'Mobile libraries were a godsend to me when I lived in an isolated place. I don't think you need more services, just make the ones you have excellent'

  'I think the service is a fantastic provision for those in rural communities without vehicle access and those home bound'

- 23 comments (4.7%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
  - Provide transport to libraries for those who live in rural areas with no bus service
  - Provide free e-readers for those who cannot get to a library branch in person
  - Have a delivery service to villages for those who can't wait for the mobile library to visit
- Four comments (0.8%) were categorised as negative all suggested closing the libraries/mobile service/outreach

  'None, close the service and put the money into something useful or reduce tax'
  'Library outreach should be shut down, too costly'

14. Would you prefer the mobile library to make short stops in a village offering limited services or fewer, longer stops, offering a wider range of services?						
Answer Choices	Under 15 minutes	16 – 30mins	31- 60 mins	1 – 2 hours	More than 2 Hours	Response Total

14. Would you prefer the mobile library to make short stops in a village offering limited services or fewer, longer stops, offering a wider range of services?

Short stops with fewer services	6.95% 105	32.69% 494	33.36% 504	20.38% 308	6.62% 100	1511
					answered	1511
					skipped	3904

15. Would you prefer smaller mobile library vehicles e.g., 3.5 tonnes or larger vehicles e.g., 7.5 tonnes?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Smaller vehicles (smaller than current vehicles)		49.38%	751
2	Larger vehicles (current size)		35.31%	537
3	Other (please specify):		15.32%	233
			answered	1521
			skipped	3894

Other responses: 233 people provided more information although two of these were found to be blank. The remaining 231 are summarised as follows (note: one person's response covered more than one comment so the total adds up to more than 231/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Mixture of both for flexibility	63	27.3%
No preference/don't know	44	19.0%
Depends on route/weather	36	15.6%
Smaller vehicle with access to community space/link to village schools	14	6.1%
Needs to have adequate stock, whatever the size	12	5.2%
Other	12	5.2%
Needs to be accessible to those with mobility problems	9	3.9%
Satisfied with current vans	8	3.5%
Use electric/environmentally friendly vehicles	7	3.0%
Negative comment don't need service	7	3.0%

Prefer larger vehicle for longer visits but must still be able to access small villages	6	2.6%
Don't have electric vehicle as lack of charging in rural areas	4	1.7%
Don't currently have access to or use a mobile library	4	1.7%
Smaller vehicles for more rural destinations	3	1.3%
Negative comment about survey	2	0.9%
Medium size	1	0.4%

- Most popular comment with 63 responses (27.3%) was 'Mixture of both for flexibility'

  Sample responses:

  'A mix would be the obvious solution and route them appropriately'

  'A combination of both types to provide maximum flexible options'

  'A mix of the two with alternating between them as well as mixing up the duration of visit and the services offered.'

- Second most popular comment with 44 responses (19.0%) was 'No preference/don't know'

  Sample responses:

  'Have no strong view as either larger or smaller ..they just need to continue'

  'Don't mind - just don't stop them coming to villages'

  'Grateful for any vehicle, large or small'

- Third most popular comment with 36 responses (15.6%) was 'Depends on route/weather'

  Sample comments:

  'Mixture of both depending on the access roads and parking areas available where they are going.'

  'Surely there is a case for a mix of both - depending on the area. If a location is known to be affective to access then there is a case for smaller library van'

  'But alternating could be an idea... Weather limitations might force use of a smaller vehicle, but in good weather/access provide a greater selection'

- 12 comments (5.2%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
  - Have a pop-up service in a village hall instead where books can be dropped off and collected
  - Can't decide as this is a choice between the environment and providing a service
  - Have a 'hub and spoke' service instead using electric cargo bikes

16. Would you prefer to have a community funded pop-up library or a pop-up library instead of mobile library in your area?

Answer Choices	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Total
Interested in a Pop-up	11.86% 171	15.19% 219	41.05% 592	18.93% 273	12.97% 187	1442
Would support a Pop-up provided by external (e.g. community) funding in addition to existing services	12.24% 174	26.44% 376	38.68% 550	13.64% 194	9.00% 128	1422
Would support a Pop-up to replace mobile stops (Pop-up not funded by community)	5.62% 79	11.53% 162	35.59% 500	22.42% 315	24.84% 349	1405
					answered	1465
					skipped	3950

17. Do you have any preferences on what time of day pop up libraries should be made available?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Morning		12.35%	174
2	After school		11.78%	166
3	Evening		4.26%	60
4	Weekends		9.87%	139
5	No preference		61.75%	870
			answered	1409
			skipped	4006

18. Do you have any thoughts on how the Home Library Service could be enhanced?		
Answer Choices	**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	600
	answered	600
	skipped	4815

600 people answered this question but 198 of those made comments such as 'No' or 'Don't use the service' or 'Don't know enough to comment' . The remaining 402 comments are summarised below (note: some made comments covering more than one theme so the total adds up to more than 402/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Promote more & in ways accessible to all (don't just use social media)	206	47.0%
Praise for service	46	11.4%
More volunteers needed	41	10.2%
Link up with care homes/other orgs/the vulnerable in the community	24	6.0%
Other	22	5.5%
More funding to expand service/improve stock	21	5.2%
More to prevent isolation	20	5.0%
Must have internet access/help for people to access e-books	10	2.5%
Make sure service is accessible to all	9	2.2%
Better selection of books/more books especially children's/other items to borrow (e.g. toy library)	8	2.0%
Need to use professional library staff not volunteers	7	1.7%
More frequent visits/stops	6	1.5%
Order online and have books posted to you	5	1.2%
Delivery of other items e.g. shopping, medication	5	1.2%
Negative comments	4	1.0%

- Most common comment with 206 responses (47.%) was to ' Promote more and in ways accessible to all (don't just use social media)'

Sample comments:

'It needs to be better advertised and recruited. More posters in GP surgeries?'

'Could it be more widely advertised, until receiving this questionnaire I hadn't heard of this, would be useful for regular library users during periods of illness, for instance if

unable to return books already on loan, and would like to borrow additional books but unable to get to the library as usual.'

'How do residents find out about this service? I only found out by completing this survey and yet I use the library on a regular basis. How could I let someone know about it if I don't know it's available in the first place?'

- Second most popular comment was 'Praise for the service' with 46 responses (11.4%)

  Sample comments:

  'It is valued by those who are most vulnerable'

  'I used to volunteer for the home library service years ago. It is a great service and I greatly enjoyed choosing books for people and chatting to them. I made great friendships'

  'My father used this service for several years. It was very important to him when he lacked mobility.'

- Third most popular comment with 41 responses (10.2%) was 'More volunteers needed'

  Sample comments:

  'Recruit and support volunteers to extend access for older or disabled readers'

  'A very important service & needs as many volunteers as possible, perhaps more publicity

  To recruit more volunteers & advertise for more volunteers. I did not know this service existed.'

- 22 comments (5.5%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
  - Set goals for those using the service to transition to use a mobile library instead
  - Use the service to deliver other things to users, such as hearing aid batteries
  - Partner with visitor teams from churches

19. Is there anything else you would like us to consider when reviewing library outreach services?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	481
	answered	481
	skipped	4934

481 people answered this question, although 129 answered either 'No' or 'None' or had no comment to make. The remaining 352 comments are summarised below:

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Ensure mobile service/pop-ups etc continue	104	29.5%
Praise for mobiles/outreach	39	11.1%
Better publicity of dates/routes of mobile libraries and what they offer	38	10.8%
Do more to ease isolation (for all ages)	37	10.5%
Other	30	8.5%
Do more for care homes (to ease isolation of residents)/vulnerable communities	21	6.0%
Mobile offer should mirror static library service (activities, variety of stock etc)	17	4.8%
Shouldn't rely on volunteers/employ the right sort of staff (need paid staff)	10	2.8%
Have longer hours/ both a daytime and an evening service/more stops	10	2.8%
Pop-ups needed in small communities - to combine with shops/banks/ POs etc	9	2.6%
Seek more funding from elsewhere (e.g. parish/district councils)	9	2.6%
More focus on health and wellbeing	8	2.3%
More support to access online services/better digital offer for users	7	2.0%
Don't need mobile libraries/outreach	6	1.7%
Prefer home delivery to mobile library	4	1.1%
Loan period for books borrowed on mobiles /home library service is too long	3	0.9%

- Most popular comment with 104 responses (29.5%) was a request to 'Ensure mobile service/pop-ups etc continue'

  Sample comments:

  'Just to enable as many people as possible to access books'

  'Keep the mobile libraries for the rural communities especially for the elderly as this may be their only interaction with people if they live on their own'

  'With rural transport services being cut, the mobile library is a vital link for us. We look forward to its visit every month'

- Second most popular comment with39 responses (11.1%) was 'Praise for mobiles/outreach' Sample comments:

  'The volunteer who provides my mobile library service is very knowledgeable and obliging. They recommend books I had not considered reading so have broadened my interests'

'The service provides a vital contribution to village life, especially for elderly folk who may find travel to a library branch difficult.'

'Public transport to rural areas is terrible. The mobile service is really important.'

- Third most popular comment with 39 responses (10.8%) was 'Better publicity of dates/routes of mobile libraries and what they offer'

Sample comments:

'Ensuring these services are widely known about so elements of the community who could benefit from them are able to find out'.

'Make people aware the services are out there. Remember not all can access services on line. Use GPs to get message out.'

'Better advertising of this service – I've never heard of it & my Mother is in a care home so are these covered by this service?'

- 30 comments (8.5%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a more diverse range of topics and were unique to one person, including:
  - Would be happy to pay to attend children's activity sessions at outreach locations
  - Users need to be contacted if the mobile library isn't running for any reason
  - Pop-ups/outreach should not be used as an alternative to or replacement for a library branch

20. Can you please tell us your post code. This will not be used to identify you in any way and will be used to check the consultation has reached all parts of Suffolk and enable us to analyse results according to location.

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	4362
	answered	4362
	skipped	1053

21. Can you tell us how you heard about this consultation?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1 Facebook		33.40%	1618

	21. Can you tell us how you heard about this consultation?			
2	Twitter (X)		1.28%	62
3	Nextdoor app		4.31%	209
4	Local press		1.98%	96
5	Word of mouth		8.15%	395
6	Radio		0.27%	13
7	Letter		0.25%	12
8	Email		13.99%	678
9	Parish newsletter		2.04%	99
10	Poster or bookmark		5.20%	252
11	Local library branch or mobile library		30.75%	1490
12	Other (please specify):		9.89%	479
			answered	4845
			skipped	570

Other responses: 479 completed this question, although one was found to be one of the options provided in the question so was added to that total. 17 provided no further information. The remaining 461 are categorised as follows:

How did you hear?	No. of responses	% of responses
School/college email/newsletter	128	27.8%
Work	38	8.2%
Staff newsletter	37	8.0%
Other	30	6.5%
SCC website	23	5.0%
Instagram	22	4.8%
Local library	22	4.8%
Family/friends	19	4.1%
Budget consultation	19	4.1%
WI	18	3.9%
Parish/town council	16	3.5%

Mobile library	12	2.6%
Council officer	10	2.2%
Local councillor (town/parish/district/borough/county)	8	1.7%
Suffolk Libraries website	8	1.7%
Village email/website	8	1.7%
Whatsapp	6	1.3%
Library friends group	6	1.3%
SALC newsletter	5	1.1%
Suffolk Libraries Newsletter	5	1.1%
Community Action Suffolk	4	0.9%
Online search	4	0.9%
Diocese newsletter	4	0.9%
CAB	3	0.7%
Staff in the street	3	0.7%
VAS email	3	0.7%

- The highest number of responses with128 (27.8%) heard via an email or newsletter from school or college
- Second highest was 38 responses (8.2%) who heard via their place of work
- Followed by 37 responses (8.0%) who heard via a staff newsletter.
- 30 comments (6.5%) were categorised as 'Other' as they mentioned a more diverse range of sources, including:
    - Linkedin
    - Flyer from the Green Party
    - Local mayor
    - Village shop
    - GP waiting room
    - Over 60s club
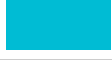
22. If you choose not to answer any of these questions, please tick the 'Prefer not to disclose' option so that we are aware of your choice.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to disclose		100.00%	1047
			answered	1047
			skipped	4368

23. Are you:

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Female		75.16%	2938
2	Male		23.59%	922
3	Prefer not to say		0.87%	34
4	Prefer to self-describe (please specify):		0.38%	15
			answered	3909
			skipped	1506

24. Which age group do you fit into?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Under 16		0.36%	14
2	16-24		1.76%	69
3	25-34		6.37%	249
4	35-44		12.45%	487
5	45-54		12.50%	489
6	55-64		20.43%	799
7	65-74		26.23%	1026
8	75+		18.46%	722
9	Prefer not to say		1.43%	56
			answered	3911

24. Which age group do you fit into?

	skipped	1504

25. The provision for disability within Equalities legislation defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) and has an adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Do you consider yourself to have a disability according to the terms given in the Equality legislation?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		14.80%	574
2	No		83.45%	3236
3	Prefer not to say		1.75%	68
			answered	3878
			skipped	1537

26. If you have answered yes to the above question, please indicate the type of impairment which applies to you from the list below. People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case please select all that apply. If your disability does not fit any of these types, please mark 'Other'

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Mobility		39.26%	267
2	Hearing		19.12%	130
3	Vision		7.65%	52
4	Learning		4.71%	32
5	Mental Health		19.12%	130

26. If you have answered yes to the above question, please indicate the type of impairment which applies to you from the list below. People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case please select all that apply. If your disability does not fit any of these types, please mark 'Other'

6	Communication		3.97%	27
7	Long standing health condition		36.47%	248
8	Prefer not to say		6.18%	42
9	Other (please specify):		9.56%	65
			answered	680
			skipped	4735

27. Your religion or belief - What group do you most identify with?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	No religion		39.71%	1537
2	Baha'i		0.03%	1
3	Buddhist		0.88%	34
4	Christian		49.94%	1933
5	Hindu		0.13%	5
6	Jain		0.00%	0
7	Jewish		0.28%	11
8	Muslim		0.26%	10
9	Sikh		0.03%	1
10	Prefer not to say		5.73%	222
11	Any other religion or belief (specify if you wish)		3.02%	117

27. Your religion or belief - What group do you most identify with?

answered	3871
skipped	1544

28. To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Asian or Asian British: Indian		0.28%	11
2	Asian or Asian British: Pakistani		0.03%	1
3	Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi		0.08%	3
4	Any other Asian background - please specify in the box below.		0.05%	2
5	Black or Black British: Caribbean		0.25%	10
6	Black or Black British: African		0.31%	12
7	Any other Black background - please specify in the box below.		0.00%	0
8	Chinese		0.23%	9
9	Mixed: White and Black Caribbean		0.08%	3
10	Mixed: White and Black African		0.05%	2
11	Mixed: White and Asian		0.53%	21

28. To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

			Response Percent	Response Total
12	Any other Mixed background - please specify in the box below.		0.23%	9
13	White: English		58.10%	2281
14	White: Irish		1.53%	60
15	White: Scottish		1.27%	50
16	White: Welsh		0.53%	21
17	White: British		29.27%	1149
18	Gypsy or Irish Traveller		0.36%	14
19	Other White background - please specify in the box below		0.64%	25
20	Prefer not to say		3.31%	130
21	Other (please specify):		2.88%	113
			answered	3926
			skipped	1489

29. What is your sexual orientation?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Bisexual		2.65%	100
2	Gay man		0.61%	23
3	Gay woman/Lesbian		0.56%	21
4	Heterosexual		82.82%	3123
5	No sexuality		1.38%	52

	29. What is your sexual orientation?			
6	Same sex relationship with a man		0.32%	12
7	Same sex relationship with a woman		0.24%	9
8	Prefer not to say		9.12%	344
9	Other (please specify):		2.31%	87
			answered	3771

Annex 5: Children's questionnaire response - Final Results

	1. Have you used a library building in Suffolk within the last 12 months?			
	Answer Choices		**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1	Yes		60.18%	331
2	No		39.82%	219
			answered	550
			skipped	7

	2. If you answered NO, can you tell us what would make you want to use library buildings?		
	Answer Choices	**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	197
		answered	197
		skipped	360

197 children and young people answered this question, although on investigation one was found to be blank and 60 either said 'Nothing' or 'Don't know'. Once these were removed, the remaining 136 were categorised as follows (note: some responses contained more than one comment so the total adds up to more than 136/100%):

Comment	No. of comments	% of comments
More/specific books/better looked after books/comics/comic books	77	56.6%
If building more welcoming/attractive/bigger	9	6.6%
Have plenty of books at home	8	5.9%
To use computers/printing facilities/wifi	8	5.9%
Other	7	5.1%
If went into town more	4	2.9%
If library was nearer	4	2.9%
If had more time	4	2.9%
Quiet/comfortable space to read	4	2.9%

Fewer people	3	2.2%
To attend a specific event	3	2.2%
Dedicated space in library for teenagers/older children/play area	3	2.2%
More games	3	2.2%
Praise for library	3	2.2%
If books for sale	2	1.5%

- Top answer with 77 comments (56.6%) was 'More/specific books/better looked after books/comics/comic books'

Sample comments:

'for there to be more than one of the same book so everyone can get a chance to read the same book and dint have to wait.'

'More time to read the books without having to pay and books that are cared for better'

'comics books'

- Second most popular answer with 9 responses (6.6%) was 'If building more welcoming/attractive/bigger'

Sample comments:

'Make them more aesthetically pleasing and have a wider range of books'

'more inviting looking'

'im not sure probably there being 2 or 3 storeys'

- Third most popular comment with 8 responses (5.9%) was 'Have plenty of books at home'

Sample comments:

'i would use the library if my dad didn't make books and get them for free for me'

'I don't think much could make me go to a library as i have my own books at home that i read'

'Reading is actually my favourite hobby and I finished reading the ones I had bought online'

Seven responses (5.1%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a range of more diverse topics unique to only a small number of responses:

- o Access to resources for teaching and studying
- o More promotion of what the library does
- o Food being available in the library

3. If you answered YES can you tell us which library locations you usually use? **Tick all boxes that apply to you.**

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Aldeburgh		0.00%	0
2	Beccles		4.13%	13
3	Brandon		0.32%	1
4	Broomhill, Ipswich		0.63%	2
5	Bungay		1.90%	6
6	Bury St Edmunds		5.08%	16
7	Capel St Mary		0.00%	0
8	Chantry, Ipswich		0.95%	3
9	Clare		0.00%	0
10	Debenham		0.32%	1
11	Elmswell		0.00%	0
12	Eye		0.95%	3
13	Felixstowe		0.32%	1
14	Framlingham		0.32%	1
15	Gainsborough, Ipswich		7.94%	25
16	Glemsford		0.32%	1
17	Great Cornard		4.13%	13
18	Hadleigh		2.86%	9
19	Halesworth		9.21%	29
20	Haverhill		0.95%	3

	3. If you answered YES can you tell us which library locations you usually use? **Tick all boxes that apply to you.**			
21	Ipswich County		3.17%	10
22	Ixworth		0.63%	2
23	Kedington		0.00%	0
24	Kesgrave		1.90%	6
25	Kessingland		2.54%	8
26	Lakenheath		0.32%	1
27	Lavenham		0.32%	1
28	Leiston		0.00%	0
29	Long Melford		1.27%	4
30	Lowestoft		23.81%	75
31	Mildenhall		3.49%	11
32	Moreton Hall		0.63%	2
33	Needham Market		0.00%	0
34	Newmarket		30.16%	95
35	Oulton Broad		6.03%	19
36	Red Lodge Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.32%	1
37	Rosehill, Ipswich		0.32%	1
38	Rushmere Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.00%	0
39	Saxmundham		0.32%	1
40	Shotley Pop-up (Suffolk Libraries Local)		0.63%	2
41	Southwold		1.27%	4

3. If you answered YES can you tell us which library locations you usually use?   **Tick all boxes that apply to you.**

42	Stoke, Ipswich		0.32%	1
43	Stowmarket		3.17%	10
44	Stradbroke		0.32%	1
45	Sudbury		4.13%	13
46	Thurston		0.32%	1
47	Wickham Market		0.00%	0
48	Woodbridge		0.95%	3
			answered	315
			skipped	242

4. How important do you think these parts of the library service are?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important nor not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Borrowing books for free	49.09% 269	31.57% 173	14.60% 80	2.01% 11	2.74% 15	548
Digital books you can read for free on your computer, tablet or phone e.g. e-books, e-magazines, e-newspapers	25.88% 140	36.60% 198	26.06% 141	6.84% 37	4.62% 25	541
Free use of the internet, Wi-Fi and IT equipment in a library building	41.77% 226	33.09% 179	18.30% 99	3.51% 19	3.33% 18	541
Printing and copying services	28.62% 154	38.66% 208	21.56% 116	5.39% 29	5.76% 31	538

92

4. How important do you think these parts of the library service are?

Opportunities for learning to read and write	56.64% 303	25.98% 139	12.15% 65	2.43% 13	2.80% 15	535
Help to use your computer, tablet or phone	29.98% 161	32.40% 174	24.95% 134	8.01% 43	4.66% 25	537
Regular activities for older people (e.g. craft)	35.90% 191	39.47% 210	18.23% 97	3.76% 20	2.63% 14	532
Regular activities for toddlers and parents	40.41% 215	36.47% 194	16.54% 88	3.01% 16	3.57% 19	532
Homework clubs and activities for children (e.g. Summer reading challenge, Lego club)	37.76% 202	37.01% 198	15.89% 85	4.11% 22	5.23% 28	535
Activities to keep your mind and body healthy	48.50% 258	31.39% 167	14.47% 77	2.44% 13	3.20% 17	532
Arts and cultural activities	34.77% 185	36.65% 195	18.98% 101	4.89% 26	4.70% 25	532
Useful information given by staff	41.68% 223	33.27% 178	19.07% 102	2.06% 11	3.93% 21	535
					answered	552
					skipped	5

5. How important is it for the library service to do the following?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important nor not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Tell people more about the services they offer	33.65% 178	43.86% 232	17.39% 92	2.46% 13	2.65% 14	529
Provide more services online (e.g. e-books)	32.32% 170	38.59% 203	22.81% 120	3.99% 21	2.28% 12	526

5. How important is it for the library service to do the following?

Show people how to use a tablet, computer or phone	30.92% 162	34.54% 181	24.24% 127	6.87% 36	3.44% 18	524
Make more use of library buildings for activities	38.02% 200	37.64% 198	18.44% 97	4.37% 23	1.52% 8	526
Offer more services to preschool nurseries, schools and colleges	45.32% 237	34.99% 183	15.68% 82	2.10% 11	1.91% 10	523
					answered	535
					skipped	22

6. Are you satisfied with the current library service in Suffolk?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very Satisfied		32.35%	175
2	Satisfied		38.82%	210
3	Neither Satisfied nor Not Satisfied		23.29%	126
4	Not Satisfied		1.48%	8
5	Not Satisfied at all		4.07%	22
			answered	541

7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about library services?

	Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	315

7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about library services?

answered	315
skipped	242

315 children and young people answered this question, although on investigation 175 either said 'Nothing' or 'Don't know'. Once these were removed, the remaining 140 were categorised as follows (note: some responses contained more than one comment so the total adds up to more than 140/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Praise for library/love visiting library	62	44.3%
Suggestions for improvements	22	15.7%
Libraries encourage reading for children of all ages	15	10.7%
Praise for library staff	15	10.7%
More books needed (especially books in series)	11	7.9%
Praise for activities	9	6.4%
Negative comments	9	6.4%

- The most popular comment with 62 responses (44.3%) was 'Praise for library/love visiting library'

Sample comments:

'I just think it is amazing how reading and other activities can change you so much'
'Nice staff; Quiet place to read; No anger; Books for all ages; Opened to everyone'
'I think they're a great help to me and all the other people in my school (TGS), having a library like mine so near a school is extremely helpful- not just for homework, but for other fun experiences as well!'

- Second most popular comment with 22 responses (15.7%) was 'Suggestions for improvements'

Sample comments:

'very good but we need more variety
'A lot of books get vandalized so maybe get stricter in punishment for the offenders'
'there should be older books for older children and more seating areas as being in a library should be fun and colourful'

- Joint third most popular comment with 15 responses (10.7%) were 'Libraries encourage reading for children of all ages' and 'Praise for library staff'

Sample comments – 'Libraries encourage reading for children of all ages'

'I like the activities as if a reading challenge! It is fun and can make other children read more.'

'I love reading and would not be able to read as many books without the library. Books help me feel relaxed and happy and help me at school.'

'It offers good support for people such as reading clubs for parents and children'

Sample comments – 'Praise for library staff'

'There lovely people and are very nice and i dont feel worried or unconfertable to ask them about things or ask them about recommended books'

'The staff do amazing when faced with a lot of naughty and abusive children that parents just leave to the library to sort'

'The staff are nice and help me choose a book if I don't know what to read and they help me find the book I want.'

8. Have you used any of these library services in the last 12 months? (Tick any boxes that apply to you).			
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**	**Response Total**
1	Mobile library vans	24.04%	44
2	Home library service	55.19%	101
3	Pop-up libraries	32.79%	60
		answered	183
		skipped	374

9. : If you don't live near a library building, how important is it that you can:

Answer Choices	Very Important	Important	Neither important or not important	Not important	Not important at all	Response Total
Borrow books from the library	41.47% 180	30.88% 134	20.97% 91	3.46% 15	3.23% 14	434
Get help with digital equipment (tablet, online library services etc) from the library.	28.50% 122	36.68% 157	23.83% 102	6.78% 29	4.21% 18	428
For the library to provide activities for children after school, in holidays or at weekends?	34.73% 149	39.16% 168	18.65% 80	3.96% 17	3.50% 15	429
To continue the Home Library service where books are brought directly to those that find it difficult to walk.	44.99% 193	34.03% 146	16.08% 69	2.56% 11	2.33% 10	429
To provide a weekly pop-up library in your area	28.77% 122	36.08% 153	26.89% 114	5.19% 22	3.07% 13	424
					answered	438
					skipped	119

10. What other services do you think the library could provide for children not living near a library?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	326
		answered	326
		skipped	231

326 children and young people answered this question. 85 of these said 'Nothing' or 'Don't know' or had no suggestions. The reaming 241 have been categorised as follows (note: one comment made two suggestions so the total adds up to more than 241/100%):

Comment	No. of responses	% of responses
Book delivery/pick up service	47	19.5%
More mobile library visits/pop-ups/extended routes especially to schools	44	18.3%
Digital books/online library	26	10.8%
Other	22	9.1%
Build more libraries	17	7.1%
More activities/clubs/games	12	5.0%
Book fairs/book shop/book swaps	10	4.1%
More special events/clubs/parties/outdoor sessions	9	3.7%
More books	9	3.7%
Link with schools/school visits to libraries	8	3.3%
Storytime/opportunity of being read to/listened to reading	7	2.9%
Access to online/digital content (eg YouTube, Zoom Facebook, BBC Bitesize)	7	2.9%
Book groups/reading clubs	7	2.9%
Transport to the nearest library	6	2.5%
Donate books to them	5	2.1%
Free phones/ipads	3	1.2%
Longer loan periods	3	1.2%

- Most popular suggestion with 47 responses (19.5%) was 'Book delivery/pick up service'

Sample comments:

'books that could be sent straight to their door to help with reading'

'online book website, for books to be delivered to people who arent near any.'

'Allow a delivery service of books. Like you go on an online app to book books you want to read then they send them to your house. The person/people would return it via delivery again. '

- Second most popular suggestion with 44 responses (18.3%) was 'More mobile library visits/pop-ups/extended routes especially to schools'

Sample comments:

'vans that bring out books to children that struggle to get to the library and read.'

'Weekly/Monthly libraries in halls to help children to have access to books they will enjoy'

'maybe use extra space in community centres ore indoor social clubs to have a little library'

Third most popular suggestion with 26 responses (10.8%) was 'Digital books/online library'
Sample comments:

'they can do it online like a Phone,Tablet or Computer.'

'Online library card, so they can get online books without going far to a library'

'Maybe make an online app or a channel where you can read to them'

- 22 responses (9.1%) were categorised as 'Other' as they covered a range of more diverse topics unique to only a small number of responses, including:
  o   Access to food and drink at the library
  o   Libraries already offer a good service for everyone
  o   They could try to find one closer to where they live

11. Can you please tell us your postcode?

	Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	327
		answered	327
		skipped	230

12. Are you a.....?

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Boy		40.71%	195
2	Girl		45.30%	217
3	Prefer not to say		6.05%	29
4	I describe myself as:		7.93%	38
			answered	479
			skipped	78

13. Which age group do you fit into? (Tick one box that applies to you.)

	Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	0 -11		46.28%	224
2	12 -15		48.35%	234
3	16 -24		5.37%	26
			answered	484
			skipped	73

Annex 6: Qualitative Feedback Summary

Queries received – Mixture of Email Phone and in person.

hard copy request	11
comment on survey	5
poster request	4
general query	3
alternative version request	0
comment praising service	1
question about current service	1
request to respond as an organisation	1
request to see results	1
	27

Qualitative Events

Stakeholder group	Event Type	Number engaged
Be well bus Burlington Road	face to face event	20
BME focus group	online event	3
BME focus group	online event	4
Bury St Edmunds Parents group library	face to face event	4
Deaf network	online event	8
Disabilities Focus group public	online event	4
Disabilities Focus group SCC networks	online event	4

Felixstowe Parents group Oaks Family Centre	face to face event	5
Haverhill library staff	face to face event	3
Haverhill locality meeting	face to face event	17
Hintlesham Coffee Caravan	face to face event	11
Home Library Focus group	face to face event	5
Ipswich Cornhill with Be Well bus	face to face event	46
Ipswich Mobile library route 11	face to face event	24
Leiston Be Well bus at Co-op	face to face event	52
Leiston Be Well bus at Co-op	face to face event	1
Leiston Library staff	face to face event	2
LGBT+ focus group + public recruited by Together for Suffolk	online event	6
Lowestoft - Ormistion Denes High school	face to face event	8
Lowestoft - Over 60s club	face to face event	10
Lowestoft library Duplo group	face to face event	3
Rattlesden - Cockfield mobile library	face to face event	19
Suffolk University waterfront	face to face event	50
Teenage Parent Toddler group	face to face event	4
		313

Additional Feedback Received – email

Suggested future libraries priorities	6
Home Library service positive comment	4
Autism related feedback	1
concerns over low uptake of Home Library service	1
extension of C-Card scheme	1
Feedback from BME group	1
LGBTQ+ feedback	1
Service as a whole - positive comments	1
	16