

# Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## Library Policy Document

2025-2028

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## 1. Background

### 1.1 The Council Plan

The [Council Plan](#) has an overall vision to achieve

**“A borough of safer, greener and cleaner communities, with opportunity for all”**

This is supported by five strategic aims:

1. Put the council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively
2. A cleaner, greener, safer and more prosperous borough
3. Children and young people have a good start in life and opportunities through to adulthood
4. People live healthy and independent lives in supportive communities
5. A high-performing council that delivers for the borough.

The Library Service contributes to the successful delivery of all five strategic aims while providing spaces and resources to support Council Services and Council Partners such as Optalis and Achieving for Children to do the same.

### 1.2 Library Transformation Strategy

A robust, objective and evidence-based [Library Transformation Strategy](#) aims to deliver corporate and community priorities through a Library Service that helps release the power and assets within communities to meet local need.

As well as accessing books, information, sign-posting and digital support, Royal Borough residents utilise library spaces in large numbers for study, social contact, health and wellbeing, group exercise, support and council customer services.

Statutory library provision is available at all [Borough Libraries](#) during opening hours. A trained library officer will be on site to support volunteers and manage the building. This member of staff will also deal with complex enquiries, escalations and safeguarding concerns.

The Royal Borough Library Service consists of:

- a) Three town centre Libraries open 7 days per week: Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot libraries
- b) Three public libraries linked to local schools: Cox Green, Cookham and Dedworth libraries
- c) Five community libraries: Old Windsor, Boyn Grove, Sunninghill, Datchet and Eton Wick Libraries
- d) A Container Library at Wraysbury
- e) Pop-up libraries where demand and funding warrant this service such as in Sunningdale

- f) A [Digital Library](#) providing access to e-books, magazines, audio books, newspapers and graphic novels
- g) An Online Resources Library that includes training, reference resources such as Dictionaries, Ancestry, Theory Test and Which Online.
- h) A programme of Library events and clubs that reflect the four National [Universal Library Offers](#):
  - o Reading
  - o Information & Digital
  - o Culture & Creativity
  - o Health & Wellbeing.
- i) A Library Employment initiative (delivered in partnership with the DWP) to support individuals and employers
- j) An [Accessibility Scheme](#) to ensure those with additional needs are supported with tailored adjustments so that they can benefit from library facilities and customer services support.

### 1.3 Legislation

Councils are statutorily responsible for overseeing and ensuring the delivery of a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service and are also responsible for supporting the overall health and well-being of their communities.

Library services must comply with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964<sup>1</sup> and other legal obligations, including the Equality Act<sup>2</sup> and Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>3</sup> (PSED). The legislation states that the library service must:

- *Encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service, and to provide advice as to its use, making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required.*
- *Secure, by the keeping of adequate stocks, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children who live, work or study in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead*

### 1.4 Current Position

All [library policies](#) were reviewed in 2025. A number of amendments and updates were implemented.

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<sup>1</sup> [Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Public sector equality duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## 2. Purpose and Vision

### 2.1 Library Service Vision

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library Service will provide physical and virtual spaces that build connections and facilitate access to knowledge, resources and support so that residents are equipped to aspire and thrive

### 2.2 Library Service Strategic Priorities

This vision will be underpinned by six **Strategic Priorities**:

- a) Facilitate opportunities for young people to aspire, thrive and make a positive contribution to society
- b) Empower residents to take charge of their mental and physical health, skills development and independence
- c) Help shape, connect and support communities that are characterised by resilience, strength and vibrancy
- d) Assist local economic recovery to support individuals in realising aspirations and fulfilling potential
- e) Promote environmental sustainability while managing assets and resources efficiently to provide value for the community
- f) Assure access to trusted information for work, leisure, citizenship and study through expert and professional collection development and curation.

### 2.3 Library Service Aims

The primary aim of the Library Transformation Strategy is to deliver sustainable and resilient library services that support Corporate and Community priorities in the most cost-effective way possible. To achieve this the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library Service will

- a) Support cultural and creative enrichment
- b) Support increased reading and literacy
- c) Improve digital access and digital literacy
- d) Help everyone achieve their full potential
- e) Contribute to healthier and happier lives
- f) Contribute to greater prosperity
- g) Help build stronger, more resilient communities

## 3. Scope

- a) Library Locations
- b) Home Library Service
- c) Digital Library
- d) Library and Resident Contact Staff and Volunteers

## **4. Library Stock Policy**

### 4.1 Background

- a) This policy covers the handling of and access to stock and information at all Library Service points.
- b) The Library Service is part of the Royal Borough's contribution to the wellbeing of the individual through the encouragement of self-development, assistance to both formal and informal educational development, and support of the cultural, social, leisure, business and commercial activities of the community.
- c) The Library Service exists to provide access to resources, both stock and information, for everyone on an equal and fair basis. The resources provided should allow the maximum freedom of choice representing all shades of opinion
- d) The Library Service should be multi-cultural in the broadest sense. Access to resources may be from current Library holdings or via the South East Library Management System (SELMS) consortium.

### 4.2 Objectives

- a) To offer all customers scope and opportunity for self-development, bridging the gap between the information rich and the information poor
- b) To support education both formally & informally by providing resources and information for lifelong learning
- c) To contribute towards intellectual, emotional, psychological and social development
- d) To communicate the pleasure and enjoyment that reading can bring
- e) To provide for information needs
- f) To develop the use and understanding of language
- g) To prepare children and adults to become lifelong readers
- h) To reflect values and experiences in the context of multi-cultural Britain and the wider world
- i) To help people understand and respect their own and others' cultural heritage
- j) To enlarge and enrich the mind and imagination

### 4.3 Access to Stock

- a) Resources may be provided, as appropriate, by acquisition of stock as part of the holdings of the Library Service or loan of stock from other library authorities (SELMS)
- b) Stock is acquired with the intention of making it easily available. Closed access (Reserve Stock) will only operate where physical conditions impose restrictions on items are of a rare or valuable nature or due to space constraints. Most stock will be available for loan to customers but occasionally use may be restricted to library premises.
- c) Materials for children are provided in separate areas within service points, but young people increasingly require access to resources held in general areas of libraries. A public library is not the only source of material for children and they may also have access to materials and media on an adult level at home and elsewhere. The responsibility for a young person's access to and use of various media remains with the parent or guardian. Staff are not held to serve "in loco parentis".

- d) Lending books, including those provided electronically online, will be issued free of charge to customers for a set loan period. Items that may incur a hire charge include Audio Visual materials and books included as part of a mixed media format.
- e) All items that are loaned will be liable for overdue charges. It is the customer's responsibility to return or renew items in a timely fashion to avoid accruing charges. Digital items for loan may automatically return after the due date expires.

#### 4.4 Requests & Reservations

- a) Requests & reservations for items are an indicator of level of demand. However, the physical stock held at libraries may become unbalanced if acquisition patterns only follow this assessment.
- b) Most loanable items on the catalogue can be reserved and sent to any library in the Borough for a customer to collect. Items will be kept at the collection library for up to 2 weeks for the customer to collect.
- c) Requests for physical items not in stock but in print may be fulfilled via SELMS or they may be purchased. There may be charges which are set by Full Council.
- d) Customers can reserve eBooks via the library audio and eBook provider websites.
- e) When considering whether or not to purchase a requested item, normal selection criteria will apply.

#### 4.5 Catalogue

- a) The library catalogue is an accurate record of acquisitions of both physical and electronic items.
- b) It shows items that are at all the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Libraries, their status (eg on loan) and any items on order which are intended for stock.
- c) The catalogue can be accessed anytime online (excluding maintenance/downtime periods) as well as in all libraries, either via internet computers, catalogue computers or through staff computers.
- d) The catalogue can be used by any customer to search, reserve or renew items (physical and electronic).

#### 4.6 Stock Provision

- a) All libraries other than pop-ups will stock the following physical items:
  - Adult Fiction books
  - Popular Adult Non-Fiction books
  - Children's books, including picture & board books
  - Large Print books
  - Audiobooks
- b) Library customers will additionally have access to a range of online resources and eBooks through the Borough's website at any time (excluding maintenance/downtime periods). A valid Royal Borough library membership number and PIN will be required to access some services.

- c) The main town libraries (Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot) will additionally stock a wider range of Adult Non-Fiction stock. They will also hold local studies collections (which includes a selection of lendable items).

#### 4.7 Stock Promotion

The Library Service will promote its stock to library customers and to the wider public in order to:

- Encourage and enhance reading
- Encourage library membership and use
- Provide information and guidance to customers
- Encourage exploration of information sources

Stock will be tidy, organised and clearly labelled to help customers find what they require. Face on displays will be used where possible to generate interest and encourage the borrowing of a range of items. These displays will be changed regularly to maintain a fresh look and customer engagement.

#### 4.8 Stock Management

- a) Good stock management is essential to create space for new materials, enabling stock to be replaced quickly and easily by staff and enhancing the presentation of stock. This ongoing process helps to improve visits and issues.
- b) Stock may be withdrawn for a variety of reasons:
  - Poor physical condition. An item will be considered for reordering if demand is present and it is available to buy
  - Low use. If it is a specialist or valuable item, it may be transferred to Reserve stock
  - Excess stock for demand. If in good condition an item may be considered for transfer to another library, if demand is present
  - Excess stock for a low use subject
  - An item contains out of date or inaccurate information
  - An item is superseded by a newer edition

#### 4.9 Disposal of Stock

- a) Stock that has been selected for withdrawal, including donations that do not meet selection criteria, will be sent to external companies for an agreed price or discarded.
- b) On occasion items may be donated to charity following approval by a member of the Management Team. It is not possible to withdraw an item from stock for sale on request however libraries may hold book sales from time to time with the approval of the Service Lead.

#### 4.10 Censorship

- a) Acting as censor is not an appropriate role for a public library authority; the only relevant test is the law of the land.



- b) Some published material may cause offence to some customers because of its religious, political or moral viewpoints, or because of the inclusion of alternative or controversial knowledge. If material is lawfully published, no matter the format, then it should be assessed under the normal selection criteria.
- c) This approach is relevant to all forms of access whether stock is being considered for purchase or information being accessed via the Internet.
- d) The function of a library service is to provide, so far as resources allow all books in which its readers claim legitimate interest. In determining what a legitimate interest is the librarian can safely rely upon one guide only - the law of the land. If the publication of such matter has not incurred penalties under the law it should not be excluded from libraries on any moral, political, religious or racial ground alone, to satisfy any sectional interest.
- e) The public are entitled to rely upon libraries for access to information and enlightenment upon every field of human experience and activity. Those who provide library services should not restrict this access except by standards which are endorsed by law.
- f) The Service will not remove any items from library shelves solely at the request of an individual or group although the service will consider all suggestions for items to add to stock. The stock will therefore reflect different shades of opinion.
- g) Publications which are legally available will not be excluded because they are controversial. Each item will be evaluated by the professionals who select stock.

#### 4.11 Donations

- a) The Library Service is often asked to accept donations of materials from organisations and members of the public. Donations are not encouraged as the cataloguing and curation of the items generate additional costs over and above those of items supplied by the contracted supplier.
- b) If a donation is accepted due to exceptional circumstances the items become the property of the Library Service and may be utilised in the most appropriate manner. Items will only be added to stock if they meet the standards of normal selection criteria and the costs involved are commiserate with the value of the item.
- c) Most donations will be discarded through normal disposal channels
- d) Gifts of expensive material or of a rare nature may be subject to special conditions or arrangements which will be agreed by the Service Lead.

## **5. Library Enquiries Policy**

### 5.1 Background

- a) Enquiries are a key element of the public library service. Enquiries cover a great diversity of subjects, including Signposting, Council Customer Services, Digital Support, Library Information, leisure interests, Fiction and Non-Fiction stock, educational projects and work-related topics such as business, skills and training.
- b) The way enquiries are answered, and the accuracy of any information given, is of critical importance to residents. A key element of the statutory library service is that the library can be trusted to provide unbiased, accurate and current information.
- c) RBWM library staff are trained to a high standard to assist residents with their Council, Library and other enquiries.

### 5.2 Customer Waiting Times

#### **5.2.1 Enquiries in person**

- a) Enquiries should be answered as quickly as possible, consistent with good customer care and provision of the right information at the right level for the customer.
- b) The presence of a customer at an enquiry desk should be acknowledged as soon as possible and at least within two minutes.

#### **5.2.2 Information Enquiries by email and webform**

- a) All enquiries should be acknowledged within two working days or when next the library is open.
- b) Wherever possible answers should be completed with 10 working days. If it is not possible to answer in this time (eg complex local studies enquiries), the acknowledgement should state what action is proposed and how long it will take. All answers should be supplied within the time stated. No reply should take longer than four weeks.
- c) If enquiries are likely to take more than 30 minutes to research (eg some Local Studies enquiries) customers should be informed of the possible charge and their agreement to pay sought beforehand.

#### **5.2.3 Enquiries via Social Media**

- a) Social Media enquiries will be dealt with as soon as possible and within two working days at the latest.
- b) Some social media enquiries may be answered via Direct Message

### 5.3 The Enquiry Interview

- a) All information enquiries should be treated seriously. Staff should always try to establish the true nature and level of the information required and provide answers that are accurate and consistent with the customer's expressed needs.

- b) Inaccurate or out of date information inappropriate to the customer's needs should not be given. If information is not the latest available but is appropriate to the customer's need it should be offered with an explanation of its status. The customer should be made aware of the data and source of information they are given as appropriate.

#### 5.4 Referral of Enquiries

- a) Customers can make enquiries at any library and while many can be answered there and then, some will need to be referred to specialist staff or other libraries.
- b) If it is not possible to give an answer that fully meets the customer's needs but information is likely to be available elsewhere, the enquirer should be referred to where that information is available.
- c) Wherever possible internal referrals should be made by email while the customer is in the library so as much detail as possible can be included in the email.
- d) Every effort will be made to answer all enquiries. If the enquiry cannot be answered it will be escalated to a senior or manager.

#### 5.5 Staffing

All libraries should be staffed by suitably trained staff for their published opening hours.

#### 5.6 Training

- a) All library staff should be trained in referral techniques and should be aware of correct procedures for dealing with enquiries, so that if they are not able to answer an enquiry the customer is referred correctly first time.
- b) All staff should be familiar with the full range of resources available at all Borough libraries.
- c) All staff should be familiar with the Council website and able to use it to assist with council enquiries.

## **6. Library Access Policy**

### 6.1 Background

- a) This policy covers all aspects of accessibility to the Library Service including location, opening hours, ICT, physical access, furniture and equipment, stock and services, access to staff and adequate space.
- b) It sets the standards against which individual users and communities can measure their expectations.

### 6.2 Location Policy

- a) Currently the eleven fixed site libraries and the Container Library at Wraysbury cover all the main centres of population in the Borough. The Home Library Service visits customers in their own homes.
- b) The service aims to ensure all residents are able to access library services regardless of mobility, disability, distance from a static library or any other barrier.
- c) Pop-up library options are established where demand arises and funding is available such as at Sunningdale.

### 6.3 Physical access standards

- a) Parking areas are required at all libraries. Disabled Parking is made available where possible.
- b) Street guiding is required for ease of locating all library buildings.
- c) Adequate signing for all library buildings will be well placed and well-lit with clear script and contrasting colours and background. Links to opening hours information are displayed.
- d) Access from the approaches and within the demise of the library will be level and allow free and unobstructed passage for wheelchairs and pushchairs. If not possible then entrance access will be ramped with rails where appropriate. Steps where provided will be low and deep with the edges highlighted. Handrails will be provided.
- e) Doors should be automatic and main entrance doors should be double doors or wide enough for double pushchair or wheelchair access. They should be glazed or partially glazed especially if outward opening. Spring closures should be avoided where possible and only delayed action type should be used. Minimum pressure should be required to open and close any manual doors and thresholds should allow unassisted access by wheelchairs.
- f) Lobbies inside an entrance door should provide sufficient turning space for wheelchairs and pushchairs and any mats should fit into a well and be flush with the floor.
- g) Lifts should be provided in all buildings where there is more than one floor level accessed by customers and should allow independent use by wheelchair users. Sufficient turning space and mirrors for reverse exits must be allowed where it is not possible to turn in the lift or dual doors are not feasible.
- h) Corridors and passageways should be sufficiently wide to allow wheelchair access and where possible to allow pedestrian passing of wheelchairs. Seats or perching areas should be provided if the corridor is longer than 10 metres
- i) Non-slip flooring should be used in all areas. Short pile carpeting should always be used with anti-static properties.

- j) Lighting design should allow as much natural light as possible and where artificial lighting is used it should be to a level of 300-500 lux. Lighting should be positioned to avoid shadows falling on shelves or dazzling customers when browsing, and glare on computer equipment from all sources is to be avoided. Areas of poor natural light should be given types of lighting that mimic natural light where possible. Poorly lit areas should have large areas of wall covered in light, reflective colours and ceilings should be covered in light, reflective colours to maximise the light available.
- k) At least one computer space per static library should be large enough to accommodate a user plus carer.

#### 6.4 Furniture and equipment standards

- a) Access must accommodate wheelchair users.
- b) There should be no shadowed areas which impedes lip reading. Hearing loops should be available.
- c) Internal signs should be of a professional standard with no handwritten notices. Signage and notices must be branded appropriately. They should be at eye level with easy access for close viewing. Glare should be minimised.
- d) Equipment must be safely housed at an appropriate height with no trailing wires. Reading tables should be provided to suit the height of the available chairs whilst being appropriate for wheelchair users. Wheelchair spaces [900mm x 1400mm] should be allowed for at tables and computers. A variety of seats should be provided at a range of heights with and without arm rests and they must be stable, clean and in good repair. Suitable seating should be provided for computer use in the appropriate areas. Perching seats should be available where people may have to wait.
- e) Shelving should be no higher than 1500mm from floor level and no lower than 250mm from floor level, especially for Large Print stock, except for the children's area. Here shelves should be no higher than 1200mm from floor level for older children, 600mm for under 5's and no lower than 250mm from floor level. There should be space around shelving and desks sufficient to allow wheelchair and pushchair access, with no protruding feet into the aisles.
- f) Public toilet facilities where provided should be accessible to all and this should include provision for assisted transfers and emergency help. Nappy changing facilities should be provided where possible.

#### 6.5 Staffing standards

- a) The training plan will include customer care and related training on an ongoing basis to ensure that new and existing members of staff have the skills they need.
- b) Disability awareness training will also be made available for staff

#### 6.6 Opening hours policy

- a) Opening hours are intended to reflect local needs and interests whilst maintaining the widest possible access by the whole community. Currently Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot libraries open across 7 days per week and only close on bank holidays.
- b) Opening hours are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community. Library closures for whatever reason will be kept to a minimum.

### 6.7 ICT (Information and Communications) access policy

- a) Access to ICT is fundamental in promoting equal opportunities of access to information and services. Libraries should be a major vehicle for providing affordable, supported access to ICT.
- b) One of the main aims of the Library Transformation Strategy is to increase access for customers and staff to information and services through the use of ICT and to bridge the gap between the information rich and the information poor. Public Internet use in all borough libraries is governed by the Public Internet Access Acceptable Use Agreement.
- c) The library service also aims to maximise the benefits of ICT in enabling access for disabled users to library facilities, as well as those affected by sensory, intellectual and cultural access barriers. Appropriate means of accessing ICT for these users is provided at all service points.
- d) Catalogues and key documents should be available on-line via the Internet. The library service is accessible outside opening hours through the library website. This provides the opportunity to check the library catalogue, join the library, renew items, make reservations, check borrowing details and be informed of events, activities and other library information online.
- e) Library members can also access a range of electronic information and lending resources provided through the library web pages.
- f) Access to the Library Catalogue is also made available via the free RBWM Library App from SOLUS. Customers can search, reserve and renew books via this app.

### 6.8 Physical access policy

- a) It is important that library buildings are easily accessible and have a welcoming, professional image.
- b) Clear external and internal signs and guiding facilitating self-help are essential, together with appropriate furniture, lighting and equipment.
- c) The library service is also required to meet all relevant legislation requirements including health and safety standards, Equalities Act 2010 provisions and section M of the Building Regulations.

### 6.9 Access to Stock and Services

- a) Libraries provide a unique mix of resources and services - they are a community resource, giving local access to networks and global reach to knowledge and opportunities.
- b) The Library Service will ensure that people who have difficulty using facilities are not financially penalised or otherwise disadvantaged and that the service is accessible to the low paid, unemployed and other excluded groups.
- c) Information about services should be available and should increase public awareness and promote a positive image of the service.
- d) The [Accessibility Scheme](#) ensures that customers with additional needs including those with Dementia and Autism are able to use the library service comfortably. This includes longer loan periods and access times with staff available to assist outside of normal opening hours.

#### 6.10 Access to Staff

- a) Staff and volunteers will provide help and support in a non-judgemental way and will be trained in all aspects of customer care to ensure equality of treatment.
- b) All staff will be proficient in using relevant ICT programmes so that they can confidently use and help customers to use the ICT and Internet facilities

## **7. Customer Care Policy**

### 7.1 Background

- a) Customer care is fundamental to an effective service. It is essential that this is reflected in all aspects of the service.
- b) Customer care has three dimensions: surroundings, competence and how people experience the service they receive. Staff are trained to provide the best possible levels of service.

### 7.2 Training

- a) Training in customer care will be given a high priority. Training will cover dealing with Difficult Customers, customers with additional needs and different groups of customers.

### 7.3 Staff Attitudes

- a) Staff are expected to be courteous, attentive, approachable and helpful. A pleasant manner should be matched by efficiency in service.
- b) All customers are entitled to the same standard of care.
- c) Staff must familiarise themselves with the expected standards and procedures across all policies. Staff must also be aware of the additional needs of some customers.

### 7.4 First Impressions

- a) Staff should acknowledge each customer in a pleasant and welcoming manner. It is important to acknowledge a customer and smile. Eye contact is important.
- b) A friendly manner and a willingness to help are basic requirements.
- c) Staff should avoid standing with their backs to the customer and not eat in public areas. They should always be aware that they are representing the Library Service and the Council.
- d) Staff should constantly be alert to customers waiting. Anyone shelving, shelf checking or on floor duties should keep an eye on the pod or enquiry desk and return to assist colleagues with queues, or to answer telephones. Customers who ask for directions should be taken to the appropriate section.
- e) On the Container Library, staff should be prepared to assist customers who need assistance in getting on and off the vehicle. Elderly customers often have difficulty carrying a heavy bag of books up steps. Where appropriate the passenger lift should be offered.

### 7.5 Telephone Manner

- a) No personal calls should be taken in the public area except in cases of emergency. Calls to other libraries or services should be limited to business.



- b) A greeting such as “Good morning, Ascot Library, can I help you?” is essential. It is only necessary to give your name as you answer a call if you are answering your own personal extension, or if the caller will require you specifically in future.
- c) If it is necessary to transfer a of call, it is important that an explanation is given to the customer first. If appropriate, an offer to call the customer back should be given. If the person required is not available a message be taken which should be passed to the relevant member of staff as soon as possible. Anyone shelving, shelf checking or on floor duties must return to the counter to answer the telephone if other staff are occupied with customers.
- d) If a customer is put on hold then the call must be muted

#### 7.6 Complaints and Difficult Situations

- a) A complaint must always be taken seriously and courteously. It is essential that staff always remain calm and polite.
- b) Remember, it is not possible to control the behaviour of other people. It is only possible to control your own behaviour and responses. It is however usually possible to de-escalate a situation.
- c) If you find yourself out of your depth and cannot de-escalate, then escalate to another member of staff. In a single staffed location it may be necessary to call someone at another location. Excuse yourself politely and advise the customer that you are calling someone for assistance.

#### 7.7 Physical Aspects

- a) Making service points attractive and easy to use is part of customer care. Guiding should be clear, helpful and large enough to be seen by people with a visual impairment.
- b) The siting of various resources is important. Large print books should always be shelved in well-lit areas and if natural light is poor, consideration must be given to obtaining additional artificial light. Large print stock should be on shelves which are neither too high nor too low.
- c) Furnishings should be suitable for a range of users.
- d) For large libraries, a library 'plan' is very helpful to customers. Autism maps are available on the library webpages. Notice boards should be tidy and uncluttered with notices kept up-to-date. Refer to the Physical Presentation, Displays & Exhibitions and Access Policies for more information.

#### 7.8 Confidentiality

- a) Records of borrowers should be accessible to the staff and the individual borrower only. Addresses and other details should never be left on a screen or given to other people. Information should not be given to the police unless it is requested in the appropriate manner. This will be managed by the DPO (Data Protection Officer). Any request must be reported to the Service Lead or Team Leader who will contact the DPO.
- b) When on duty in public areas staff should never talk about members of the public, collectively or individually.

- c) All enquiries should be handled with tact and discretion.
- d) Any personal data that is left in the library should be treated as confidential and not left lying around. No personal data should be left where members of the public can see it. Any documents containing personal data should be kept securely until collected by the customer or disposed of appropriately. Lost property containing personal data [e.g. a memory stick, handbag, purse etc.] should be dealt with according to the on-site lost property procedure.

### 7.9 Special Groups

- a) Staff need to be aware of the problems faced by customers with additional needs. Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is a requirement for all service providers to make equal provision to users regardless of any disability. Help should be offered unobtrusively as customers with a disability might not want to draw attention to themselves. Staff should never shout at a hearing-impaired person. Speak slowly and clearly while facing the customer.

### 7.10 Closing Routines

- a) Closing the service at the end of the day should take place in a polite manner. Customers should be reminded that the service is to close shortly. A five- or ten-minute warning should be given, more in the case of large buildings.
- b) Customers who appear a few minutes before closing must be dealt with politely.
- c) Lights should not be turned off before all customers have left, but they may be momentarily dipped just before closing time as a gentle hint.

## 8. Child Safety

### 8.1 Background

- a) Children are a valued group of customers. It is important that they feel secure, comfortable and confident when using Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead libraries and that safe community spaces are provided.
- b) Under the Occupier's Liability Act (1957) it is the duty of the Service to take such care, as is in all the circumstances reasonable, to ensure that visitors will be reasonably safe in using the premises for the purpose for which they are permitted to be there. As children are expected to be less careful than adults, the standard of care required will be higher.
- c) If anything on the premises is an allurements or danger to children, reasonable care must be taken to protect them from that danger. It is essential that all staff take the welfare and safety of children seriously, but in no instance would staff be expected to take on parental responsibilities for children in libraries or agree to look after a child.

### 8.2 Children in the library - supervision

- a) Library staff can never act in loco parentis.
- b) The library is an open, public place.
- c) Children under the age of eight should always be accompanied by a parent/carer.
- d) If a child under the age of eight is not being appropriately supervised, indicate politely, discreetly and gently to the accompanying adult that the child they are accompanying requires closer supervision. If a child under the age of eight has been left unaccompanied in the library, when the adult returns ask them politely, discreetly and gently to remain with their child in future. It may be necessary to explain the policy. It is not acceptable to make the parent feel like they are being told off or not parenting correctly.
- e) If a parent/ carer alerts staff that their child/ young person is missing, support the family by asking for a description of the child. Inform other staff. Escalate if the child is not found immediately and contact police to inform them. Advise that CCTV is available if it is. Fill in an incident report stating a child went missing whilst on the premises but under supervision of the parent/ carer
- f) If a child presents themselves as having lost parents/ carers or appears to be lost, support the child and find out where and when their parent or carer was last with them. Try to find out the name of the child. Escalate to your line manager or Duty Officer and contact police if the parents are not found quickly. The escalation may lead to an SPA (Single point of Contact or MASH) referral. Fill in an incident report to state the child presented as lost and what happened.
- g) Medical needs – if an unaccompanied child or young person is having a seizure or is injured call the emergency services and fill in an incident report. Let your line manager or the Duty Officer know.

### 8.3 What to do if a child is unaccompanied and wants to leave alone

- a) If you can ascertain, or already know, that the child is allowed to come and go alone and you feel that they are likely to get home safely then let them go. If you

are in any doubt then encourage the child to stay while you contact the parent/ carer or escalate internally. If the child is under eight, do not let them go home alone. Instead contact the parent or your line manager or Duty Officer.

#### 8.4 Unaccompanied children at closing time

- a) Ask the child if they are expecting someone to collect them. Don't wait until closing time to take the next step. If no-one turns up then try to contact a parent/carer. You may find their contact details on the Library Management System or the child may have a contact number on their mobile phone.
- b) If you cannot contact anyone you will need to escalate internally. Never escort a child home yourself.
- c) If a parent repeatedly leaves a child unaccompanied at closing time then the library supervisor will contact the parent.
- d) If you have a safeguarding concern, contact your line manager or the Duty Supervisor who will assess the situation and, if necessary, make contact with SPA 01628 683150 or EDT (Emergency Duty Team) out of hours 01344 786543.

#### 8.5 Children over 8 years who should be at school

- a) Children over eight can visit the library alone. This may happen during school hours and staff may be concerned that they may be truants. Libraries, however, are to be regarded as a safe haven and anyone under 16 should be allowed to stay without feeling threatened or challenged by anything or anyone.
- b) Younger children may visit the library during school hours with parents or carers or alternative education providers. If you have any safeguarding or welfare concerns escalate them to your line manager or a team leader who will assess the situation and, if necessary, make a safeguarding referral. the contact numbers for MASH are 01344 352005 or 01344 786543 (after hours).
- c) Any problems to do with truancy will not be for library staff or volunteers to address.
- d) If children are behaving badly or inappropriately, then warnings should be given. Unacceptable behaviour in breach of the Byelaws will be dealt with in accordance with the Library Byelaws. It is important that children who are not at school feel safe in the library.

#### 8.6 Staff safety

Staff should ensure that they protect themselves in the following ways:

- a) Don't accompany a child to the toilet
- b) Don't initiate physical contact
- c) Don't allow a child to sit on your knee during story-time or other activities
- d) Staff are required to attend Safeguarding training.

### 8.7 Adults in children's section of the library

- a) The children's section must be clearly demarcated as such. In this sensitive area staff should be cautious but the child's welfare must come first. An adult in the children's area but not seeming to use it should be directed to seating in the adult library or helped in finding the information they require and encouraged to leave the children's library. Staff should stay with the adult until they have left the children's area and inform a senior member of staff if they remain concerned.
- b) Polite notices suggesting only adults accompanying children are encouraged to be in the children's or teenage areas are permitted but do understand that sometimes parents select books for their children or teens and should not be discouraged from doing so. However, once they have selected the items they should move out of the space.

### 8.8 Use of Toilets

- a) Children should be allowed to use staff toilets if no public toilets are available, but staff should not enter the cubicle with them.

### 8.9 Taking Photographs

- a) Permission is required from the parent for a child under 13 to be photographed by Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead staff. Young people can provide their own consent from the age of 13.

### 8.10 Events and activities

- a) Library activities for young people will be less than two hours in duration.
- b) Parents should stay with young children and with children who have extreme allergies or who are more likely to be at risk.
- c) For class or group visits the accompanying adults (e.g. teachers) should remain with the group.
- d) Children with disabilities are actively encouraged to participate in activities and reasonable adjustments will be made to facilitate their full engagement.
- e) Staff and volunteers must make themselves aware of first aid arrangements. If you use the first aid kit at a branch, ensure the items you use are replaced.
- f) Staff must wear their badges in order to be identifiable.
- g) Limit numbers of attendees to events based on the number of adults that will be present and the size of the venue.
- h) Parents must be aware that they are expected to collect their children when the event finishes. Events should finish at least half an hour before library closing time to give parents time to collect their children.
- i) If an unaccompanied child wishes to leave early try to persuade them to stay until they are collected. If you feel, with good reason, that they will be in danger then escalate your concerns internally.
- j) Events Registers should include an emergency contact number for the parent/carer. If children are left alone at the event (over eights only) then keep a register of all children with parent's name and contact number and any known medical conditions (what library staff should do in an emergency). Data protection legislation prevents us from keeping these lists for longer than absolutely necessary. They should be shredded/ disposed of in the confidential waste bins.

### 8.11 Staff undertaking external visits

- a) The organisation being visited remains responsible for the children. Library staff should not be left alone with the children. Staff must ensure that they are wearing their staff badge.

### 8.12 Library Evacuation during an event

- a) The member of staff or volunteer leading the event is to ensure all children attending the event are evacuated and accounted for (take register of attendees with you). If a child is unaccounted for inform the emergency services immediately. Stay with the children until they are collected.

### 8.13 Bullying in the library

- a) If you witness a child being bullied you have a duty to do what you can to stop it, including asking the bully to leave if necessary. Libraries should be places where children feel safe. If a young person presents with very challenging behaviours, escalate to your line manager or duty officer who may call the SPA. You may have to call the police. Fill in an incident report.

### 8.14 Surveying and Consultation

- a) Consultation is carried out with all customers including children. The information is used to find out about service performance, to plan for service development and for internal marketing purposes.
- b) In general, permission is required when surveying children under 13 unless collecting only statistical data in which individuals cannot be identified.
- c) If visiting an outside group, it is important to give enough notice so that parents and children can all be informed. If approaching children ensure the publicity is very clear. Explain what you are doing and why, and how the information will be used.
- d) You do not need permission when asking children general questions where you will not use or publish the information in such a way that the individual child could be identified.
- e) Interviewers need to wear identification. Children cannot be interviewed alone in a separate room – all one-to-one interviews with children must take place in public spaces.

## **9 Physical Presentation Policy**

### 9.1 Background

- a) It is important that the physical presentation of a service point, the stock, staff and equipment should create a welcoming and professional image so that customers from all sectors of the community should feel comfortable and at ease.
- b) Services must appear friendly but also professional, clearly indicating the range of services available. Consistency in image across all service points is essential.

### 9.2 External appearance

- a) The exterior of service points is a crucial factor in affecting the impression of services and in influencing new customers. It is important that all external parts of service points should be kept clean, tidy and in good repair.
- b) All Health and Safety standards are to be met.
- c) The view through windows into the interior of the building is crucial as this represents an advertisement for the service even when service points are closed. Areas on view may include public areas, staff work rooms and rest rooms.
- d) Care must be taken to ensure that shelves and counters are left as tidy as possible on closing. Staff and work areas must appear well organised, with washing up and food cleared away. Curtains and blinds should be neatly arranged and plants well cared for.
- e) External signs and guiding are essential if customers are to be able to locate service points easily. Ideally there should be guiding in place for library buildings from town/village centres, local transport links and car parks. The library building itself must be adequately signed.

### 9.3 Internal appearance

- a) The interior of the service point should appear as attractive, welcoming and tidy as possible. It should not appear cluttered and there should be space around shelving and furniture in order to ensure ease of access.
- b) The interior of the building should be in good decorative order. Carpets should not be worn or damaged in such a manner to look unsightly or cause a hazard.
- c) The inside of the building must be kept clean with floor coverings that are cleaned / vacuumed, shelves dusted etc.
- d) Furniture and equipment must be kept clean [with no stains or graffiti] and in a good state of repair so that it is safe to use. Furniture and equipment should be adequate and appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended. Where possible furniture should be coordinated with and in style with other furnishings.
- e) Shelving should conform to the Access Policy and standards. Books and other items should be shelved upright with face-on display used as much as possible.
- f) Equipment must be suitably and safely housed and, if available for public use, easy to understand instructions must be made readily available.
- g) Seating should conform to the Access Policy.

#### 9.4 Signs and guiding

- a) Ample, clear, attractive and informative guiding is essential if customers are to be able to use stock and services effectively.
- b) Guiding must be of a professional standard with no handwritten signs.
- c) It is essential that all basic services should be clearly marked. Any charges relating to services must also be clearly displayed.
- d) The branding style must be adhered to

#### 9.5 Staff pods and enquiry desks

- a) Surfaces of pods and enquiry desks should be clean, tidy and uncluttered.
- b) An appropriate balance should be maintained between allowing the maximum space possible for interaction with customers and allowing enough space for the necessary tools and equipment for the job. This is to ensure that customers do not feel there is a barrier between them and staff.
- c) Pods and enquiry desks must appear well organised, including any shelving or storage space behind them. Storage should not be allowed to overflow into public areas and Health and safety requirements must be observed at all times.

#### 9.6 Notices and posters

- a) Notices should only be affixed to boards and surfaces specifically designed for this purpose.
- b) 'What's On' folders should be available for information that it is not possible to display.
- c) All notices displayed on behalf of the service must be printed in line with branding requirements. No notices handwritten by staff may be used.
- d) Signs professionally mounted on windows to be seen from outside should relate only to services offered within that service point. They must be replaced when faded.
- e) Out of date notices must not be displayed. [See the Displays and Exhibitions Policy for priorities on which notices to display.]

#### 9.7 Leaflets

- a) Leaflets should always be displayed in purpose made racks that ensure they do not slide down or flop forward.
- b) Where there is space for a range of leaflets to be displayed, these should be organised into categories and, if possible, the racks labelled accordingly.
- c) Leaflets must not be left in piles on flat surfaces.
- d) Racks should be checked regularly to ensure that out of date or tatty items are replaced and displays are refreshed.
- e) Different leaflets should not be "displayed" in the same "pocket" of a rack. [See Displays and exhibitions Policy for priorities on which leaflets to display.]



### 9.8 Dress and personal appearance

- a) The personal appearance of staff is an important factor in conveying a suitable impression of the service to customers. They should, therefore, appear smart and well-groomed at all times, bearing in mind that they should present a friendly and approachable image to all sectors of the public.
- b) Staff should wear name badges in the corporate style. These should be worn so that customers can see them easily, even if working behind a desk or counter. Volunteers should also wear a corporate badge or lanyard.
- c) Please refer to the Corporate Dress Code Guidance for more information.

## **9. Displays and Exhibitions Policy**

### 10.1 Censorship

- a) There have been various attempts by national and local government bodies to define acceptable limits for displays and exhibitions in libraries. Most of these have foundered because what is acceptable to one individual or group is not acceptable to others. It is neither desirable nor practicable for colleagues to be required to act as censors and any guidelines must be clear.
- b) Material that promotes extremism or radicalisation are not permitted.
- c) Unless approved by the Service Lead, material promoting businesses or commercial organisations will not be displayed.
- d) The service reserves the right to remove a notice or display at any time at the sole discretion of the Service Lead.
- e) The Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 states: A person permitting or causing display of indecent matter visible from a public place shall be guilty of an offence.
- f) Leaflets left in libraries will be disposed of unless permission has been granted to hold them.
- g) Notwithstanding the above, a library should foster the exchange of ideas and information and maintain the same impartiality with regard to displays as with regard to book selection. Provided that space permits, the only restraint on allowing individuals and organisations to mount displays and exhibitions on library premises should be the law of the land.
- h) A library should not permit a display reflecting a particular view of a subject without being willing to permit the same facilities for a contrary display. It is sufficient that the library should be willing for its facilities to be used should someone come forward with a contrary display.
- i) Material may not be displayed if it contravenes the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead's own policy on promotion or advertising.

### 4.3.2 Charities

- a) Registered Charities may display materials (digitally or in folders) relating to their work but not collect from customers without the written permission of the Service Lead.

### 4.3.3 Accessibility

- a) Exhibitions must be mounted leaving sufficient space for wheelchair access to all parts of the exhibition.

### 4.3.4 Priority

Category 1: Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council

Category 2: Achieving for Children, Optalis and other public and non-sectarian bodies, including registered charities and the NHS

Category 3: Local societies and non-profit organisations

**The above is contingent on the space available. Material may be held in folders rather than on notice boards or in leaflet holders.**

## **11. Home Library Service**

### 11.1 Background

- a) This policy covers all aspects of the provision of the Home Library Service
- b) The Home Library Service is positioned to cover the geographic remit of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The service aims to ensure all residents can access library services regardless of mobility, disability, distance from a static library or any other barrier.
- c) The Home Library service is run by library staff and delivered by library volunteers.
- d) The service is also available to care homes, day centres and nurseries where book collections are taken out on a six weekly cycle.

### 11.2 Summary of how it works

- a) Home Library readers can reserve their library requests online / by email / by telephone or by telling library staff or allocated library volunteers what they require. Library volunteers or staff may also select books for readers.
- b) Books are picked by staff or volunteers and issued onto home library volunteer accounts. If items are selected by staff on behalf of volunteers, issued items are despatched to static library locations for allocated volunteer collections.
- c) Volunteers are informed by email that their readers' book packs are ready for collection. Readers and volunteers arrange mutually suitable appointment times for visits.
- d) Volunteers collect and return the prepared book bags from or to the most convenient static library location.

### 11.3 Accessing the service

- a) Potential home library service readers can contact any static library location to communicate their interest in the service. Library staff on duty will take their details and pass them to the Home Library service team. Potential home library service readers can also go online [Home Library Service](#) and click on the web-form.
- b) The Home Library service team will make contact via an initial telephone call. During this call, reader's preferences are discussed and an appointment is made to visit the reader, which may include the introduction of the allocated volunteer.

### 11.4 Library membership and loan status

- a) Home Library readers and assigned volunteers are identified under the Mobile category status. They will have library loans of at least six weeks and there are no overdue charges.
- b) Renewals are subject to items not being requested by other readers and dependent on availability in the wider stock system.

### 11.5 Home Library service volunteers

- a) Volunteers are recruited and selected for their local proximity to the community areas they agree to deliver within. Volunteers must be adults. Volunteers must also demonstrate the capacity to engage with readers at a social and empathetic level.
- b) Volunteers must be interviewed and have the remit of the role explained to them before acceptance. Volunteers must have a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) notification certificate that has been processed by the Library Volunteering and Community Development Officer.

### 11.6 Home Library Service volunteer role

- a) Home Library service volunteers collect and deliver book requests / packs to housebound Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead residents unable to access a static library location.
- b) Volunteers are encouraged to take the opportunity to converse at a social level with readers during the Home Library meeting time slots. They are also able to gather feedback on reading experiences of delivered books.
- c) The purpose is to develop rapport, mitigate the effects of social isolation and vulnerability and update the effectiveness of book stock for the service.

### 11.7 Induction for volunteers

- a) Home Library volunteers undertake an induction that includes a presentation and explanation of a Confidentiality Agreement, Volunteer's Agreement, Safeguarding Information and Guidance, and the Health and Safety protocol for Lone Working staff and volunteers.
- b) The volunteer must read and give their signature for the Confidentiality Agreement and Volunteer's Agreement. The signed documents are scanned and kept as an electronic record, and the hardcopy originals are retained by the volunteer.

### 11.8 Support for volunteers

- a) Volunteers are supported by library staff in the ability to optimally deliver the library service to their assigned readers. This will be facilitated via regular feedback between readers, volunteers and library staff regarding reading experience and book selections.
- b) Library staff must carry out initial introductions of volunteers and allocated readers before service commences. These must take place as face-to-face visits between library staff, volunteers and readers.
- c) Volunteers can walk or drive to carry out their Home Library deliveries. The Library is unable to compensate mileage expenses when volunteers utilize their personal vehicles to carry out this service.
- d) Home Library volunteers are allocated at least one reader and will be matched with more housebound readers as mutually agreed between readers, volunteers and library staff supporting volunteers. Allocation evaluations are based on volunteer-reader fit in terms of proximity of locality, diverse reading interests and an interest in helping to reduce social isolation and contribute to improving housebound readers' quality of life.

### 11.9 Feedback

- a) The service has a built-in feedback process – staff are in contact with readers every three weeks via email or telephone to check/confirm book requests. Staff are also in regular contact with volunteers via email or telephone and face-face at the respective library locations where volunteers collect and return their book deliveries.
- b) Customer service feedback cards may be handed out annually. These will be attached to book deliveries and collected by volunteers.
- c) Digital feedback can be given at any time using the Council's feedback process: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/contact-us/compliments-concerns-and-feedback>. All feedback will contribute to an on-going cycle of learning and adjusting to how to optimally deliver the service and experience for readers, volunteers and staff.

## **12. Library Exclusions Policy**

### 12.1 Background

- a) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has a responsibility for the care and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and customers who make use of the Library Service.
- b) Every effort is made to ensure that libraries offer a safe and welcoming space for everyone.
- c) The Library Service and Council will manage the risk to staff, volunteers and library customers from individuals and groups who behave in ways that are threatening, unruly, disruptive, aggressive, indecent or violent. Harassment and disorderly behaviour are also covered by this policy.
- d) The service reserves the right to take into account confidential, sensitive or personal information about any customer that may alter its response to unusual or apparently inappropriate behaviour that is not necessarily deliberate. Examples may include library users with learning difficulties or who are known to have a mental illness.
- e) Library users will not be excluded in response to a request from another library user.
- f) Each case will be considered individually by the Service Lead.
- g) Notwithstanding the above, a customer will be excluded if, in the opinion of the Service Lead, there is a risk of violence to staff, volunteers or other customers.
- h) Staff will be provided with training on de-escalation skills and how to deal with difficult customers.
- i) Staff will follow clear procedures set out in the Single Staffing Policy and Personal Safety Policy to ensure they do not put themselves at risk.
- j) The Service will work with the Community Safety Team, the Control Room, Thames Valley Police (PCSOs and TVP Officers), Community Wardens, the Mental health Team, Social Services, the Housing and Rough Sleeper teams, the Windsor Homelessness Project and other partners when dealing with persistent and one-off incidents.
- k) This policy is based on the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library Byelaws

### 12.2 Exclusion

- a) Any incident preceding an exclusion will be fully investigated by the Service Lead
- b) An incident report will be created immediately after an occurrence that may lead to exclusion. Eyewitness accounts of staff, volunteers and customers may be included in the incident report. Incident reports will be kept updated with any developments.
- c) The Service Lead will advise the excluded individual(s) in writing which may be by letter or by email or both. If required, library partners such as those mentioned in 4.10.1 (g) may assist with issuing the letter to the excluded person.
- d) The behaviours that may lead to an exclusion are outlined in the Library Byelaws. These include but are not restricted to threatening, unruly, disruptive, aggressive, indecent, violent and disorderly behaviour or harassment.
- e) The excluded individual will be advised as to the length of the exclusion. Exclusion durations are at the discretion of the Service Lead.
- f) Breaching an exclusion notice may result in an extension on the period of exclusion.

### 12.3 Right to Appeal

- a) The excluded customer has a right to appeal to the Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Library & Resident Services.
- b) Appeals must be made in writing and received within 5 days of the exclusion being issued. The basis for the appeal must be clearly stated.
- c) Appeals will be assessed on the following criteria:
  - The reasons for the exclusion are incorrect
  - New information has come to light
- d) The Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Library & Resident Services will consider the appeal and either
  - Uphold the exclusion
  - Change the period of exclusion
  - Overturn the exclusion
  - Order a new investigation
- e) Appeal decisions are considered full and final



## 13. Public Computers, Wifi and Internet Access

### 13.1 Background

- a) The Library Service provides public access to computers, Wi-Fi, the Internet and Microsoft Office software for library customers as part of its role to provide access to cultural, leisure, information and educational resources. The policy below applies to all locations other than pop-up libraries.

### 13.2 Access and Charges

- a) Users can use the public computers in libraries to access the Internet (including web-based email services) and Microsoft Office. Charges may be applied, which will be agreed at Full Council.
- b) The Library Catalogue is free of charge.
- c) Assistive technology incorporating text-to-speech software and screen magnification is available.
- d) Scanning, printing and photocopying facilities are available.
- e) Computer sessions can be extended depending on availability.
- f) All computer sessions will end 15 minutes before library closing time.
- g) Bookings are held for 10 minutes.
- h) Charges for printouts and photocopies can be viewed [here](#).

### 13.3 Safety and Security

- a) Online financial transactions should be conducted over secure connections. If customers choose to undertake online financial transactions over the Internet by credit or debit cards, they do so entirely at their own risk. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead accepts no responsibility for any financial or commercial transactions undertaken whilst using library computers.
- b) Be aware that subscribing to websites and entering or broadcasting personal or private details over the Internet may lead to receiving unwanted mail or attention. Always be sure to read the terms and conditions attached to any website before subscribing.
- c) Always remember to logout after your session. All data on the PC is wiped once you have logged out and you are not able to go back and access this data once the session has ended.
- d) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead recognises that the Internet is also potentially open to misuse and abuse, and that legitimate users should be protected from illegal and offensive materials. Safe use of the Internet is the responsibility of both the library service and customers. The Library Service will, where possible, attempt to restrict access to illegal and offensive materials on the Internet by the means laid out below:
  - Filtering software is used on all computers to block access to illegal and offensive material only. However, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead recognises that such software can never be 100% effective.
  - A process to adjust the filtering for individual sites based on staff and customer feedback exists. In cases where the content of a web page is believed to be inappropriate, staff will pass details onto the Library

Management Team who, in consultation with Corporate IT, will make a decision. If a website has been inappropriately blocked and reported that site may be made available. The Library Management Team reserves the right to continue blocking any site considered to be inappropriate for public access.

- e) By using the Internet on a library computer, the customer accepts the terms of the Library Public Computer Service User Agreement (see 6.3) and accepts personal responsibility for any potentially offensive material that may accidentally or deliberately be viewed.
- f) The Service has access to all browsing history and may share computer usage information with the police, probation service or security services when lawfully required to do so.

#### 13.4 Using the Wi-Fi Facilities

- a) Free Wi-Fi service operates in all libraries except pop-ups.
- b) The public Wi-Fi network is secured, and information transmitted is encrypted but there is a risk that it may be intercepted. By using Public Wifi the customer agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the Wi-Fi Acceptable User Policy (6.2).

#### 13.5 Misuse

- a) Where there is a reason to believe that the acceptable use agreement is breached, Internet access may be monitored or revoked. The service will be withdrawn from anyone found infringing the Library Public Computer Service User Agreement or Wi-Fi Acceptable User Policy.
- b) If online activity (e.g. game playing) significantly impacts the ability of the network to deliver other services, those activities will be restricted.

## 14. Wifi Acceptable Use Agreement

**By using Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Library and Resident Services Wi-Fi service, you agree to abide by the terms and conditions of our Acceptable Use Agreement.**

### 14.1 Please note:

- a) A Wi-Fi service is available at all libraries.
- b) The Library Service cannot guarantee availability or compatibility with all equipment and hardware used with the Wi-Fi service.
- c) The Wi-Fi network is secured and information transmitted is encrypted but there is a risk that it may be intercepted by others.
- d) Library staff are not trained to provide specific Wi-Fi technical assistance to customers. They cannot configure your equipment or wireless adapter.

### 14.2 Your responsibilities:

- a) You are responsible for the safety of the electronic equipment you use to access the Wi-Fi service.
- b) You must ensure that cables do not cause a safety hazard.
- c) You are responsible for the privacy or security of your activities when using the public Wi-Fi service. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead cannot be held responsible for the privacy or security of your activities.
- d) It is your responsibility to provide antivirus protection for your equipment. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead cannot accept responsibility for damage incurred to your equipment or hardware through your failure to protect it through appropriate software or by incomplete security settings.
- e) It is your responsibility to take great care when transmitting financial, private or confidential information such as credit card details over the Internet. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead cannot be held responsible for any losses resulting from sending confidential information via the Internet.
- f) You are responsible for the accuracy, validity or legality of any information you make available over the Internet.
- g) You are responsible for not infringing any of the copyright regulations that apply to Internet web pages. Many of the pages on the Internet are subject to copyright. Visit [www.cilip.org.uk/copying](http://www.cilip.org.uk/copying) for further information about copyright.
- h) Use of this service is entirely at your own risk.

### 14.3 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead responsibilities:

- a) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead aims to protect you from illegal or inappropriate material held on the Internet. Websites may be blocked using filtering software, but this software cannot be guaranteed to prevent access to such material.
- b) If you find a web site that has been inappropriately blocked you may request that the site be made available, although the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead reserves the right to block any site considered to be inappropriate for public access. If you find a web site which you think is unsuitable, please report this to a member of Library Service staff.
- c) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is not responsible for equipment or the security of data resulting from connection to Wi-Fi.
- d) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead will not accept liability for any loss

- or damage that may arise from use of this Wi-Fi service.
- e) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead cannot guarantee response times or the availability of any web site.
  - f) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is responsible for monitoring use of the Wi-Fi service, including web sites visited. Log files of browsing activity are retained for 1 year. As providers of an internet service we are responsible for responding to any official request from the police and for complying with current data protection legislation.
  - g) If you infringe these regulations relating to the use of the Wi-Fi access your right to use this service may be withdrawn.

## 15. Public Computer Acceptable Use Agreement

**By using this service, you are agreeing to these terms and conditions**

**You must read and accept the following terms and conditions before you can use this computer. Failure to comply will result in removal of computer access.**

### 15.1

#### I will:

1. Be fully responsible for all activities and communications that take place during my computer session.
2. Respect the privacy and sensibilities of other library users.
3. Save documents and information only to USB memory sticks or the D: Drive. Any USBs left in computers will be kept by staff for 1 month. After this the USB will be destroyed securely.
4. Use the computer only within the time that has been allocated to me.
5. Pay for any printing costs incurred.
6. Agree to my Internet use being recorded for my protection and that of other users. An investigation will take place if I am reasonably suspected of misusing any of these facilities; and, if misuse is proved, penalties will range from the loss of library facilities and services to criminal proceedings.
7. Accept that my session will end 15 minutes before closing time.

### 15.2

#### I will not:

1. Tamper with computer hardware or attempt to install or download software including viruses onto library computers.
2. Seek to gain unauthorised access to computer systems or information ("hacking").
3. Try to access pornographic material.
4. Try to access materials of religious hatred.
5. Try to access material inciting acts of violence.
6. View, download, copy or transmit any material, which is illegal or may reasonably be viewed as offensive
7. Cause noise, or display text or graphics that may be reasonably viewed as obscene or offensive.
8. Use the computer with the intention of profit making, including advertising, commercial email ("spamming"), and chain letters.
9. Use the computer for the purpose of libel, slander or harassment, or for sending material likely to cause offence or inconvenience.
10. Violate copyright or software licence agreement

### 15.3

- a) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead uses a virus checker on the public computers, however the council cannot accept any responsibility for ensuring that no viruses are present and cannot be held liable for any damage caused as a result of viruses.

- b) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead accepts no responsibility for the quality, accuracy or availability of information for any services accessed via the internet.
- c) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead assumes no liability for any loss, damage or injury, direct or indirect, suffered as a result of using its computer facilities.
- d) Where necessary the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead may share computer usage history with the police, probation service or security services when lawfully required to do so.
- e) Staff can discontinue any session if they consider the material being viewed contravenes these conditions and senior staff may prohibit further use at their discretion. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead reserves the right to pursue legal action concerning any breach of this Acceptable Use Agreement.

## 16. Terms and Conditions

### 16.1 Joining the Library

- a) By completing your e-mail details, we assume you are willing to be contacted by this method for delivery of notices regarding your account.
- b) Your library membership is issued subject to the Library Byelaws
- c) Membership means you are responsible for returning borrowed items and paying for any charges relating to your account or the account you are acting as guarantor for.
- d) The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is part of the SELMS consortium. Your borrower record will be held on a shared database but your details will only be available to staff in another authority if you choose to borrow or reserve items from that authority. All personal data is held strictly in accordance with the requirements of current Data Protection legislation and the Borough's [Data protection policy](#).

### 16.2 Borrowing items

- a) Books are free to borrow. There is a charge to borrow most audio-visual items. Most items are loaned for 3 weeks.
- b) There is a charge for returning items late and you may incur replacement costs if borrowed items are lost, stolen or damaged.

### 16.3 Renewing items

- a) Items can be renewed 24-hours a day via <https://rbwm.spydus.co.uk> (subject to downtime for maintenance) or via the Library App or at your local library during opening hours. In most cases, items can be renewed four times. Please be aware that audio visual items will incur a repeat loan charge. Items requested by other customers may be subject to renewal limits.

### 16.4 Using library computers, laptops, and USB devices

- a) Public PCs, Laptops, digital cameras, memory sticks and other USB equipment can be used in the library as long as conditions of use are adhered to.