

# Libraries**West**

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## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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## **Section A: Background and Context**

### **A1 Aim of the policy**

This Collection Development Policy sets out the principles by which, within the budget available, books, audio-visual, digital materials and other resources are acquired, managed and made available for the maximum benefit of the population in the LibrariesWest area.

LibrariesWest is a partnership of seven public library services in the southwest of England. The services work together to share costs and offer enhanced services to customers. LibrariesWest serves a resident population of more than 2.1 million people across an area of nearly 2,300 sq. miles. Customers can use their membership cards in any of the public libraries across the consortium. There is access to a joint catalogue of around 2.5 million items, which all customers can reserve and borrow from, subject to restrictions on certain material types such as reference items.

The authorities in LibrariesWest are:

Bath and North-East Somerset  
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole  
Bristol  
Dorset  
North Somerset  
Somerset  
South Gloucestershire

### **A2 Vision, aims and strategic priorities**

#### **LibrariesWest Mission Statement**

##### **Our Vision**

Seven library services working together to add value and deliver a better library experience.

##### **Our Core Aims**

The route to achieving our shared vision is encapsulated in our two core aims, which form the basis of our operational work plan:

- Working together to:
  - Deliver and demonstrate value for money – sharing services and resources to improve the customer experience
  - Innovate – applying technology and developing new services or projects to improve the customer experience

**LibrariesWest** has four key service priorities:

- Remain relevant to our wider customer base
- Drive down costs and improve efficiency
- Focus our reach on targeted services
- Focus on designing services to meet those in need

**Libraries Connected** and partners have identified four key areas of service which today's users regard as integral to a 21st century library service. The Universal Library Offers are:

- Reading
- Health and Wellbeing
- Information and Digital
- Culture and Creativity

Alongside the Universal Offers are two promises:

- Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise
- Children's Promise

A detailed explanation of the Offers/Promises can be found at this link

[Universal Library Offers | Libraries Connected](#)

Each authority also has its own council priorities – see links below

[Bath & North East Somerset Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 | Bath and North East Somerset Council \(bathnes.gov.uk\)](#)

[Corporate Strategy \(bcpcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)

[Corporate Strategy - bristol.gov.uk](#)

[Dorset Council's Plan - Dorset Council](#)

[Priorities and strategies | North Somerset Council \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

[County Business Plan \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

[Council Plan 2020 – 2024 | BETA - South Gloucestershire Council \(southglos.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Section B: Key principles**

### **B1 Collection Management Policy statement**

- All stock will be purchased and managed as an authority-wide resource to optimise use throughout its life.
- Stock management is based on identified customer priorities and in support of diverse community needs set out in service objectives and to support the service in maintaining library usage.
- The resource budget is allocated to most effectively meet community needs and to achieve operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- Each service point provides a balanced collection reflecting the reading tastes, the information needs, and the multicultural nature of the communities served.
- Collection range and level will consider variations in local communities to provide a range and depth of stock for the whole service.
- Evidence based management information, such as issue statistics, are utilised to select, manage, and evaluate stock to maximise effectiveness and turnover.
- Additional copies are purchased (as budgets allow) in response to demand for new and popular materials to reduce waiting times.
- LibrariesWest actively cooperates with other library services and agencies to make a greater range of materials available through the reservations system
- All members of the Bibliographic User Group (BUG) have a responsibility to ensure the future development and effective implementation of the Collection Management Policy.
- The whole workforce has a responsibility for stock management in their own libraries and service areas.
- The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis to ensure continuing relevance.

### **B2 Approach**

Each authority aims to provide a varied stock relevant to community needs. However, every library is part of a large network of service points, and stock will be managed and exploited as an authority-wide resource by:

- Co-ordinating purchases across an authority
- Co-ordinating circulation across an authority
- Promoting the catalogue and reservations service
- Promoting the use of e-resources and the library web pages
- Exploiting the resources available at larger libraries via smaller libraries, e.g., through local exchanges and the referral of information enquiries

### **B3 Digital resources**

- The LibrariesWest library services are committed to providing e-resources (e-books, e-audio, e-magazines, e-newspapers, and e comics/graphic novels) for the widest possible audience by pooling budgets to provide access to larger shared collections.
- E-resources are a key part of the library offer and complement the provision of physical materials, with an emphasis on widening the library offer beyond traditional physical spaces.
- Use of e-resources is regularly monitored (with monthly performance reporting to relevant LibrariesWest staff) to ensure that value for money is being achieved and to help flag up any areas of concern.
- E-services are managed centrally on behalf of all participating authorities, including stock selection, budget and contract management, promotion, performance analysis, and responding to customer comments.

### **B4 Other non-standard resources**

Authorities work with various partners and often secure funding to provide additional services and/or resources that customers can borrow through their local library. These can include iPads, story bags, book bags, reminiscence packs, slow cookers, and blood pressure monitors.

In all cases, use of these resources will be monitored to ensure that value for money is being achieved.

### **B5 Requests**

- Reservations for any books, either in stock in LibrariesWest or items not held in our stock, may be made at any library in LibrariesWest or online via the LibrariesWest website or app.
- Suggestions for stock and feedback on the Collection Development Policy are welcomed. This information will be used, wherever possible, to inform the selection process.
- Requests for items not in stock will be considered for purchase if they are in print and meet the criteria as listed in this document. Otherwise, customers will be given the option of requesting the item from another library outside LibrariesWest.
- The decision not to purchase a requested item for stock may be influenced by any of the following factors: unsuitable format (e.g., loose leaf binding), budgetary constraints, lack of availability, poor content or presentation, dated information or low demand.
- Some reservations incur charges which are specific to individual authorities. This information can be found here: [Your Library Service \(librarieswest.org.uk\)](http://librarieswest.org.uk)

## **B6 The Legislative and Regulatory Framework and Government guidance**

The provision of library stock is carried out against a wide legislative framework:

[Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Obscene Publications Act 1959 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#), [amended 1964](#)

[Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) and other relevant H&S legislation

[Video Recordings Act 1984 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#), [Copyright \(Visually Impaired Persons\) Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) and [The Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Local Government and Housing Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Local Government Act 1992 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Protection from Harassment Act 1997 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Terrorism Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Guidance on the management of controversial material in public libraries](#)

## **B7 Censorship and controversial stock**

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) states in its guidelines that:

*“The function of a library service is to provide, as far as resources allow, all books, periodicals etc., other than the trivial, in which its readers claim a legitimate interest. In determining what is a legitimate interest the librarian may safely rely on one guide only – the law of the land. If the publication of such matter has not incurred penalties under the law it should not be excluded from libraries on any moral, political, religious or racist grounds alone, to satisfy any sectional interest”*

Using this guidance, LibrariesWest will make available the broadest range of material within its policy of freedom of access to all legally available information. It is acknowledged that on occasion individuals may find items in LibrariesWest libraries offensive. However, we do not label items to warn customers of potentially sensitive content and would only restrict access to material to protect it from damage or theft, not as a form of censorship.

In the interests of intellectual freedom material will not be rejected solely because it is considered controversial. Controversial, potentially inflammatory or extremist material will be evaluated according to this collection development policy. Decisions will be made on the assumption that the adult reader can make their own critical and reasoned evaluation of views expressed in the content of the item. Where appropriate the assistance of relevant external agencies and advisory groups will be sought. It is assumed that adults responsible for readers with junior membership will

evaluate the appropriateness of the views and opinions expressed in an item for their charges.

## **B8 Donations and unsolicited stock**

### **Donations**

Each authority within the LibrariesWest consortium has its own policy regarding donated stock. Members of the public wishing to donate stock to their library will need to contact the relevant library service for further information regarding their donations policy.

### **Self-published items**

Authorities in LibrariesWest are often asked to acquire, either by purchase or donation, books which have been self-published. The assumption is that these items will not have been through the rigorous editing and legal content checks undertaken by mainstream publishers. Where a library service agrees that such an item may be of use in their collection, it will fall to the author to prove the content is reliable, professionally presented, and does not contravene any laws.

Library service staff do not have the time to read items and make this judgement. The only exceptions to this are items with a strong local interest. These will be judged by the relevant team member on a case-by-case basis.

### **Unsolicited Stock**

Some authors and publishers send items that have not been ordered, enclosing an invoice, in the hope that a library service will purchase them. These items will not be accepted. Should the sender require their return, the cost of postage must be provided in advance, as per the Sale of Goods Act.

## **B9 Stock outside the scope of the collections**

The following categories of stock fall outside the scope of our collections:

- expensive luxury editions
- items banned under UK law
- items restricted for purchase or loan by UK publishers
- items containing information that is inapplicable to UK conditions and regulations
- items intended for individual ownership, such as books with additional objects which form part of an integral package or workbooks primarily intended for use by or with a teacher
- items with an unsuitable format for loan



## Section C: Selection

### C1 Overview of selection principles

Each authority within LibrariesWest will have a slightly different approach to stock selection depending on budget and staffing, but this will, in most cases, consist of a combination of:

- Supplier selection – selection of titles, usually in advance of publication by selectors at specialist library suppliers
- Standing orders
- Selection by staff
- Purchases from stockists/publishers of specialist and local history materials

The aim is to provide stock in appropriate formats, which is attractive, well-presented, and constantly refreshed by purchase and circulation.

A range of factors influence the selection of stock including:

- Available budget
- Anticipated demand
- The needs and profiles of the communities and individuals served
- Known demand
- Reviews and media interest
- The imperative to reflect our diverse society

### C2 Selection criteria

We aim to select stock in the format most suitable for a given purpose and most likely to prove of greatest benefit to the library user. A positive contribution to social inclusion will be made by providing other formats for users with individual needs.

Decisions on stock selection, whether printed or digital, consider a range of criteria including:

- **Content** – The authority and reputation of the author or publisher, educational or recreational value, quality, currency, and accuracy of information where applicable.
- **Potential popularity** – A substantial proportion of books are ordered pre-publication. Where possible previous performance/popularity of an author, genre or subject are used to determine potential popularity of the title being assessed. Information from the library management system, available published information and identified customer needs are among the resources used.
- **Known demand**: Based on numbers of reservations on existing copies or enquiries about a title or resource.
- **Format** – The quality of production and durability in terms of library usage. Suitability for the intended audience. Compatibility of digital resources.

- **Publishing history** – Whether it is a new edition of a proven title or a new title in a proven series or from an authoritative information source.
- **Cost** - The cost of a resource will be balanced against its benefits to the overall stock offer, its potential usage, and the available budget.
- **Coverage** - Consideration is given to the existing coverage of the subject or genre and whether a title adds anything new.
- **Social inclusion contribution**- To make a positive contribution to social inclusion items are provided in different formats, where available and in demand, so they are accessible to users with a variety of needs.
- **Diversity representation** – A wide range of titles which reflect our diverse population are selected.

### C3 Digital resources

The stock selection for digital lending materials is managed centrally on behalf of all participating authorities.

LibrariesWest works with authorities in the wider region to realise further cost savings and offer LibrariesWest members access to even more content – for example, with Plymouth to offer e-magazines, e-newspapers, and e-comics/graphic novels, and with Gloucestershire to offer e-books and e-audio books.

Each authority also subscribes to a range of digital reference materials which are managed and promoted at authority level.

### Section D: Stock Maintenance

LibrariesWest authorities aim to provide a balanced, attractive, and current stock relevant to the needs of our communities. First impressions are vital – the physical presentation of the stock makes a statement about the quality of service offered. The removal of unused, worn out and out of date stock makes it easier for customers to find good quality titles and creates space for new stock and promotions.

All the workforce has a responsibility to ensure stock is well maintained, assessing the condition of books whenever they are handled, for example at the point of return, when being shelved, or during the undertaking of stock tasks.

Several criteria are used to assess stock. These include the following:

- **Age:** Is the item still relevant?
- **Physical condition:** Is it in good condition with no yellowing pages, damaged binding, torn or loose pages etc?
- **Currency:** Does it contain out of date/potentially inaccurate information?
- **Performance:** Is the item no longer in demand?

Similar criteria apply to items of reference stock although the physical condition of some out of print, classic works may not be to the same standard as lending stock. There are also no performance statistics to base decisions on, as the items are not issued.

Different criteria apply to local history stock. Most local history titles will continue to be relevant regardless of their age. An item may not be in good physical condition but may be retained because of its local interest. The same level of issues would not be expected from a local history lending item as for a general non-fiction title.

## **Section E: Promotion**

Stock promotion is undertaken to:

- Maximise the usage of stock
- Encourage library membership and use
- Raise awareness of the range of stock and services available
- Promote reading, literacy, and lifelong learning
- Inspire and encourage users to develop diverse reading habits
- Link in with local and national promotions and initiatives
- Bring attention to stock reflecting cultural diversity, social inclusion and minority interests

The skills, knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of the workforce are essential to make the best use of stock to meet customer needs and attract new users.

Stock promoted must be in good condition and displays attractive and well-presented.

Stock is promoted in a range of ways across LibrariesWest depending on priorities within each authority and space and display furniture/resources available in individual libraries.

Digital means of promotion are increasingly used for example, features on the LibrariesWest website and authority/library social media accounts.

Authorities are expected to actively promote e-services to library members and potential members, including through active promotion on social media.

Depending on the nature of the promotion displays will aim to:

- Target a wide range of audiences including new and younger audiences
- Present imaginative and challenging reading material and choices
- Highlight stock that reflects cultural diversity and minority interests

- Bring together areas and formats of stock dispersed by the Dewey classification scheme and fiction stock categories, and feature under-used stock
- Use a high quality of presentation
- Exploit professionally produced promotions when available e.g., resources from the Reading Agency
- Make the most of library hotspots, including return trolleys, new books sections, etc.
- Take advantage of local and national promotional opportunities