

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: a ship, top-right: a stag, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: an eagle), and a banner at the bottom with the motto "A NE FOR A".

Agenda Item 5

Library Services Strategic Plan

Falkirk Council

Title: Library Services Strategic Plan

Meeting: Executive

Date: 9 May 2023

Submitted by: Director of Transformation, Communities & Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Executive with the Library Services five-year strategic plan and proposed changes to library opening hours.
- 1.2 The work in this report supports the Council Plan priority on promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
 - (1) Approves the Strategic Plan (attached as Appendix 1)
 - (2) Agrees the changes in library opening hours to deliver efficiencies whilst best meeting the needs of our communities

3. Climate Change Implications

- 3.1 The recommended decisions do not give rise to any material implications for the Council's climate change targets and obligations. Officers' assessment is that the policies and procedures detailed in this report will not lead to changes in service provision or the deployment of resources that would increase or decrease the emission of carbon.

4. Background

- 4.1 In April 2022 Falkirk Libraries became part of Falkirk Council and was integrated into the Housing and Communities division. An outline plan to redesign the service, develop a five-year Strategic Plan and deliver £425k savings was developed. This was approved by Council in October 2022 as part of the Integrated Services review.

- 4.2 Falkirk Council Libraries have eight libraries serving just under 156,000 people. The Falkirk Council area has one of the lowest proportions of public libraries in Scotland, with 1.03 libraries per 20,000 population (Scottish average is 2.04 libraries per 20,000 population). Given this position and the value that communities place in libraries, we are committed to maintain all eight libraries and to identifying other opportunities for efficiencies within the service.
- 4.3 In 2022/23 Falkirk Libraries had
- 626,796 visits – 68% increase from the previous year
 - 1,694 events attended by 26,571 people
 - 20,149 active borrowers - 16% increase from the previous year

5. Progress to date

- 5.1 Since joining Falkirk Council in April 2022 Library Services have
- Procured and implemented a new Library Management system – Civica Spydus
 - includes configuration of the system and substantial staff training
 - means we are part of the Scottish Consortium of Public Libraries, paving the way for Falkirk to be part of a One Scotland approach to libraries
 - delivers savings by reducing requirements for supplementary systems for stock control and removing systems which duplicate work of the new Library Management System
 - Introduced PressReader providing online access to a range of popular magazines and newspapers
 - provides access to publications from around the world, for example refugees can read newspapers from their home country
 - allows people to translate articles into other languages or use audio to have articles read aloud
 - will deliver a saving by reducing purchasing of printed papers
 - Changed Wi-Fi within all 8 public libraries to the Council's provider
 - delivers savings
 - Council devices automatically connect to Wi-Fi within libraries – this includes the iPads provided across the school estate making it easier for pupils to do their homework and study in libraries, particularly if they do not have Wi-Fi at home
 - Completed extensive engagement to inform five-year strategic plan
 - Maximised use of Falkirk library by sharing the reception area and implementing hot desking within the staff area, shared between library services, the Advice Hub, Access to Housing and the Marketing and Sales bookings team.

6. Library Services Strategic Plan

- 6.1 Following extensive engagement with communities we have developed a strategic plan for Falkirk Libraries which sets out our direction over the next five

years. In developing the plan we embedded themes of the Falkirk Plan, as well as Forward: Scotland's Strategy for Public Libraries.

- 6.2 Our engagement will make sure that our service best meets the needs of our communities as well as delivering efficiencies. It consisted of a paper and online survey as well as focus groups and drop-in engagement sessions at all libraries. We sent the survey and invitations to the sessions to library members, non-members, community groups, schools and other stakeholders. We also invited all libraries staff to a dedicated session to capture their views. We received 2,684 survey responses and over 200 people attended a session. The findings were collated and considered as we developed our plan.
- 6.3 Our plan sets out 6 priorities for Falkirk Libraries. It details the core service provision and the additional aims that we want to deliver for each priority. Our 6 strategic priorities are
- Empowering citizens
 - Equity and inclusion
 - Community wellbeing
 - Reading and learning
 - Culture and heritage
 - Sustainable development and future investment
- 6.4 The plan includes an Appendix which proposes outputs, outcomes and measures for each aim as well as the delivery timescale. The Strategic Plan is included in Appendix 1.

7. Library Service Opening Hours

- 7.1 As we developed our Strategic Plan, we considered how we could redesign the library structure and opening hours to best meet the needs of our communities whilst achieving efficiencies.
- 7.2 Currently our libraries are open 6 days a week, with 2 late nights. Opening hours vary across our 8 branches
- Falkirk, Grangemouth, Denny, Larbert, Meadowbank and Bo'ness are open 45 hours a week
 - Bonnybridge is open 39 hours a week
 - Slamannan is open 19 hours a week
- 7.3 As part of our engagement with communities we asked for feedback on a range of options that would reduce library opening hours. The opening hours option preferred by those who took part in our engagement was to move to one late opening each week in each branch, maintain Saturday opening and close all libraries on a Wednesday. This will reduce opening hours in 7 out of 8 libraries
- Bo'ness, Bonnybridge, Denny, Falkirk, Grangemouth, Larbert, and Meadowbank will open 36 hours a week
 - Slamannan will continue to be open 19 hours a week

- 7.4 Closing libraries one day during the working week offers an opportunity for library buildings to be used by other services, partners and community organisations, generating additional income. Whilst Falkirk library will be closed on a Wednesday, the Hub will continue to open that day.
- 7.5 Wednesdays are the least busy day across our libraries and libraries were closed on a Wednesday during the Covid restricted opening hours. We will maintain Saturday opening across the 7 libraries that currently open on a Saturday and will introduce Saturday opening in Slamannan library, bringing it more in-line with our other libraries. This offers families a warm and safe welcoming space to access on Saturdays, supporting our child poverty objectives.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 As highlighted in Section 6 we carried out an extensive engagement exercise from December 2022 to February 2023. This gathered views of staff and the public on the future of Library Services. We asked people what services they wanted libraries to provide as well as what other services and activities could take place within library buildings. We also asked them which option of reduced opening hours would suit them best.
- 8.2 The output from this engagement informed the five-year Strategic Plan. Subject to the Executive's approval of this plan, we will go back to communities to let them know what
- Feedback we received
 - We will deliver immediately
 - We are unable to deliver
 - We plan to deliver in the future, including timescales
- 8.3 The pattern of opening hours proposed in section 7 is the option preferred by those who took part in the engagement.
- 8.4 A summary of the engagement results is included in Annex 2 of the Strategic Plan.

9. Implications

Financial

- 9.1 The Integrated Services report approved by Council in October 2022 committed Library services to delivering savings of £425k between 2022/23 and 2023/24. These savings include a vacancy management target of £24k and an income generation of £31k from library fines which were removed prior to the service joining the Council. Appendix 2 gives an update on where we are with delivering these savings.

9.2 Reducing our opening hours will reduce our costs as follows

Staff	Utilities	Cleaning	Total
£167,237	£20,099	£22,585	£209,921

Utilities and Cleaning costs are estimates based on 2022/23 costs

- 9.3 The above savings includes reduced costs for utilities and cleaning resulting from the closure of libraries on a Wednesday and excludes Falkirk where the Hub will remain open. If another service or community group wishes to use a library on a Wednesday the cost of any increase in cleaning and utilities would need to be covered as part of the charge for using the space.
- 9.4 We will also review our management structure and anticipate this will deliver a further £115k of savings.

Resources

- 9.5 These proposals would result in a reduction in the number of posts across the service, however through careful vacancy management since April 2022, we already have vacant posts across the service. It is anticipated, therefore, that we would be able to achieve any reduction in posts by deleting vacant posts and do not anticipate any further reduction in the current staffing level. The vacant posts are currently covered by staff working additional hours on a temporary basis.
- 9.6 The changes in opening hours would affect the working hours and pattern of some employees. We would work closely with employees and trade unions to implement these changes through voluntary means as far as possible while minimising the impact on individuals. Initial discussions have been held with trade unions to make them aware of these proposals and employees have been advised of the contents of this report.
- 9.7 The changes to the opening hours would reduce the level of cleaning required across 7 out of 8 of the libraries. This would impact on the Council's Catering and Cleaning service.

Legal

- 9.8 Local Authorities in Scotland have a statutory duty, under section 163 (2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to 'secure the provision of adequate library facilities for all persons resident in their area'.
- 9.9 The changes proposed in this report will allow us to continue to have 8 public libraries whilst delivering efficiencies. Our 5 year strategic plan will make sure we continue to develop and deliver our services in line with the needs of our communities, tackling inequalities, supporting attainment and improving wellbeing.

- 9.10 There is a legal requirement to comply with employment legislation in relation to the potential impact on employees.

Risk

- 9.11 There is a risk that it may not be possible to accommodate some employees' needs within the revised working arrangements.

Equalities

- 9.12 An Equalities and Poverty Impact Assessment was completed for the redesign of the service including the Strategic Plan and proposed changes in opening hours. The assessment found that the proposed reduction in opening hours does pose a risk to protected characteristic groups, however this measure is necessary to deliver the efficiencies required and agreed by the Integrated Services Review (October 2022) and by reducing opening hours we can retain all eight libraries. In addition, several mitigating factors are being introduced to address the reduction in opening hours by redesigning the Library Service to best meet the needs of the community. The assessment concluded that the impact on protected characteristic groups was medium due to the reduction in opening hours.
- 9.13 The Fairer Scotland duty was considered during the development of the Strategic Plan and completion of the impact assessment. Equity and Inclusion is one of the strategic priorities of this plan and many of the core services and aims will have a positive impact on people in or at risk of poverty.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 9.14 There are no new environmental or sustainability issues from this report.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 Our engagement showed the value that our communities place in libraries services and how we can develop this to further enhance the role of libraries in communities.
- 10.2 The Falkirk Libraries Strategic Plan builds on this feedback, by setting out the priorities for this service over the next five years and how it will contribute to the objectives of the Falkirk Plan and the Council plan.
- 10.3 The transformation of the library services is on track and already delivering operational savings. Further savings will be delivered through the proposed redesign of library opening hours, which whilst reducing the availability of the physical service, allows us to retain all 8 libraries and best meets the needs of our communities.
- 10.4 We will continue to work with colleagues across the Council to look at how library services and buildings can support savings in other areas. This includes

working with Education to consider how we could align the school library service with public libraries.

Director of Transformation, Communities & Corporate Services

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Falkirk Council Libraries Strategic Plan 2023-27

Appendix 2 – Savings update

List of Background Papers:

None



Appendix 1

FALKIRK COUNCIL LIBRARIES STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-27

Draft

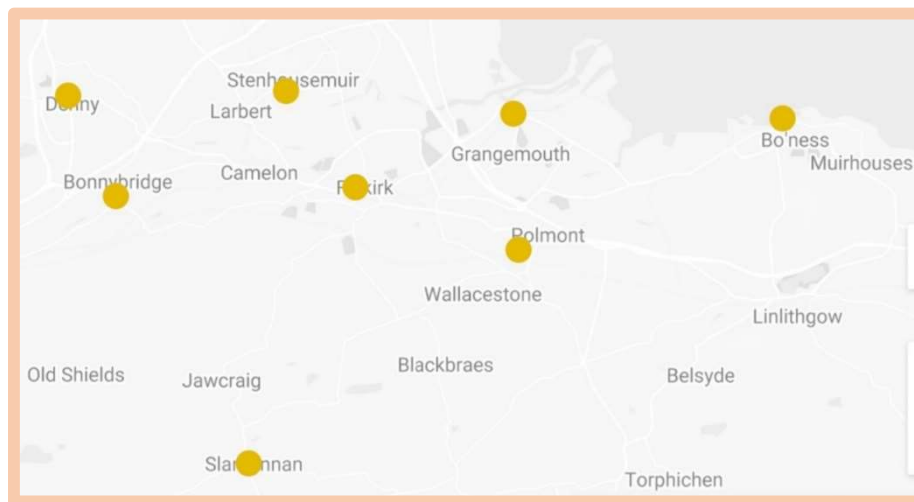
Falkirk Council Libraries Strategic Plan 2023-27

The Strategic Plan for Falkirk Council Libraries 2023-27 has been developed following a comprehensive community engagement process and the proposals are accompanied by an organisational re-structure and revised opening hours model. The plan:

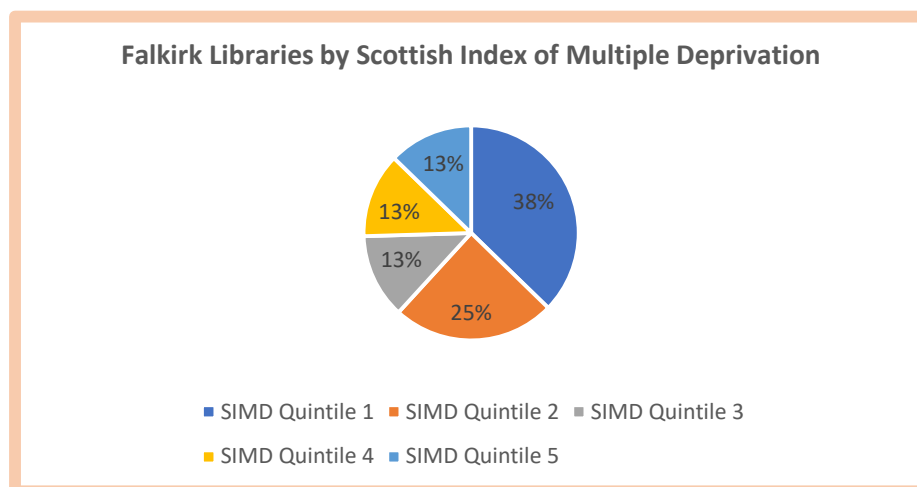
- Sets out the strategic direction for Falkirk Council Libraries for the next 5 years
- Shows how we work with communities and partners
- Outlines the priorities we are working to improve and how they align to local and national policies
- Details how we will monitor and measure our outcomes

Background:

Falkirk Council Libraries have eight libraries serving just under 156,000 people. With 1.03 libraries per 20,000 population Falkirk sits below the national average of 2.04 libraries per 20,000 population, in fact having the lowest proportion of all the public library services in Scotland.



Our libraries are spread across the Council area reflecting a range of neighbourhoods and communities and providing a variety of locations: all our libraries work with a mix of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles. People often have a favourite community library, but many of our customers use multiple branches e.g. one branch may be closer to a work or school location, and one closer to home.



Combined visits to libraries (physical and virtual) increased in 2021-22 by 345% from the previous year. This is due to buildings re-opening, staff returning from furlough, restrictions on activities being relaxed and promotion of services resuming. Although the increase is not so dramatic due to a normalisation of circumstances, our combined visits this year have continued to rise from 374,131 in 2021/22 to 626,796 in 2022/23 which reflects a 68% increase.

Community engagement process - what did people say?

In implementing our strategic direction and developing a five-year plan for Libraries we had two aims: to refresh and restructure the Library Service to best meet the needs of our community and further, to make efficiencies as agreed in the Integrated Services Review.

We engaged with active members, non-members, community groups and other stakeholders to find out their views on library services and used a variety of methods including a survey, focus groups, online engagement sessions and in-person engagement sessions in libraries. The survey was available online on Falkirk Council's Citizen Space and on paper copy from all local libraries from 19th December 2022 - 17th February 2023 and was emailed directly to over 3000 active and lapsed library members. We promoted the community engagement programme heavily on social media, on the Libraries website and online catalogue and on posters in library branches.

Libraries are committed to involving all sections of the community in service development, especially those groups or individuals who might find it more difficult to participate, or travel to a library. During this process, we targeted specific organisations, offered to visit groups, and collected anonymous equalities data as part of the survey to help monitor the results of the engagement.

As well as capturing views and votes on proposed opening hours models, we wanted to identify the most popular activities and services currently provided by Libraries, as well as any gaps in provision.

2684 completed survey responses were received and just over 200 people attended the customer engagement sessions and focus groups.

The data we gathered helped us complete an Equalities and Poverty Impact Assessment to measure the impact of proposed changes on those individuals in our community who have protected characteristics, and where appropriate, what mitigations are appropriate. In developing our priorities, we paid particular attention to the Fairer Scotland Duty which places legal responsibility on public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

We will publish the initial results of the survey and engagement sessions and once the five-year strategic plan is approved it will be available online and in hard copy in libraries.

Some of the community feedback which we will be investigating for feasibility or have integrated into our five-year plan is reflected below. The full results of the survey and engagement sessions are attached as annexes to this strategic report.

"I go to the library with my children. We enjoy the whole experience of sitting reading books before we choose which ones to borrow. The children also spend a bit of time drawing or colouring in. Going to the library is a proper event!"

"We are so lucky to have libraries and think we should really use the space to encourage others in. Everything under one roof makes sense and will help financially too."

"Would definitely be interested in tool library/seed library or a community shed/workshop space."

"Mental health support, someone nice to talk to - a café would be a good idea - instead of waiting two years to get some help through NHS, GP or CAMHS. It doesn't need to be a professional, just someone who can listen. It can save people from harming themselves."

Falkirk Council Libraries Vision:

The aim for our plan over the next five years is to position Libraries in a place where:

We serve a community where we are connected and engaged with our citizens in an ongoing conversation.

People are empowered and inspired to learn, explore, and use Falkirk Council Library Service as a trusted source of information, entertainment, opportunity, and support.

Falkirk Council Libraries Mission:

We have committed to the following actions to help us achieve this position:

- We have libraries which are warm, welcoming, community hubs providing a free safe space for everyone.
- Library staff work together with local people, schools, charities, and community groups to help us respond to needs and requests.
- Libraries provide equal access to information, books and resources, pcs, internet and WiFi, and a programme of activities and events.
- We support reading for pleasure, creativity, digital skills and access to technology, social inclusion, and mental health and wellbeing.

Our strategic direction 2023-27:

The strategic direction for Falkirk Libraries 2023-27 set out below was developed by engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including library members, non-members, community groups and organisations, partners, third sector and charity groups, local church and faith groups and young people and school pupils.

The outcome of these engagements was considered alongside other relevant strategies including *The Falkirk Plan*, *Towards a Fairer Falkirk* and *Forward: Scotland's Strategy for Public Libraries*.

From these we identified a set of strategic priorities for Falkirk Council Libraries to achieve over the next five years. Our strategic priorities are arranged within six themes with specific outputs and measurable outcomes for each priority

Strategic Priority 1. Empowered citizens:

Libraries have partnership working at the heart of the service and are integral to empowering citizens and communities.

In common with many other public services, libraries are not going to return to the way they have always operated – we must be proactive in showing communities that libraries are safe, welcoming spaces with lots to offer. Libraries have to move away from a model of passive welcome to a more active programme of invitation and showcasing the services and activities we provide on a regular basis and why they are relevant to individuals and communities. One example of how we can do this is by our highly successful Libraries are for Everyone days.

Core service

1.1 Libraries are places for conversation and debate

1.2 Libraries are hubs of community information

Aims 2023-27

1.3 Develop an activities programming group with community members

1.4 Continue to investigate opportunities for service co-location

1.5 Investigate the feasibility of a co-working or hot-desking space to support start-ups and new ways of working.

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 1. Empowered citizens:

- Libraries provided venues for Council community engagement sessions e.g. Community Choices, Strategic Property Review etc.
- Supported NHS Forth Valley outreach e.g. “It’s OK to Ask” Realistic Medicine project and Parent Club breastfeeding campaign.
- Desk space and welfare facilities provided for parking attendants at Falkirk Library.
- Hotdesking office space installed for Housing and Communities Hub staff and Bookings Team staff in Falkirk Library.
- Shared reception installed in Falkirk Library for Libraries, Housing and Communities Hub and Bookings Team.

Case Study – Libraries are for Everyone

Our Libraries Are For Everyone events which aim to promote library services to local communities have attracted 1990 people on just four Saturday afternoons at Larbert (705), Falkirk (500), Grangemouth (310) and Denny Libraries (475). Following the final relaxation of Covid-19 Health and Safety guidelines around group activities, Falkirk Council Libraries were keen to begin a programme of promotion and advocacy to encourage customers – existing and new – into buildings and using services.

Libraries are for Everyone Days act as a reminder and invitation to communities and individuals that the library is their space and has activities and services available and relevant to them.

Although the Libraries are for Everyone days are primarily fun days for the individuals and families attending, there are strategic aims underlying the programme. The main driver initially was to encourage physical visits to libraries back to a pre-pandemic level (and beyond). However, we also want to ensure we are reaching all sections of our community and that we are meeting their needs which will be constantly changing so evaluation is an integral part of these events. We collect both quantitative and qualitative feedback throughout the day from people attending: we ask what activities people enjoyed and whether they knew about them before. We are aware that it is often difficult in an age of information overload to promote the essential information to the people who need it in the most appropriate way. Importantly, we also ask communities what would be helpful, interesting, or entertaining to them that perhaps isn't being provided. We also ask for ideas for new partners and providers – especially local ones as we are keen to strengthen community networks and regenerate local economies

**Thank you so much.
Something for everyone.
Loved it .
(More please)**

Amazing. Love the VR. My son loves the coding. We're coming back A+++

**Wonderful!
Did the collage workshop, really enjoyed it. Also tried the meditation session. Again, fabulous. Thanks, Falkirk Library!**

Great to see the library so full of fun and folk.



Strategic Priority 2. Equity and Inclusion:

Libraries are a lifeline for lots of people: we offer core services that are free at the point of access including a wide variety of books in multiple genres and formats for all ages. Libraries provide access to computers and internet, magazines, and newspapers online and full programme of activities and events. Our trained staff in every branch can help support digital skills, provide information and signpost to appropriate agencies and partners for further help. When money is tight these free core services can make all the difference.

Almost 69,000 households in Falkirk have access to superfast broadband (at least 30mbps download speed), however, there are areas where access is at a level of 20% or less of households. Additionally, we know that access isn't the whole story – the cost of technology and connectivity can be prohibitive, and lack of digital skills or confidence can be a barrier.

Core service

2.1 Free access to books, audio books, wide range of information, maps and local history material, e-books and e-audio books, e-services, newspapers and magazines online, pcs, internet, and WiFi.

2.2 No financial penalties for borrowing items.

2.3 Library staff are all digital champions.

Aims 2023-27

2.4 Implement Graduate Trainee Digital Librarian post.

2.5 Review and publish Libraries stock policy.

2.6 Investigate expansion of Home Library Service.

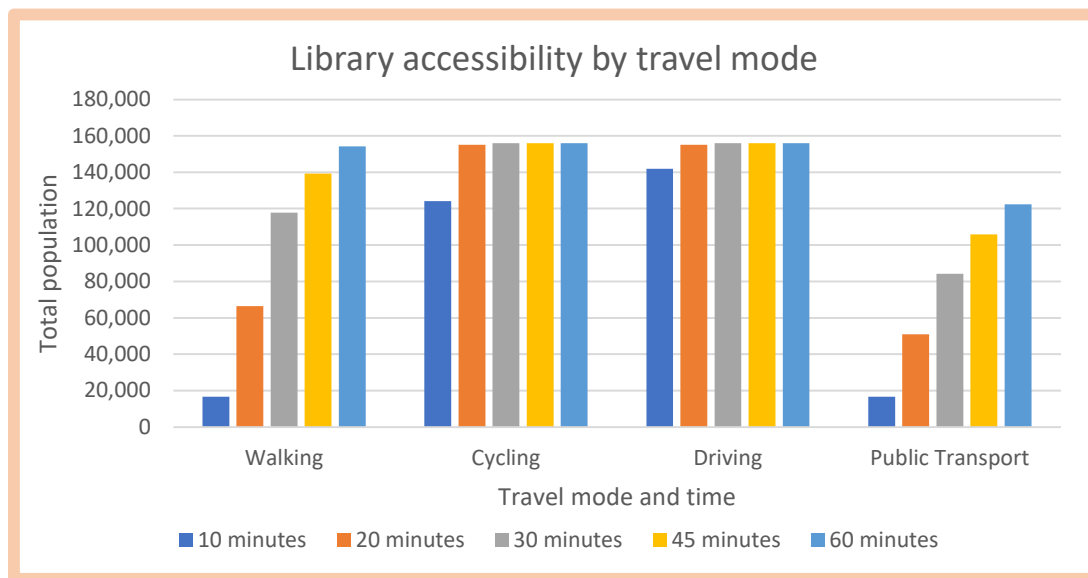
2.7 Increase digital skills support available from libraries.

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 2. Equity and inclusion:

- Libraries were positioned as warm, safe spaces which provided access to charging stations for personal devices, free period products and food bank donation stations.
- Libraries provided computers for public use, secure internet, and WiFi all free at the point of access: the service remained critically placed to support communities and ensure that no-one was excluded or left behind.
- In 2022/23 Falkirk Council Libraries removed all financial penalties for overdue loans.
- Successful funding applications were made to Falkirk Community Planning Partnership to provide Food and Activity events in Summer 2022, February 2023 and Easter 2023.
- Support provided for Ukrainian refugees e.g. Bookbug sessions, books, resource lists, free access to pcs, internet, and WiFi.
- Falkirk Council Libraries committed to supporting all library staff in achieving digital champion status in 2023 with a planned programme of practical activities to embed staff skills and confidence. Free access to digital equipment and staff support for digital skills empowered individuals to become digitally confident and included. A spread of accessible, library venues with trained staff and a range of opening hours including evening and weekend times, enabled maximum access to services.
- Libraries worked in partnership with Fairer Falkirk Team signposting individuals who may not have digital access or skills to Libraries for support in accessing the Covid Economic Recovery Payment online. This combined approach has resulted in an uptake in the payment of over 87% and Libraries saw a significant increase in visitor numbers, new member registrations and issues compared with the same week in the previous year.

Case Study – Home Library Service

In times of financial hardship, private and public transport may become unaffordable and driving or cycling may not be options for everyone: within our local area, 35,185 individuals (23%) identify themselves as living with a disability. We promote healthy living and sustainability and aim to contribute to the reduction of our carbon footprint. It's important that we consider how these factors affect the accessibility of libraries for individuals.



For those individuals who struggle to get to a library due to disability, illness, recent operation, or caring responsibilities, the Home Library Service can deliver collections of books; customers can choose the format and genre and can either choose individual titles or can request a variety of titles picked by staff based on their specified favourite themes or topics. The Home Library Service also makes deliveries to the common rooms of residential care homes in the Falkirk area. In addition to providing books, our Home Library staff also provide digital skills support – installing library e-services on personal devices, providing guidance with Living Well assessments, delivering IT taster sessions at home etc. They act as befrienders and a listening ear when they are often the only visitor in a week and can deliver replacement hearing aid batteries and even prescriptions when necessary. The Home Library Service run reminiscence sessions and two reading groups (one online) with fully accessible materials as a significant percentage of the Home Library customers are registered blind or have a visual impairment.

Strategic Priority 3. Community wellbeing:

Data shows a relatively low percentage of 0.83% of the total population of Falkirk are living with no central heating, but that still equates to 1,326 people. We know from customer feedback that many people are already unable to afford to put on the heating they have. Libraries have been providing warm, safe spaces for many years, but in recent months we have increased our support to help with the cost of living.

Core service

3.1 Libraries are warm, welcoming, safe community spaces with trained staff and resources.

3.2 Libraries for Wellbeing is embedded in Falkirk Libraries.

3.3 Libraries support community groups and partner organisations with space, resources, and signposting.

Aims 2023-27

3.4 Implement private and remote interview space in Bo'ness Library with Near Me and other videoconferencing software.

3.5 Investigate the feasibility of implementing a café space in one or more libraries.

3.6 Deliver staff training addressing anti-social behaviour.

3.7 Expand use of community spaces in libraries by community groups and partner organisations.

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 3. Community wellbeing:

- Libraries promoted their community spaces as warm comfortable spaces to relax and provided free hot drinks, jigsaws, board games in addition to other services and resources.
- Community rooms in libraries booked and used by a wide range of community organisations and partners e.g. crochet groups, Barnardo's baby massage, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Councillor surgeries etc.
- Forget-Me-Not Café met weekly in Denny Library to support people living with dementia, their families, and friends.
- Falkirk Council Employment Training Unit held weekly outreach advice sessions in libraries.
- Partnership work started with NHS Forth Valley nutrition services to promote and distribute resources in libraries.
- Forth Environment Link adult learning gardening skills course delivered in Falkirk Library over 4 weeks.

Case Study: Libraries for Wellbeing

Falkirk Libraries have been shortlisted twice in national awards in 2023 for their Libraries for Wellbeing project: SLIC Award for Project Excellence and EDGE2023 Award (Social Category). This project received £40,000 funding from the Scottish Government Covid Recovery Fund, administered by Scottish Library and Information Council.

We trained our staff members in mental health awareness so that they better understand the issues that some in our community face, provide better customer care, and are more confident in talking about mental health and in signposting people to specific resources to support their mental health.

Staff feedback on Libraries for Wellbeing training:

- *"I got a lot of information that will help me deal with people at work and at home."*
- *"[I gained] more confidence in dealing with wellbeing and where to refer people to."*
- *"[Training was] very good as some staff did not have any experience with mental health issues..."*

Participant feedback on Words for Wellbeing groups:

- *"During lockdown I saw nobody for many months because I live on my own. After my yearly review with the doctor I was told about this group. It has made a great difference to me just being with others, meeting new people, hearing other people's point of views, having a laugh helping to dispel loneliness." (G, person in their 70s)*
- *"I came to meet new people. I joined the library and staff told me about the group. I only just moved up here and I've got mental health issues and I'm autistic. I got away from domestic violence. I like coming to the group it helps keep me going. ... I don't talk much, but I like to listen and it's nice hearing other people's experiences." (A, person in their 40s)*
- *"I come to the group to get me out of the house and to interact with other people. I was told about the group from a mental health nurse at local doctor's surgery. [The group] encourages me to leave the house and [I] have met new, interesting people." (P, person in their 50s)*



The Libraries for Wellbeing project has changed the ethos of our Library Service to one where the wellbeing of our staff and communities is at the heart of our service. The Words for Wellbeing groups that are running in all 8 of our branches provide a supportive space for socially isolated people to chat about books and poetry and their feelings, and to make new friends. The groups have brought a new audience of library users and are now a core part of our library offer, with consideration being given to adding extra groups where there is most demand.

Strategic Priority 4. Reading and learning:

Libraries support reading for pleasure and promote literacy. At all ages and stages, libraries support learning - from early years, family learning, school readiness, to attainment across the 5-18 years curriculum, Libraries enable and encourage lifelong learning and curiosity. We provide resources and support for individuals to return to learning throughout their lives.

Core service

4.1 Continued promotion of and commitment to national Bookbug programme.

4.2 Promotion and delivery of annual Summer Reading Challenge.

Aims 2023-27

4.3 Promote libraries as venues for lifelong learning and investigate adult education opportunities.

4.4 Develop homework club and support for study programme in partnership with education.

4.5 Investigate introducing Therapets supported reading sessions in libraries.

4.6 Investigate implementing 4-4-2 Reading Challenge partnership with Scottish Professional Football League.

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 4. Reading and learning:

- Falkirk Libraries committed to under 5s early learning and school readiness by implementing the Scottish Government approved Every Child A Library Member (ECALM) delivery method. We are working in partnership with Registrars to collect information from parents/guardians when they register a child's birth. Children are enrolled as library members from birth and benefit from resources and services to help with reading, numeracy, play, speech development and bonding.
- Parents and guardians of new babies are supported by Bookbug which supports speech development, rhyme and phonics, numeracy, bonding, and the formation of reading as a lifelong habit. In 2022/23 Bookbug attendance rose significantly following the promotion of the return of sessions in a safe and clean environment, and as people began to feel more confident about returning to activities in public spaces: 4053 children and 3627 adults attended a Bookbug Session last year – a 414% increase on the attendance in 2021/22.
- Falkirk Council Libraries and Falkirk Council Library Resource Service jointly purchased a full-size Bookbug costume to enhance sessions and Bookbug visits libraries, nurseries, and playgroups across the area to enable all children to connect with books and reading for pleasure in a fun and exciting way.
- Libraries worked with CVS Falkirk and with Falkirk Council Housing Support to provide Bookbug sessions and information for Ukrainian refugees – we also hugely increased our stock of books in Ukrainian for parents and children.



- In 2022/23 Libraries ran 41 Code Club sessions for primary age children, with 31 children completing the introductory Scratch programming course.
- Libraries provide free access to WiFi, internet, and digital infrastructure, including a programme of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics-related (STEAM) activities to support digital learning.
- Falkirk Libraries switched in 2023 to the Council WiFi solution enabling all secondary school pupils with a school smart device to automatically log on to Library WiFi on entering their local library. This offers great opportunities to promote connected learning and supports community library-based homework clubs, self-study, creative investigation, and relaxation in a safe space with trained staff and a bank of hard copy and virtual resources on hand.

Case Study: Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge can make a huge difference to how children perform in school, especially following Covid lockdowns where attainment gaps increased in children from disadvantaged backgrounds and so many young people experienced mental health issues.

Encouragement from their school plays a huge role in children's participation in the Challenge. All schools receive a digital pack from us several weeks before finishing for the summer, but direct contact with pupils and staff can make a huge difference. Kinnaird Primary, who visited Larbert Library weekly from April 2022, had by far the highest participation rate for all schools in the area (127 pupils).

Nationally, library visits have dropped following the Covid-19 pandemic, so we had limited expectations for the enrolment figures for the Summer Reading Challenge in 2022. However, the number of children who participated in the Challenge in 2022 far exceeded our expectations. We saw 135% increase on 2021 enrolment with over 1000 children participating across Falkirk. Importantly, several libraries also saw an increase in the number of children completing the Challenge e.g. Falkirk Library increased the number of children finishing by 44%.

Feedback from families participating in the Summer Reading Challenge:

- *"The Summer Reading Challenge really helped my child, they've never managed to finish a whole book before, and they managed to finish 3 this time."*
- *"It's a great way to spend time with my grandchildren."*
- *"It has been really helpful with Fraser's dyslexia and being able to get books for his needs. Thank you."*
- *"It has made me think and helped my imagination with storytelling and Lego building."*



Strategic Priority 5. Culture and heritage:

Public libraries are vibrant local venues which provide varied opportunities to access culture and to celebrate local identity and heritage. We work in partnership with communities to create ideas and build capacity to take them forward. Libraries want to continue to develop as diverse, representative, and inclusive spaces.

Core service

5.1 Wide variety of stock including various genres and formats to support diverse community of readers.

5.2 Annual programme of free events and activities.

Aims 2023-27

5.3 Expand programme of activities and events:

to generate income.

to support local artists and include community events.

5.4 Expand programme of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) activities and events.

5.5 Develop a programme of exhibitions and displays to support national promotions, local heritage, cultural diversity etc.

5.6 Expand Memories Scotland sessions to include Football Memories Scotland sessions

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 5. Culture and heritage:

- 1694 events have taken place between March 2022 and March 2023, seeing attendances of more than 26,571 individuals: 14,016 adults and 11,359 children. Our events and activities were promoted on our website and social media accounts, in libraries and most recently, on our library online catalogue.
- Falkirk Council Libraries celebrated various national cultural events e.g. Black History Month, Keep the Heid and Read, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day etc. with displays, exhibitions, and events.
- Libraries held an event called, 'The Colour of Falkirk's Money' as part of the Black History events in 2022. This illustrated talk given by Geoff Bailey, an archaeologist and local historian, was the culmination of years of research on the historical property ownership of some of Falkirk's well known historical buildings. Falkirk Libraries produced a short film on the subject which will be shown during our annual Local History festival in May 2023. This film was produced using greenscreen technology so that the many images and documents which were the subject of the research can be viewed by all.
- The programme of local events over the last year included a range of free events for children including story-times, treasure hunts, craft activities, Lego free play etc. as well as activities to accompany national celebrations or programmes such as World Book Day, Harry Potter Night, and our annual creative writing competition, Writing Rammy.
- Grangemouth Library is currently hosting Grangemouth 150: an annual programme of monthly local history talks supported by Falkirk Council Provost and held in Grangemouth Library to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Grangemouth.
- Libraries offer individuals the opportunity to meet and greet authors, and to hear the written word in the author's voice – it's an experience that feedback tells us is still something that draws adults and children alike and helps foster a love of and connection with books. We apply every year to Scottish Book Trust Live Literature scheme for funding to help bring a range of authors to Falkirk Libraries throughout the year. The most recent two visits in 2023 have been from two Scottish authors - Alan Dapre author of Porridge the Tartan Cat books for children, and William McIntyre author of the Best Defence legal thrillers.

Case Study: Memories Scotland project

The Memories Scotland project is a national project funded by Scottish Government, administered by Scottish Library Information Council and delivered in partnership with the Scottish Football Museum. The librarian responsible for running Memories Scotland groups in 4 libraries across Falkirk and was asked by the project co-ordinator to speak at their Conference in February 2023 to try to encourage further participation across the sector.

"I delivered a presentation on starting up groups, how to facilitate, troubleshooting and what to expect. As part of my presentation, I showed a small film that I made featuring feedback from a few of the reminiscence session attendees."

The presentation received widespread acclaim and has now been filmed for upload to the Memories Scotland project website. The Memories Scotland project team have also asked Falkirk Libraries staff to deliver online training sessions for other practitioners via Microsoft Teams as examples of best practice.

From the outside these reminiscence sessions might look like chatting with tea and cake – and they do involve that! – but below is a quote from one of our librarians who leads the project in Falkirk Libraries:

"I've been approached after [Memories Scotland] sessions in Bo'ness Library by people who have shared their early diagnoses of dementia. It's an earth-shattering thought that people are facing losing themselves – and offering people a safe space to be accepted and combat isolation in libraries is something I really enjoy."



Strategic Priority 6. Sustainable Development and future investment:

As the original resource-sharing public service, libraries are advocates for responsible consumption and we collaborate with partners wherever possible to contribute to sustainable delivery. Libraries are at the forefront of the sharing economy and can support creative industries by offering access to equipment which promotes sustainable practices. By providing access to skills, training, technology and collaborative workspaces, libraries can support economic recovery.

Core service

6.1 Free access to books, e-books, e-audio books, e-newspapers, and e-magazines.

6.2 Free period products available in all libraries.

6.3 Hearing aid battery replacement programme in all libraries.

6.4 Access to free e-services in Libraries e.g. Ancestry Online, Access to Research

Aims 2023-27

6.5 Expand food bank donation provision in libraries.

6.6 Introduce sustainable swap programmes in libraries.

6.7 Develop a Library of Things lending scheme.

6.8 Exploit use of green spaces/work with plants, seeds.

6.9 Investigate the feasibility of a Make and Mend space.

2022/23 Progress on Strategic Priority 6. Sustainable development and future investment:

- Falkirk Council Libraries joined Scottish Consortium of Public Libraries and migrated Library Management System to Civica Spydus:
 - Enables Falkirk Libraries to align with Scottish Government One Card initiative.
 - Consortium approach to procurement and Scottish Government Softcat contract provide best value.
 - Cloud-based system – no space required on Council servers.
 - Shared national catalogue records provide a reduction in bibliographic data costs per consortium member.
 - Shared community of practice provides collegiate and technical support, plus leverage with supplier.
- Libraries acted as foodbank donation stations.
- Withdrawn library books put into library branch book sale at nominal cost to recycle resources.
- Ongoing installation of external lift to Bo'ness Library as part of Bo'ness Community Council's successful Town Centre regeneration funding bid. The lift which will be accessed from the outside of the library building by a secure keypad, will provide accessible entry to the two community rooms on the first floor of the library, currently accessed by stairs. The secure keypad entry will enable use of the community rooms independently from the library out-with library opening hours.
- Plans were developed and funding agreed for an accessible public toilet to be installed in Grangemouth Library. A contractor has now been appointed and work will begin in summer 2023. This was the only library not to have an accessible toilet available for customers.
- Libraries stock control processing by suppliers stopped and stock alert barriers marked for removal. This provides a saving in raw materials as well as cost. The removal of physical barriers enables accessibility and is in line with the ethos of libraries.

Case Study: Libraries IT review and upgrade:

In 2022 Libraries staff and public access pcs were still running Windows 7 operating system. This had become a critical issue due to potential cybersecurity and compliance problems. In addition, library software and connecting systems began to fail to operate with the older version of Windows.

Working closely with colleagues in IT, Digital Communities provided funding to replace the Libraries pc estate. Libraries recognised that as funding was limited, this was an opportunity to review the provision of public access pcs and internet. Statistics of use and observation have shown that since re-opening following Covid-19, library customers want to maintain more distance between pcs and the number of pc sessions has not yet recovered to pre-Covid levels.

Public access pc use has been impacted by the Scottish Government's Connected Scotland programme which made available a proportion of laptops and tablets (with connectivity) to individuals who met health and caring criteria during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is hoped that by creating space and promoting free Libraries WiFi we can encourage some of those individuals to use their own devices in Libraries, especially where they may need digital skills support.

We completed a data-informed exercise which reduced the number of public access pcs across the Libraries estate by approximately 30%.

The library staff pcs will also be upgraded in the new technology rollout. The new hardware will run far more efficiently, and we have chosen to replace the hard drives with micro-processors: the cost benefit is minimal, but the green credentials are far improved.

As part of the IT upgrade, all library staff accounts will be migrated to Office 365. This will enable the service to make far wider use of Microsoft Teams for videoconferencing and communication, reducing travel to meetings, providing channels for document sharing, project management etc.

Conclusion:

This plan sets out the strategic priorities for Falkirk Libraries over the next five years. It details the core services that we are committed to continuing to deliver and well as ambitious aims for what we will deliver going forward. The framework in Annex 1 shows how these priorities link into the Falkirk Plan, the outcomes they will achieve and how we will monitor our progress.

These priorities were developed, following extensive engagement, to deliver against what communities told us they wanted from us. Annex 2 shows the detailed results of this community engagement.

This will ensure that our libraries continue to be the centre of our communities promoting reading for pleasure and enabling access to culture and creative activity for everyone. It will maximise the impact they have on tackling inequalities, empowering communities, supporting health and wellbeing, and encouraging economic development.

FALKIRK COUNCIL LIBRARIES STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-27

Draft

Louise Graham

Falkirk Council Libraries Strategic Plan 2023-27

Appendix 1: Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1. Empowered Citizens

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
1.1 Libraries are places for conversation and debate	<p>Libraries promote their free and bookable community spaces.</p> <p>Libraries provide venues for community information sessions.</p>	Communities are empowered in decision making.	<p>Number of sessions held in libraries.</p> <p>Community feedback.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate
1.2 Libraries are hubs of community information	Libraries provide access to trusted, accurate information and signpost to appropriate agencies and partners	<p>Active citizenship is encouraged</p> <p>Communities are empowered to make informed decisions</p> <p>Libraries are trusted local sources of information</p>	Quarterly enquiry count – Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate

Strategic Plan 2023-27: Aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
1.3 Develop an Activities Programming Group with community members	<p>Active consultation with communities with direct lived experience to shape planning.</p> <p>Expanded programme of activities and events to incorporate community feedback.</p>	<p>Increased community participation in the democratic process.</p> <p>Wider audience demographic</p> <p>More diverse programming.</p> <p>Increased customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>Number of meetings</p> <p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Actions implemented</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities</p>	Short term: 2023-2024
1.4 Continue to -investigate opportunities for service co-location.	<p>Increased single point service delivery.</p> <p>Improved customer service.</p> <p>Increased signposting opportunities.</p> <p>Reduced cost of travel/childcare.</p> <p>Reduced undesirable Council property assets.</p> <p>Reduced power, water, and cleaning costs.</p>	<p>Increased customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to service access.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Improved sustainability.</p>	<p>Number of services accessible from Libraries</p> <p>Income or efficiencies from co-location.</p> <p>Customer feedback.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.1 People Centred Design</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p>	Medium term: 2023-2025

Strategic Plan 2023-27: Aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
1.5 Investigate the feasibility of a co-working or hot-desking space to support start-ups and new ways of working.	<p>Support for changing business environment and new ways of working.</p> <p>Income generation potential.</p> <p>Libraries promoted as suitable workspaces.</p> <p>Refreshed vibrant community space in libraries with appropriate technology.</p> <p>Partnerships identified with appropriate supporting organisations e.g. Business Gateway, Falkirk College, Falkirk Council Education and Training Unit</p>	<p>Improved sustainability.</p> <p>Economic recovery.</p> <p>Improved confidence and skills in business management.</p> <p>Thriving community.</p>	<p>Pilot implemented.</p> <p>Number of hot-desk rentals.</p> <p>Number of customers.</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.5 Economic Growth</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Economic Recovery</p>	Long term: 2024 - 2027

Strategic Priority 2. Equity, Inclusion and Economic Growth

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
2.1 Free access to books, audio books, wide range of information, maps and local history material, e-books and e-audio books, e-services, newspapers and magazines online, pcs, internet, and WiFi.	<p>Diverse physical and digital collections of books in a range of formats and genres.</p> <p>Promotion of reading for pleasure.</p> <p>E-resources subscriptions maintained.</p> <p>Public access computers with internet access in all libraries.</p> <p>Public Wi-Fi in all libraries.</p> <p>Support for digitally excluded individuals.</p> <p>Reduced financial barriers to accessing information and support.</p>	<p>Sustainable use of resources through physical or virtual borrowing.</p> <p>Increased level of enquiries.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced digital exclusion.</p> <p>Raised attainment.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of library issues.</p> <p>Number of active borrowers.</p> <p>Number of library registrations.</p> <p>Number of pc sessions.</p> <p>Number of unique pc users.</p> <p>Number of Wi-Fi sessions.</p> <p>Number of PressReader visits and downloads.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate
2.2 No financial penalties for borrowing items.	<p>Libraries promote no fines for overdue loans or renewals.</p> <p>Increased issues.</p> <p>Increased library registration.</p> <p>Reduction in administration.</p>	<p>Improved inclusion.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of physical issues.</p> <p>Number of library registrations.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate

Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
2.3 Library staff are all digital champions	All staff completed Learn My Way Digital Champion training by December 2023.	Library staff feel supported to manage changing workload and enquiries.	Number of library staff achieving digital champion status.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.4 Staff Culture and Leadership	Short Term: 2023-24
	Library staff are confident and comfortable supporting individuals with basic digital skills.	Libraries are better able to support partner services when digital support is required.	Staff feedback at 1-2-1 conversations.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Practical exercises and promotional outreach activity planned for digital champions.	Increased uptake of benefits and support accessed online.	Number of promotional outreach sessions.	Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities	
	Frontline support available in all libraries for individuals struggling with digital skills or confidence.	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.	Feedback and evaluation following outreach sessions.	Falkirk Plan: Poverty	
2.4 Implement Graduate Trainee Digital Librarian post	Graduate Trainee Digital Librarian added to senior staff structure.	Increased communication and understanding of the priorities of partner services.	Graduate trainee recruited.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.4 Staff Culture and Leadership	Short term: 2023-24
	Person specification, job and role description developed for temporary two-year post.	Improved inclusion and wellbeing outcomes for staff and communities.	Digital inclusion and support project plan.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Support for library staff and customers in digital exclusion work.		Partnership work examples and feedback.	Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities	
	Development of digital inclusion projects and partnerships.		Number of individuals supported.	Falkirk Plan: Poverty	

Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
2.5 Review and publish Libraries stock policy.	<p>Commitment to including accessible formats and diverse genres in library collections.</p> <p>Commitment to including stock that reflects local community and heritage.</p> <p>Clear guidelines on collection development, stock display and promotion.</p> <p>Consistent and up to date guidance for library staff on stock purchasing and management.</p> <p>Clarity on censorship, offensive material and unsuitable (for public libraries) publications.</p>	<p>Individuals and communities feel represented in collections.</p> <p>Transparency of service development.</p> <p>Consistency of approach when addressing complaints or questions about material.</p>	<p>Stock collection policy reviewed and published.</p> <p>Stock management policy reviewed and published.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	Short term: 2023-24
2.6 Investigate expansion of Home Library Service	<p>Increased provision of Home Library Service to customers meeting additional criteria i.e. inability to travel to library due to financial barriers.</p> <p>Increased use of volunteers to enable expansion of service.</p> <p>Potential revised volunteer delivery model.</p> <p>Increased Home Library Service issues.</p> <p>Increased Home Library Service borrowers.</p>	<p>Reduced isolation.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to resources due to poverty.</p> <p>Improved digital inclusion.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of Home Library Service borrowers</p> <p>Number of Home Library Service issues</p> <p>Number of Home Library Service volunteers</p> <p>Feedback from service users.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	Medium term: 2023 - 25

Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims						
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale	
2.7 Increase digital skills support available from libraries.	Digital skills drop-in surgeries delivered by library staff.	Increased digital inclusion.	Number of digital skills sessions delivered.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy and learning	Medium term: 2023-25	
	Digital skills adult learning classes delivered by library staff.	Increased access to services.	Evaluation of sessions.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community wellbeing		
	Partner-delivered digital skills classes and/or support.	Increase uptake of benefits accessed online.	Number of attendees.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion		
	Library staff deliver outreach sessions to promote e-services available from libraries.	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.	Number of partner sessions held in libraries.	Falkirk Plan: Poverty		
	Refresh guidance to support customer access to library e-books, e-newspapers, e-magazines, and e-services.	Reduced poverty impact.	Number of new partnerships.	Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities		
		Increased opportunities for lifelong learning and new skills.	Number of pc sessions in libraries.	Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities		
		Increased confidence and social inclusion.	Number of unique pc users.			
			Number of WiFi sessions.			

Strategic Priority 3. Community Wellbeing

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
3.1 Libraries are warm, welcoming, safe community spaces with trained staff and resources.	Libraries have accessible community buildings in a good state of repair with comfortable seating.	Increased health and wellbeing outcomes.	Number of libraries	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing	Immediate
		Increased social inclusion.	Annual asset works programme	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Communities have a hub to provide support for local activity and projects.	Increased opportunities for attainment and health self-management.		Falkirk Plan: Poverty	
	Individuals have a local safe space which offers respite from chaotic lives.			Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities	
	Libraries budget supports an adequate level of staffing and resources.			Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing	
3.2 Libraries for Wellbeing ethos is embedded in Falkirk Libraries.	Local support for lifelong learning and access to information.				Immediate
	Words for Wellbeing sessions run in Libraries	Increased health and wellbeing outcomes.	Number of Words for Wellbeing sessions	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing	
	Library staff are trained in mental health awareness, mental health first aid and bibliotherapy.	Increased social inclusion.	Number of attendees	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Soft seating areas to encourage conversation and befriending opportunities.	Increased opportunities for signposting and health self-management.	Number of referrals from NHS and partners	Falkirk Plan: Poverty	
	Provision of traditional board games, jigsaws etc to enhance the community	Increased confidence	Evaluation of Words for Wellbeing sessions.	Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities	
				Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing	

	living room feel of the project.				
Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
3.3 Libraries support community groups and partner organisations with space, resources, and signposting.	<p>Community groups and organisations use library spaces and book community rooms in libraries.</p> <p>Libraries distribute and display wellbeing information to communities for partner agencies.</p> <p>Staff signpost individuals to relevant community organisations and/or partner agencies.</p>	<p>Increased social inclusion</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes</p> <p>Income generation potential</p> <p>Strong communities</p>	<p>Number of community group activities</p> <p>Number of community room bookings</p> <p>Feedback from community groups</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	Immediate
3.4 Implement private and remote interview space in Bo'ness Library with Near Me and other videoconferencing software.	<p>Private space installed in Bo'ness Library with digital technology and video-conferencing software to enable confidential, remote appointments with e.g. GPs, health practitioners, social work, housing needs, job interviews etc.</p> <p>Promotion of pilot remote private appointment space with range of videoconferencing tools.</p> <p>Link with local GP surgeries to maximise use of NHS Near Me remote appointment software.</p>	<p>Reduction in GP waiting times for appointments.</p> <p>Reduction in face to face Living Well social work appointments.</p> <p>Reduction in financial and travel barriers to attending appointments and interviews.</p> <p>Improved inclusion.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of appointments</p> <p>Number of unique users</p> <p>Range of partners and agencies promoting and using the service.</p> <p>Feedback from users.</p> <p>Number of partners.</p> <p>Feedback from partners.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.3 Blended services</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Economic Development</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p>	Short term: 2023-24

	<p>Development of partnerships likely to want to use remote interviews and videoconferencing in libraries.</p> <p>Digital skills support and guidance in using technology and videoconferencing software.</p>			Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities	
Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
3.5 Investigate the feasibility of implementing a café space in one or more libraries.	<p>People-centred design in response to libraries community engagement exercise.</p> <p>Transparent and collaborative service development.</p> <p>Suitable location chosen.</p> <p>Consultation with community and potential partners.</p> <p>Feasibility study carried out.</p>	<p>Increased trust in community engagement process.</p> <p>Informed decision-making process.</p>	<p>Site chosen</p> <p>Consultation results</p> <p>Feasibility study results</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Economic Development</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	Medium term: 2023-25
3.6 Deliver staff training addressing anti-social behaviour	<p>Provide staff training on working positively with anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Increased staff skills in negotiation, de-escalation and working with young people.</p> <p>Develop revised guidelines for acceptable use policy.</p>	<p>Libraries are safe, welcoming spaces for everyone.</p> <p>Improved social inclusion.</p> <p>Increased staff confidence.</p> <p>Increased staff awareness</p>	<p>Number of staff attending training sessions.</p> <p>Feedback from staff.</p> <p>Revised risk assessments.</p> <p>Revised Acceptable Use Policy.</p> <p>Library Charter.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.4 Staff Culture & Leadership</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.1 People-Centred Design</p>	Short term: 2023-24

	Develop a Library Charter with input from young people.			Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities	
	Define expectations of behaviour from staff and patrons.			Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities	
	Review library risk assessments.				

Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims

Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
3.7 Expand use of community spaces in libraries by community groups and partner organisations.	<p>Promotion of libraries as community spaces.</p> <p>Promotion of hire of library community rooms.</p> <p>Promotion of hire of libraries as venues when closed.</p> <p>Development of less traditional library activities in libraries as income generation potential.</p> <p>Input from Activities Programming Group</p> <p>Co-delivery with local artists and performers and community groups.</p>	<p>Increased social inclusion</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes</p> <p>Income generation potential</p> <p>Strong communities</p> <p>Economic regeneration.</p> <p>Building new community partnerships.</p> <p>Engaging new and diverse audiences</p>	<p>Number of community group activities</p> <p>Number of community room bookings</p> <p>Feedback from community groups</p> <p>Number of events</p> <p>Number of attendees</p> <p>Hire of libraries as venues</p> <p>Income generated</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	Medium term 2023-25

Strategic Priority 4. Reading and Learning

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
4.1 Continued promotion of and commitment to national Bookbug programme.	Weekly Bookbug sessions in Libraries	Increased bonding and play development.	Number of Bookbug sessions.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning	Immediate
	Promotion of Bookbug Collector scheme	Improved phonics and speech development.	Number of Bookbug attendees.	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Support for Bookbug gifting programme	Improved reading, literacy, and numeracy development.	Number of Bookbug dolls issued.	Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities	
	Partnership work with Health visitors and Early Years/Education staff.	Improved attainment.	Number of Bookbug bags gifted at each key stage.	Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing	
	Promotion of reading for pleasure leads to reading as a lifelong habit.	Increased confidence and social inclusion for new parents and guardians.		Falkirk Plan: Poverty	
	Books and resources gifted to every child at key stages from birth to 5 years.	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.		Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities	
		Access to books and information with no financial barrier.		Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities	
4.2 Promotion and delivery of annual Summer Reading Challenge	Programme of activities in libraries to support Summer Reading Challenge.	Improved attainment	Number of children registering for Challenge	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning	Immediate
		Increased social inclusion			
	Library staff liaise with community primary schools and Falkirk Council Learning Resource Service to promote engagement.	Access to activities and events with no financial barrier.	Number of children completing Challenge Number of activities	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	

	<p>New stock bought and promoted to support relevant theme and increased demand.</p> <p>Application to partner agencies offering Summer Reading Challenge funding to host events supporting enrolment and completion.</p> <p>Purchase of branded publicity materials, certificates, medals and supporting materials.</p> <p>Completion of monitoring to track individuals' progress.</p> <p>Medal and certificate ceremonies for children completing.</p>		<p>Number of large-scale events</p> <p>Funding received</p> <p>Feedback received from participants</p> <p>Feedback received from schools and partners</p>	<p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	
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Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims

Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
4.3 Promote libraries as venues for lifelong learning and investigate adult education opportunities.	<p>Review online learning offer in libraries.</p> <p>Review demand for informal education classes</p> <p>Review demand for formal learning/training courses</p> <p>Consider partner/third sector/community group delivery options.</p>	<p>Increased attainment</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion and confidence.</p> <p>Economic regeneration</p> <p>New partnerships</p>	<p>Number of online learners</p> <p>Number of partner-delivered courses</p> <p>Number of adult learners</p> <p>Number of Ancestry sessions</p> <p>Number of Theory Test Pro sessions</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p>	Medium term: 2023-25

	<p>Promote e-services, non-fiction, and reference resources</p> <p>Promote links to National Library of Scotland, universities, colleges, Business Gateway etc.</p>	<p>Strong, thriving communities</p> <p>Access to education and skills development with no financial barrier</p>		<p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	
4.4 Develop homework club and support for study programme in partnership with education.	<p>Space and resources for children to support self-study and homework.</p> <p>Trained staff to provide guidance with resources and support information literacy.</p> <p>Liaison with Falkirk Council School Library Service and Education partners to support curriculum awareness.</p> <p>Timetable/project updates from learning cluster to enable supporting resources and activities from libraries.</p> <p>Promotion of school devices automatic log-in to Libraries Wifi</p>	<p>Increased attainment</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion and confidence.</p> <p>New partnerships</p> <p>Strong, thriving communities</p> <p>Access to education and skills development with no financial barrier</p>	<p>Number of homework clubs</p> <p>Meetings with partners minutes</p> <p>Feedback from library staff and partners</p> <p>Feedback from young people</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities</p>	Medium term:2023-25

				and educational attainment and reducing inequalities	
Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
4.5 Investigate introducing Therapets supported reading sessions in libraries.	<p>Develop session plan to support reading for pleasure.</p> <p>Consider diverse audiences and potential intergenerational activity.</p> <p>Co-delivery model with a range of potential community organisations.</p> <p>Develop robust risk assessment.</p> <p>Deliver story-time and reading sessions in libraries with therapy animals (Therapets)</p> <p>Customer-led service development.</p>	<p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Improved literacy and attainment.</p> <p>Forming reading for pleasure as a habit.</p> <p>Improved social inclusion and confidence.</p> <p>Increased trust in community engagement process.</p>	<p>Number of sessions held</p> <p>Number of books issued per session</p> <p>Feedback from attendees</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Short term: 2023-24
4.6 Investigate implementing 4-4-2 Reading Challenge partnership with Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL)	<p>Review 4-4-2 Reading Challenge as a non-seasonal complement to Summer Reading Challenge</p> <p>Link with contacts at Scottish Professional Football League, Falkirk FC and Stenhousemuir FC</p>	<p>New partnerships</p> <p>Engaging new and diverse audiences</p> <p>Intergenerational activity</p>	<p>Result of review</p> <p>Potential implementation of 4-4-2 reading challenge</p> <p>Number of registrations</p> <p>Number of books read</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p>	Short term: 2023-24

	Potential support for/from new Football Memories Scotland group		Number of match tickets provided to Falkirk Libraries members	Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities	
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Strategic Priority 5. Culture and Heritage

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
5.1 Wide variety of stock including various genres and formats to support diverse community of readers.	Diverse physical and digital collections of books in a range of formats and genres.	Sustainable use of resources through physical or virtual borrowing.	Number of issues	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning	Immediate
	Promotion of reading for pleasure.	Increased social inclusion.	Number of requests	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	E-resources subscriptions maintained.	Reduced digital exclusion.	Customer feedback	Forward: Strategic Aim 2.4 Culture and Heritage	
	No fines for borrowed items.	Raised attainment.		Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing	
	No subscription fees for e-books, e-audiobooks, e-newspapers, or e-magazines.	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.		Falkirk Plan: Poverty	
		Reduced barriers to resources due to finance.		Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities	
5.2 Annual programme of free events and activities	Wide of activities and events for all ages provided throughout the year.	Increased social inclusion.	Number of events	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community wellbeing	Short term: 2023-24
		Reduced digital exclusion.	Number of attendees	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	
	Activity distributed around all libraries.	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.	Activities Programming Group meeting minutes	Forward: Strategic Aim 2.1 People-Centred Design	
	Input from Activities Programming Group	Reduced barriers to resources due to finance.	Customer feedback	Forward: Strategic Aim 2.4 Culture and Heritage	
	Promotion of libraries as community spaces.	Strong communities.		Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships	
	Water, juice, and healthy snacks provided to support school holiday events.	Economic regeneration.			
		Building new community partnerships.			

	Free hot drinks at adult and family events. Co-delivery with local artists and performers and community groups.			Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing Falkirk Plan: Poverty Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities	
Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
5.3 Expand programme of activities and events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to generate income. to support local artists and include community events. 	<p>Wide range of activities and events for all ages provided throughout the year.</p> <p>Activity distributed around all libraries.</p> <p>Promotion of hire of library spaces.</p> <p>Development of less traditional library activities in libraries as income generation potential.</p> <p>Input from Activities Programming Group</p> <p>Promotion of libraries as community spaces.</p> <p>Co-delivery with local artists and performers and community groups.</p>	<p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced digital exclusion.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to resources due to finance.</p> <p>Strong communities.</p> <p>Economic regeneration.</p> <p>Building new community partnerships.</p> <p>Potential income generation.</p> <p>Engaging new and diverse audiences</p>	<p>Number of events</p> <p>Number of attendees</p> <p>Library room bookings</p> <p>Hire of libraries as venues</p> <p>Income generated</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.1 People-Centred Design</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.4 Culture and Heritage</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Economic Recovery</p>	Short term: 2023-24
5.4 Expand programme of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths	Increase existing STEAM activities in libraries.	<p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced digital exclusion.</p>	<p>Number of events</p> <p>Number of attendees</p>	Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning	Short term: 2023-24

(STEAM) activities and events.	<p>Develop new digital and STEAM activity for libraries.</p> <p>Seek funding from Digital Xtra fund for expanded Coding activity</p> <p>Replace outdated technology</p> <p>Purchase new devices and technology to support expanded provision.</p> <p>Access to digital technology and support for free.</p> <p>Input from Activities Programming Group</p>	<p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to resources due to finance.</p> <p>Strong communities.</p> <p>Raised attainment.</p>	<p>Activities Programming Group meeting minutes</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.1 People-Centred Design</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	
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Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims

Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
5.5 Develop a programme of exhibitions and displays to support national promotions, local heritage, cultural diversity etc.	<p>Regular displays and exhibitions in libraries</p> <p>Commitment to celebrate local history and heritage, and local artists.</p> <p>Support for national and local promotions.</p> <p>Investigate potential for local artists to exhibit and sell work in libraries.</p>	<p>Strong communities.</p> <p>Raised attainment.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to culture and creativity due to finance.</p> <p>Potential income generation.</p> <p>Economic regeneration.</p>	<p>Number of exhibitions</p> <p>Number of sales</p> <p>Income generation</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.4 Culture and Heritage</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p>	Medium term: 2023-25

5.6 Expand Memories Scotland sessions to include Football Memories Scotland sessions.	<p>Football Memories Scotland sessions added to programme.</p> <p>Additional male session leaders identified to support football theme and encourage men to attend.</p> <p>Promotion of new football-based reminiscence group.</p>	<p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to resources due to finance.</p> <p>Strong communities.</p> <p>Building new community partnerships.</p>	<p>Number of Football Memories sessions</p> <p>Number of attendees</p> <p>Feedback from group members</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.4 Culture and Heritage</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental health and wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	Medium term: 2023-25
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Strategic Priority 6. Sustainable Development and Future Investment

Core service					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
6.1 Free access to books, e-books, e-audio books, e-newspapers, and e-magazines.	<p>Diverse digital collections of e-material in a range of formats and genres.</p> <p>Promotion of reading for pleasure.</p> <p>Promotion of accessibility features and lack of subscription fees.</p> <p>Review and promotion of guidance and instructions on accessing library e-materials.</p> <p>E-resources subscriptions maintained.</p>	<p>Sustainable use of resources through virtual borrowing.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced digital exclusion.</p> <p>Raised attainment.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of digital issues</p> <p>Number of virtual visits to Libby and PressReader sites</p> <p>Number of active borrowers</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.3 Empowered Citizens</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate
6.2 Free period products available in all libraries.	<p>Co-ordination and ordering of period products from Fairer Falkirk.</p> <p>Distribution of products to all libraries from central point (Falkirk Library).</p> <p>Free period products available in all libraries.</p>	<p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to healthcare due to finance.</p>	<p>Number of period products distributed through libraries.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p>	Immediate
6.3 Hearing aid battery replacement programme in all libraries.	<p>Co-ordination and ordering of hearing aid batteries from NHS Forth Valley.</p> <p>Distribution of batteries to all libraries from central point (Falkirk Library).</p>	<p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion.</p> <p>Reduced barriers to healthcare due to finance.</p>	<p>Number of replacement hearing aid batteries distributed through libraries.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p>	Immediate

	Free replacement hearing aid batteries available in all libraries.			Falkirk Plan: Poverty Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities	
Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
6.4 Access to free e-services in Libraries e.g. Ancestry Online, Access to Research etc.	<p>Review e-services offer in libraries.</p> <p>Review demand for e-services</p> <p>Promote e-services available and review access guidance.</p> <p>Promote links to National Library of Scotland e-services available free via Falkirk Libraries.</p> <p>Library staff support digital skills and confidence.</p> <p>Library staff offer guidance and signposting where appropriate.</p>	<p>Increased attainment</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Increased social inclusion and confidence.</p> <p>Reduced digital exclusion.</p> <p>Access to education and skills development with no financial barrier</p>	<p>Number of pc sessions</p> <p>Number of e-service log-ons</p> <p>Number of unique users</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.1 Literacy & Learning</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Working in partnership with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities</p>	Immediate
6.5 Expand food bank donation provision in libraries.	<p>Increase foodbank donation stations in libraries according to community demand.</p> <p>Work in partnership with foodbanks in each local area.</p>	<p>Communities empowered to support vulnerable members.</p> <p>Reduce social isolation</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Number of foodbanks in libraries.</p> <p>Number of collections.</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p>	Short term: 2023-24

	<p>Monitor donation station for damaged/spoiled items.</p> <p>Arrange collection of items when donation station is full.</p> <p>Promote libraries as a support service.</p>	<p>Strong communities</p> <p>New partnerships.</p> <p>Increased signposting opportunities.</p>		<p>Falkirk Plan: Working with communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p>	
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Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims

Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
6.6 Introduce sustainable swap programmes in libraries.	<p>Develop a programme of sustainable swap events for libraries.</p> <p>Tailor events to target specific priority groups e.g. baby clothes; school uniforms; Halloween costumes etc.</p> <p>Investigate co-delivery options to manage the storage of items etc.</p> <p>Activity distributed around all libraries.</p> <p>Input from Activities Programming Group</p> <p>Promotion of libraries as community spaces.</p>	<p>Promoting sustainable use of resources.</p> <p>Reduce social isolation</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Strong communities</p> <p>New partnerships.</p> <p>Increased signposting opportunities.</p> <p>Reducing stigma of second-hand.</p> <p>Reduce effects of poverty.</p>	<p>Number of events</p> <p>Number of attendees</p> <p>Feedback from participants</p> <p>Feedback from partners</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partners</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.3 Sustainable Development</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p>	Medium term: 2023-25
6.7 Develop a Library of Things lending scheme.	Invest in a collection of resources to lend - other than books.	Promoting sustainable use of resources.	<p>Number of issues</p> <p>Customer feedback</p>	Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery	Long term: 2024-27

	<p>Use community engagement results to inform selection.</p> <p>Seek community partners for co-delivery to support storage and maintenance issues.</p> <p>Investigate cataloguing configuration to add artefacts to Civica Spyds catalogue.</p> <p>Develop impact and risk assessments as appropriate.</p>	<p>Reduce social isolation</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>Strong communities</p> <p>New partnerships.</p> <p>Increased signposting opportunities.</p> <p>Reduce effects of poverty.</p>	Partner feedback	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partners</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.3 Sustainable Development</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p>	
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Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims

Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
6.8 Exploit use of green spaces/work with plants, seeds	<p>Develop partnership with community groups and colleagues in Estates Management.</p> <p>Support gardeners and community growing with seed banks in libraries.</p> <p>Increase outdoor activities and events where appropriate e.g. Bookbug Buggy walks</p> <p>Investigate potential for community green/growing space in or around libraries</p>	<p>Increased social inclusion</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing outcomes</p> <p>Strong communities</p> <p>New partnerships.</p> <p>Increased signposting opportunities.</p> <p>Promoting sustainable use of resources.</p>	<p>Number of green projects</p> <p>Feedback from communities</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partners</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.3 Sustainable Development</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p>	Medium term: 2023 - 25

Strategic Plan 2023-27: aims					
Aim	Output	Outcome	Measure	Strategic Indicators	Timescale
6.9 Investigate the feasibility of a Make and Mend space	<p>People-centred design in response to libraries community engagement exercise.</p> <p>Transparent and collaborative service development.</p> <p>Suitable location chosen.</p> <p>Consultation with community and potential partners.</p> <p>Feasibility study carried out.</p>	<p>Increased trust in community engagement process.</p> <p>Informed decision-making process.</p>	<p>Site chosen</p> <p>Consultation results</p> <p>Feasibility study results</p>	<p>Forward: Strategic Aim 1.2 Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 2.2 Community Delivery</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.1 New Partnerships</p> <p>Forward: Strategic Aim 3.3 Sustainable Development</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Poverty</p> <p>Falkirk Plan: Economic Recovery</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities</p> <p>Falkirk Council Plan: Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p>	Long term: 2024-27

FALKIRK COUNCIL LIBRARIES STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-27

Draft

Louise Graham

Falkirk Council Libraries Strategic Plan - Appendix 2:

Community Engagement Results Summary

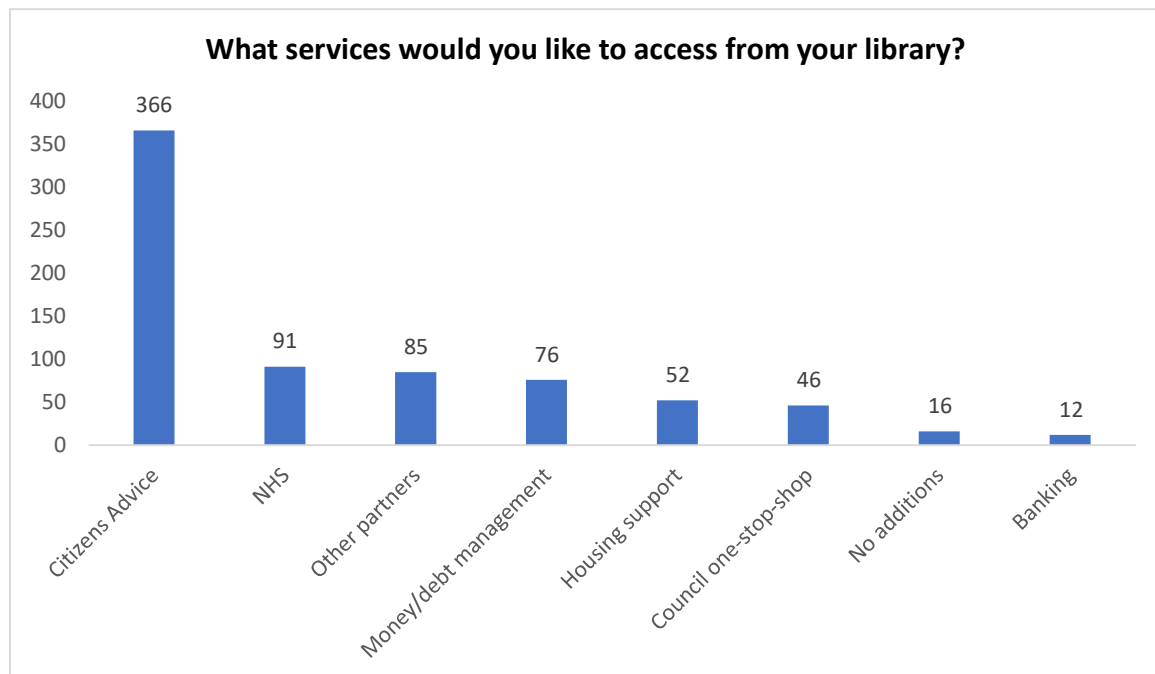
Community Survey - open question responses:

Q1. Are there other services you would like to access from your library e.g. Citizens Advice, NHS, money advice, access to housing etc?

“We are so lucky to have libraries and think we should really use the space to encourage others in. Everything under one roof makes sense and will help financially too.”

“Having a local hub would be very useful, particularly for the ageing population and with public transport being limited and expensive.”

“It should be a visitor information hub to help those from outside the area discover what's on offer locally and to signpost nearby attractions and services.”



Q2. What would make you use your library more often?

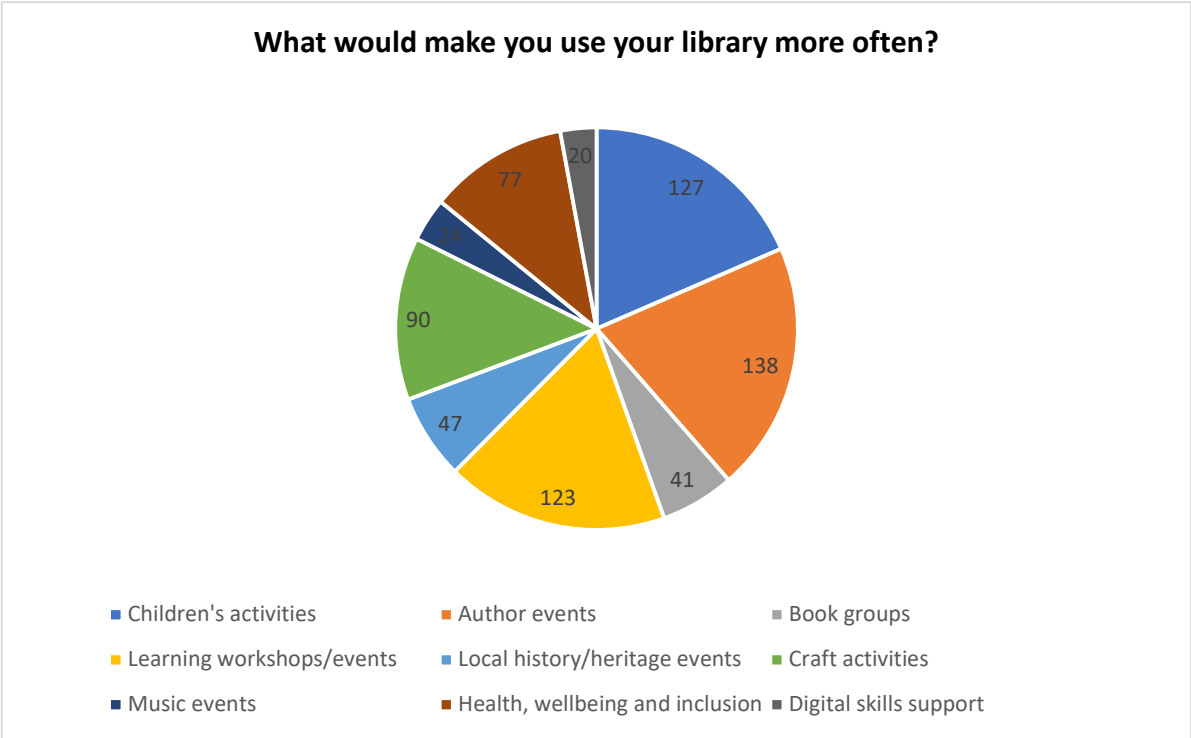
“Local community events, meeting new people, support groups, specialised training courses e.g. British Sign Language, new craft courses, first aid training.”

“Ecology and conservation learning. How to repair clothes, reduce waste.”

“Performance space for performing arts (linked to classes and instrument library).”

“Co-working space would be great. So many people work from home, including myself sometimes, and an opportunity for a different space to work in would be good for people to use. I would enjoy this and be willing to pay a small fee to use this service.”

“Just an idea... what about children's parties, storytelling. What a fab way to ignite children’s imagination (with their friends). Some kids that may be unfamiliar with the library could experience it through their friends. Also, it’s a more inclusive idea for children with additional learning needs, a calming party experience.”



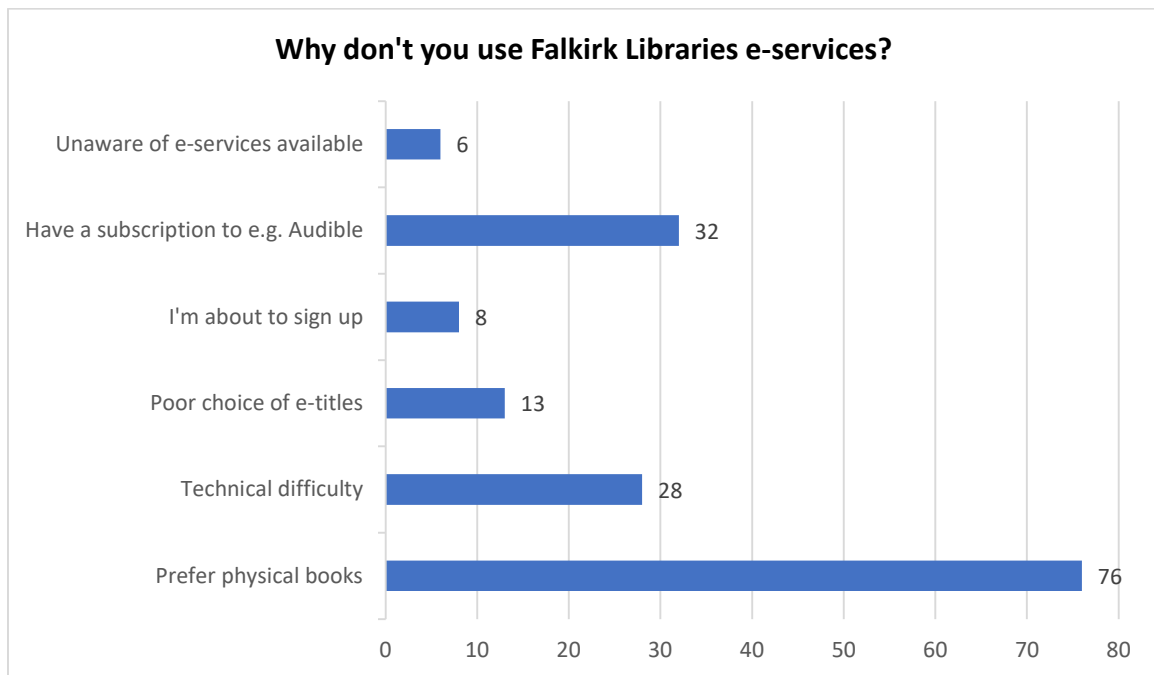
Q3. If you don’t use Falkirk Libraries e-services, can you tell us why?

“Mental health - it gets me out the house to go to library and I browse and choose books I normally wouldn’t. I then get to interact with other people also.”

“Daughter engages far better in homework in the library than at home. Library environment is hugely supportive of her learning.”

“I forget this service is available, I have subscriptions for audio and e-books.”

“I've not had much success using the online books in the past, couldn't get past the sign in process so gave up as a bad job. I know you offer a new system but have not yet tried it.”



In-person and online community engagement sessions:

Q1. What activities and events would you like in your library?

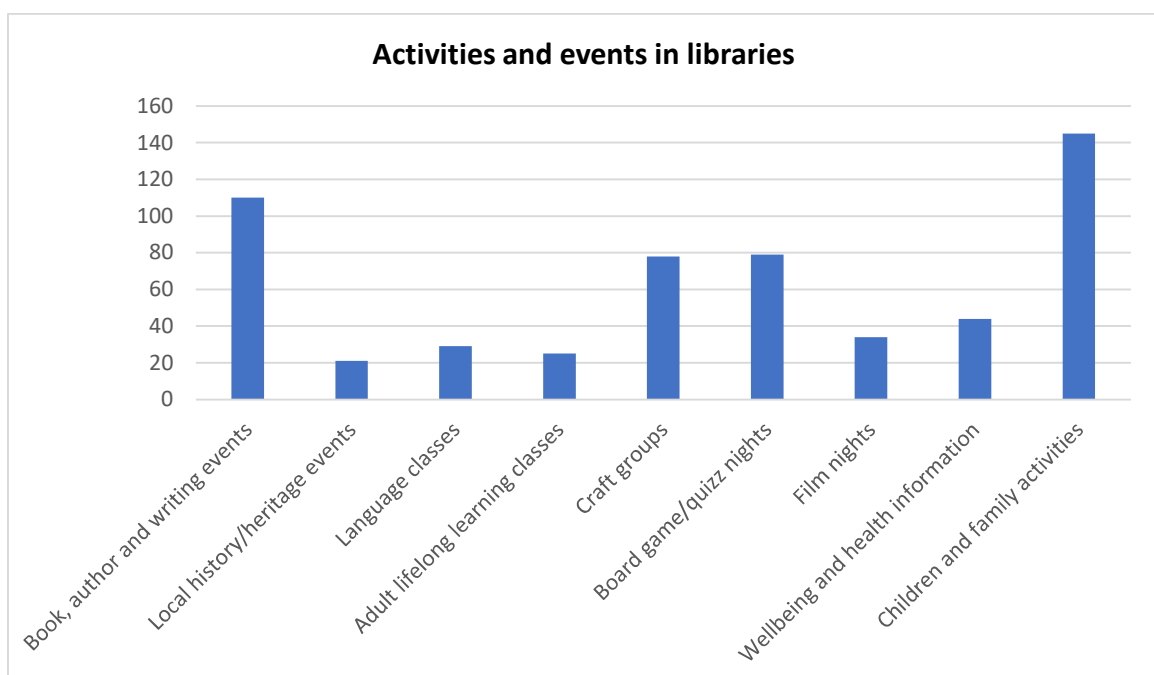
“Sharing and talking with immigrants to discuss experiences, make friends and integrate.”

“More activities for the very young – get them in a library early.”

“Craft Hubs where people can socialise while doing something they like.”

“Beginner computer classes for people who don’t know how to use them.”

“Keeping warm in libraries – coffee morning for elderly, people who need a wee hand...”



Q2. What would you like to borrow from your library (in addition to books)?

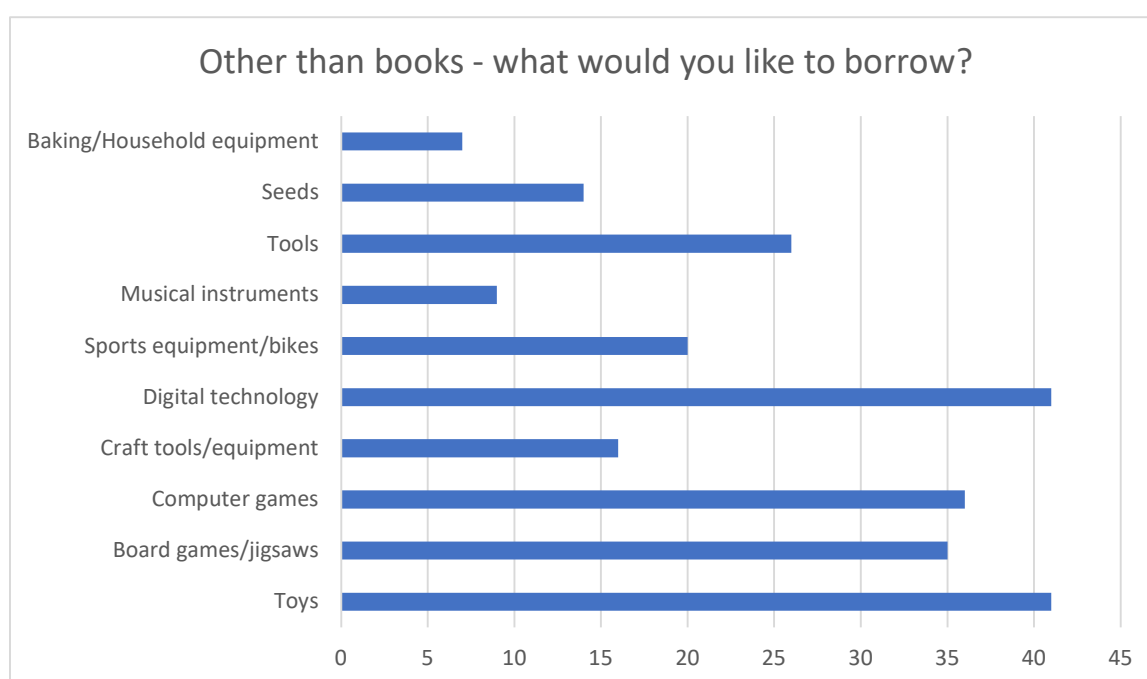
“Toys/Educational games – children can become bored with the familiar so changing or borrowing these items refreshes interest again and meets changing stages of development.”

“Laptops for online study at home.”

“Not just books – garden tools, DIY, baking equipment etc.”

“Borrowing crochet and needlework items is really good to introduce a hobby to people who might otherwise not be able to afford the start-up supplies.”

“Craft tool library (and then sessions on how to use them).”



Q3. How would you like your library building to be used?

“Definitely a café - not much in this area just somewhere for a cuppa nothing fancy.”

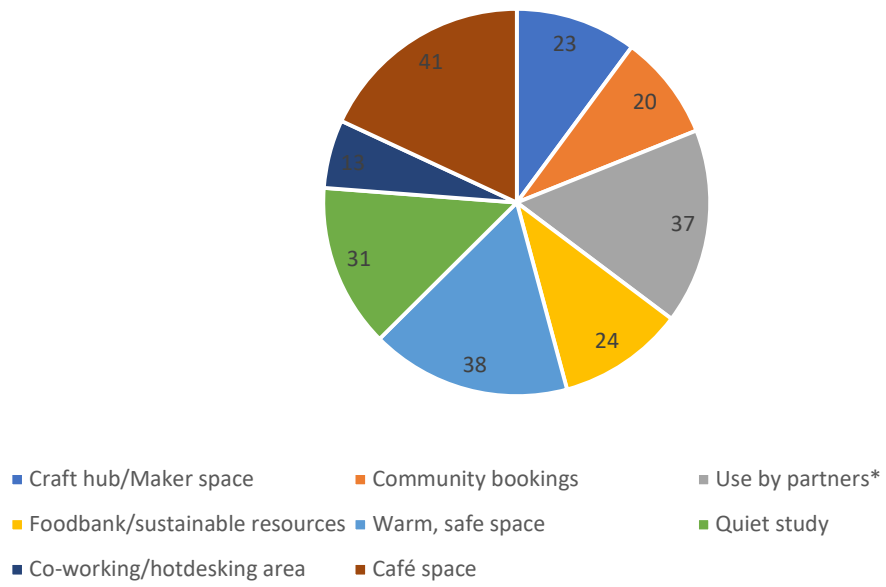
“The library would make a very good environment for people who now work from home as it provides a warm space free from distractions...The printing and copying facilities would provide an income stream.”

“A quiet place to come and relax to get away from the hurly burly of modern life is a good thing for mental health.”

“Warm hub – free tea, coffee biscuits and board games, newspaper, magazines.”

“Dead time when the library is closed should be made available for suitable community groups.”

Possible use of library spaces



*partners mentioned included Citizens Advice Scotland, NHS, Macmillan Cancer Support, Falkirk Council services etc.

Appendix 2

The following table provides an update on the savings proposed in August 2022. These savings are offset by costs in other areas including the income target for fines and vacancy management. Overall the library service is currently forecasting an underspend of £53k for 2022/23. This is over our original savings target for 2022/23 of £44.8k

What	Original timescale for saving	Original estimated value of saving	How	Update	Saving/income achieved
Falkirk library/hub co-location	2022/23	£16.8k	Hub contribution to library running costs	Completed 20% share of electricity, gas, water and cleaning costs agreed.	£15k
New Library Management System	2022/23	£15k	Supplementary systems no longer required	Completed. Contracts for other systems cancelled. One currently in legal dispute. Full savings will be achieved in 2023/24.	
Remove stock security system	2022/23	£5k	Removal of system and maintenance	£2k maintenance expenditure not incurred. System contract terminated. Physical parts of system (security barriers etc) will be removed gradually alongside any improvement works. For Falkirk this will take place as part of planned works to reception area.	£2k
Review public access PCs	2023/24	£13k	Reduced licensing costs due to reduction in PCs	Completed. Reduced overall number of public access PCs. Upgrade of PCs currently underway. Saving will be delivered following upgrade.	
Expand room hire – income	2022/23	£3k	Groups using library spaces – historical society, yoga classes etc	Big increase in use of libraries for other activities including community engagement sessions and UFO documentary filming.	£20k

Expand events in libraries – income	2022/23	£5k	Author events, kid's activities – robotics club	Less progress made on this due to focus on new Library Management System, engagement and expanding room hire.	
'Work from home' hub in libraries – income	2023/24	£2k	Rent a desk for a day	Will be considered as part of strategic action plan.	
Senior staff restructure	2023/24	£125k	Reduce senior posts	Under development as part of strategic action plan. Recruitment freeze has resulted in £75k saving in staff costs for 2022/23	£76k
Redesign opening hours	2023/24	£210k	Reduce utilities, cleaning and staff costs	Under development as part of strategic action plan. See above re recruitment freeze savings.	
Co-location	2023/24	£30k	Reduce running costs – frees up building	Future locations of libraries being considered as part of wider review of properties.	