
Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 19 December 2013

Subject: Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy 2013 - 2017

Report by: Customer Services Manager

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy for approval. The strategy covers the 4-year period from 2013 to 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council:
- a) approves the Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy 2013-2017 at appendix 1
 - b) agrees that progress is monitored annually thereafter by the Education, Sport & Leisure Committee.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. Libraries are at the heart of our communities, providing citizens of all ages with free and easy access to reading material, internet access and public computers, as well as information, local public services and learning sources. Libraries are however much more than simply a place for books, they are increasingly being developed as places for relaxation, fun, learning and a space in the community to connect with friends.
- 3.2. The context for information and library services has never been more complex, with fast moving changes in user demands and expectations, and a higher proportion of books and resources being created and accessed digitally. The library service must embrace these challenges and opportunities or else be seen as not fit for purpose in a modern technological age.
- 3.3. Traditional library book borrowing is declining on a UK and Scotland-wide basis. Customers are finding information by means other than books, essentially through search engines and other websites. Publishing is changing the way books are produced, read, borrowed and bought. Electronic books are growing rapidly in popularity.
- 3.4. This strategy outlines the issues, opportunities and means by which we will embrace the changing needs of users in 2013 and beyond.

Main Issues.

- 3.5. There are currently eight public libraries in Clackmannanshire. Opening hours vary, with a combination of full time and part time hours, based on historical arrangements. Library services are also delivered in a number of community facilities and in people's homes by our housebound service. In addition, there are excellent library facilities within each of our 3 community schools.
- 3.6. There has been a 25% reduction in the number of books issued in the last 2 years within public libraries.
- 3.7. Library usage varies significantly across Clackmannanshire. Alloa is by far the busiest office for book issues (53% of total issues), followed by Tillicoultry (12%), Alva (10%), Dollar (8%), Menstrie (6%), Sauchie (4%), Tullibody (4%) and Clackmannan (3%).
- 3.8. Current low usage of assets combined with sharply declining demand necessitates a fundamental rethink on the nature and uses of our libraries. The status quo is not a realistic option. Furthermore, there are also significant policy imperatives as described in the SOA 2013-23 that need to be addressed. These include adult literacies concerned with parenting, employment and employability, income, health and healthy living, culture and heritage and community learning and regeneration.
- 3.9. Of course, these structural shifts come at a time of acute financial pressure. It is essential therefore that we make more effective use of our resources. As such, the key thrust of this strategy is a shift away from traditional libraries to community learning resources, where individual and community learning can be more closely aligned with changing needs and preferences.
- 3.10. The 3 key strategy aims therefore are:
 - Improve adult literacies and learning in Clackmannanshire
 - Increase usage of community learning resources and boost economic and community regeneration and learning
 - Develop a core infrastructure that is sufficiently flexible to support different customer needs and changing demand
- 3.11. A number of improvements are included in the strategy that will improve our capacity to deliver better outcomes, including:
 - Re-launch of the refurbished Speirs Centre in May 2014, providing integrated, local public services and the launch of a new Local and Family History Centre
 - Migration to a new Library Management System (called Evergreen)
 - Introduction of ebooks
 - Launch of a new and improved Library website - Clackmannanshire Digital Library by end 2013
 - Introduction of smart technologies to improve the customer experience such as Wi-Fi, self issue kiosks, further digitisation of local archives, local

history, local newspaper and museum collection within ClacksPast, and the launch of a new Local and Family History Centre

- Improved learning opportunities and classes, and working with key partner agencies to facilitate better access to information and advice services
- An expanded number of cultural and learning events and activities delivered in partnerships with local individuals and community groups

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1. This Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy sets out a way ahead for delivering a modern library and adult learning service fit for the 21st century.
- 4.2. With significant pressures on public spending, the strategy supports the continued delivery of local libraries in some form within local communities, but within the context of a broader operating model encompassing person-centred information and support to improve literacies.
- 4.3. It actively promotes the introduction of new technologies and new methods of accessing library materials, including ebooks and online web services.
- 4.4. The strategy will be reviewed annually and, into the future, be shaped by the changing context and needs of local people.

5.0 Sustainability Implications

- 5.1. This strategy aims to ensure that the organisation remains viable and sustainable in the future.

6.0 Resource Implications

- 6.1. *Financial Details* - spend implications for 2013/14 are budgeted for by the service. Potential developments beyond 2013/14 will be included in the context of Making Clackmannanshire Better programme.
- 6.2. *Staffing* - no specific implications for the establishment though a broadening of skills may be required in due course.

7.0 Exempt Reports

- 7.1. Is this report exempt? No

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box ☒)

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are safer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Vulnerable people and families are supported	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

9.0 Equalities Impact

9.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes ☒ No ☐

10.0 Legality

10.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes ☒

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1: Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy 2013 - 2017

12.0 Background Papers

12.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

No

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Approved by

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Making Clackmannanshire Better



**Clackmannanshire
Council**

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Better Services

Better Opportunities

Better Communities

**Information, Libraries
and Learning Strategy
2013-2017**

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Foreword

Making Clackmannanshire Better is about providing better access to opportunities for life-long learning that will help people and communities realise their full potential in life.

People no longer go into libraries simply to find a book. Libraries in Clackmannanshire and elsewhere are having to re-invent themselves as places to go to relax, have fun, read a newspaper, access the internet, meet friends, improve literacy skills, participate in events, transact with public services, find out about community groups, volunteer - the list is endless.

Through implementing this Strategy, we are aiming to achieve:

1. Improved access to information, learning and library services delivered through modern, fit-for-purpose community resources.
2. Improvements in community and personal development.
3. Improved literacy and digital skills in our communities.
4. Increased usage of learning & cultural services by introducing new services, local events and activities and improved marketing.
5. Sustainable operating costs through better use of resources and assets.

This document provides a framework to encourage and support our communities to access local information and learning resources helping everyone realise their full potential.

Elaine McPherson
Chief Executive

December 2013



1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

This document defines Clackmannanshire Council's Information, Libraries and Learning Strategy. The strategy contributes to Clackmannanshire's Single Outcome Agreement and has been informed by reviewing current service delivery in Clackmannanshire, incorporates good practice from other local authorities in relation to learning & library services, builds on feedback from users and staff, and considers how changes in the way people access books and digital content will impact on the Council's library service in future.

1.1 Introduction

Clackmannanshire libraries are often at the heart of our communities, providing citizens of all ages with free and easy access to reading material, internet access and public computers, as well as information, local public services and learning sources. Libraries are however much more than simply a place for books, they are increasingly being developed as places for relaxation, fun, learning and a space in the community to connect with friends.

The context for library services has never been more complex, with fast moving change in user demands and expectations and a higher proportion of books and resources now being created and accessed digitally, rather than in print. The service must embrace these challenges and opportunities, or else be seen as not fit for purpose in a modern technological age.

Why bother? In an age of the Internet, cheap books from companies like Amazon and local charity shops, can't people get everything they want elsewhere? The answer is no. Libraries in Clackmannanshire shouldn't just be about books – they should be a focal point for personal and community learning and development - embracing the concept of local community services. Clackmannanshire Council is already relatively advanced in bringing some local public services together. This places us in a strong position to make best use of scarce resources but challenges us to consider the affordability of the model in the longer term, as budgets are increasingly stretched.

1.2 Context

Traditional library book borrowing is declining on a UK and a Scottish-wide basis. Customers are finding information they require by means other than books, essentially through search engines and other websites. Publishing is changing the way books are produced, read, borrowed and bought. Electronic books are growing rapidly in popularity. Amazon announced in August 2012 that they were selling more ebooks than hardbacks and paperbacks combined. The average Kindle owner buys up to four times more books than they did before owning the device. The proportion of sales taken



up by ebooks will continue to increase. There has also been a surge in self publishing, as opposed to distribution through major publishers.

This strategy therefore comes at a time of unprecedented change in information and reading habits at time when there is significant pressures on public sector funding.

We need to work within financial and economic realities, finding cheaper and smarter solutions, making better use of buildings and resources. New models need to be explored. The Information, Library and Learning Strategy forms a future where everyone's contribution – in money, in time, or in kind – is asked for, recognised and appreciated.

We need to consider the use of new operating models such as the use of Community Libraries and volunteers working alongside qualified library staff, typically to help run activities, if we are to deliver what local people are asking for. The book budget is being challenged to maintain a good selection of printed books across eight libraries, whilst trying to provide new content, particularly digital content such as ebooks. We need to ensure that every penny of our budget is spent on improving outcomes for the people of Clackmannanshire, with a particular focus on reducing inequalities.

We need to look fundamentally at what purpose our libraries serve. With demand for traditional print books declining, what outcomes are we looking to deliver from these limited resources? Persistent high levels of employment and education deprivation remain in some Clackmannanshire communities. Health inequalities are stark within our most deprived communities, with higher instances of teenage pregnancies, poor maternal health, smoking and alcohol dependency.

Looking to the future therefore the concept of a library must broaden beyond traditional booking lending and leisure to provide more rounded, person-centred learning environments supporting people and communities to achieve improved outcomes, with an emphasis on reducing inequalities.

Such a shift undoubtedly means that difficult choices lie ahead. This Strategy outlines the issues, opportunities and means by which the service will embrace the changing needs of users in 2013 and beyond, including the refurbishment of the Speirs Centre.

Covering the period from 2013 to 2017, it is intended to be a 'living' document and will be reviewed regularly to reflect local priorities and need.



2. CURRENT SERVICE OFFERING

2.1 Statutory Requirements

The Public Libraries (Scotland) Act 1955 requires local authorities to deliver an adequate library service to everyone who lives, works or studies in the local authority area. This is a broad definition that can be interpreted locally to meet local needs.

2.2 Current Offering

There are currently eight public libraries in Clackmannanshire:

- Alloa Town Centre (interim Speirs Centre)
- Alva Community Access Point
- Clackmannan Community Access Point
- Dollar Community Access Point (Dollar Civic Centre)
- Menstrie Community Access Point / Dumyat Community Centre
- Sauchie Community Access Point
- Tillicoultry Community Hub (Ben Cleuch Centre)
- Tullibody Library (Civic Centre)

Opening hours vary, with a combination of full time and part time hours, based on historical agreements:

Location	No. of opening hours (per week)	% of total opening hours
1. Alloa	54	19%
2. Alva	36.5	13%
3. Clackmannan	31.5	11%
4. Dollar	21.5	8%
5. Menstrie	42.5	15%
6. Sauchie	36.5	13%
7. Tillicoultry	33	12%
8. Tullibody	24.5	9%

Services are also delivered to people who are housebound in their own homes or in care homes, via our Library Housebound Service. This is supported by a small network of volunteers who make home visits, whose support is vital and gratefully acknowledged by the council and users.



Library services are also available in a number of community facilities such as the Bowmar Centre, Alloa Community House, Coalsnaughton Community Cafe, Action for Children "The Big Blue House", Tullibody Healthy Living Initiative and Hawkhill Community Centre, providing books as and when required. Consideration of further extending the 'Community Library' model, in consultation with service users, therefore could improve access to the library service.

The public library service is supported by a small headquarters function, responsible for the professional guidance, procurement, cataloguing and distribution of library stock around all local libraries. Headquarters staff also provide support to the school library service, undertake educational visits, arrange a programme of events and activities such as author visits, organise public and staff reading development groups.

Separate to our public library provision, there are school library services, with excellent modern facilities in the 3 community academies, staffed by qualified librarians, and managed locally by Head Teachers. All are in relatively close proximity to existing public libraries.

2.3 Libraries Usage

The overall usage of local libraries can be assessed by analysing:

- Number of book issues
- Usage of public computers
- Overall number of people visiting each office

2.3.1 Book Issues

Figure 1 shows the number of books issued over the last 3 years. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of issues by location.

In terms of book issues in 2012/13, Alloa is by far the busiest office (53% of total book issues), followed by Tillicoultry (12%), Alva (10%), Dollar (8%), Menstrie (6%), Sauchie (4%), Tullibody (4%) and Clackmannan (3%). This demonstrates a significant variation in book issues across the county.

Overall there has been a **25% reduction** in the number of books issued by Clackmannanshire libraries in the last 2 years. This trend is not dissimilar to reductions experienced in many other local authorities.



Figure 1 - Book Issues in last 3 years

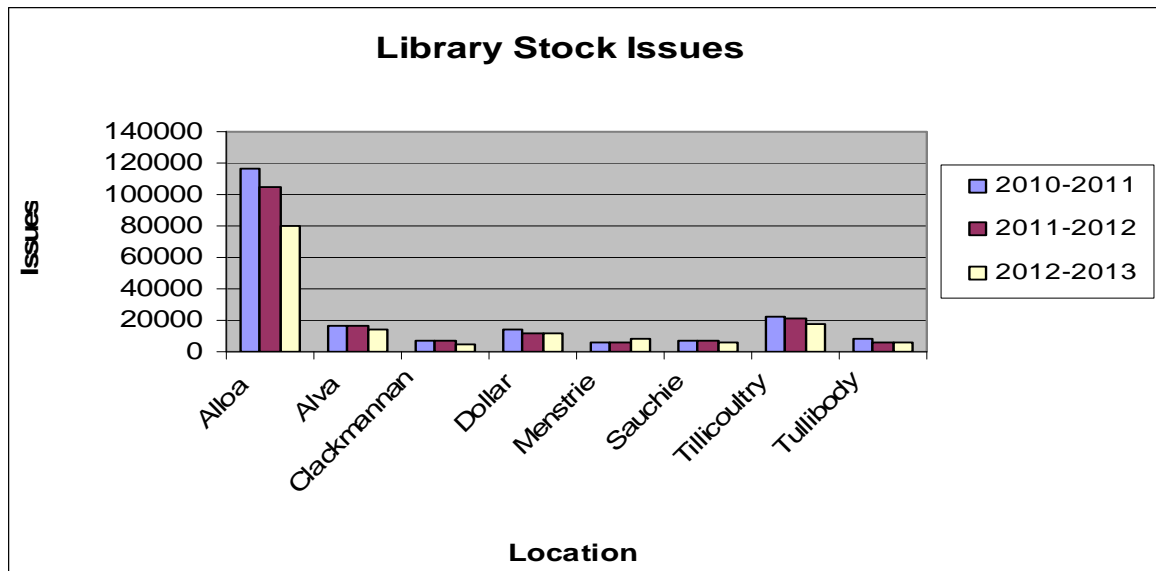
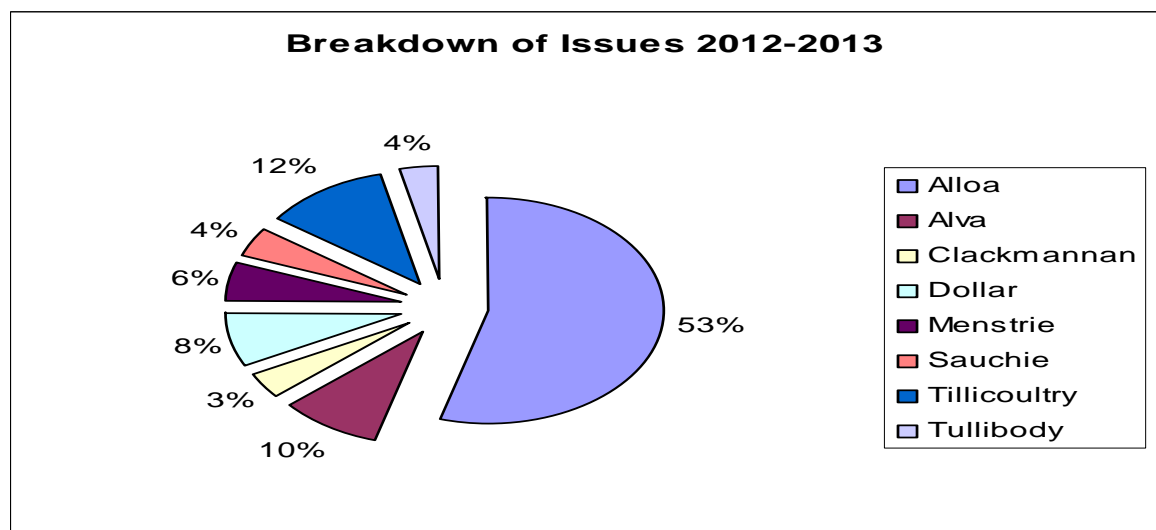


Figure 2 - Breakdown of Book Issues by location



2.3.2 Usage of Public Computers

Figures 3 and 4 shows the usage of public computers in local libraries. Alloa is by far the busiest office for computer users (56%), followed by Sauchie (10%), Menstrie (10%) and Alva (8%). Dollar (2%) has the lowest use of public computers.

Figure 3 - Usage of public computers in last 3 years

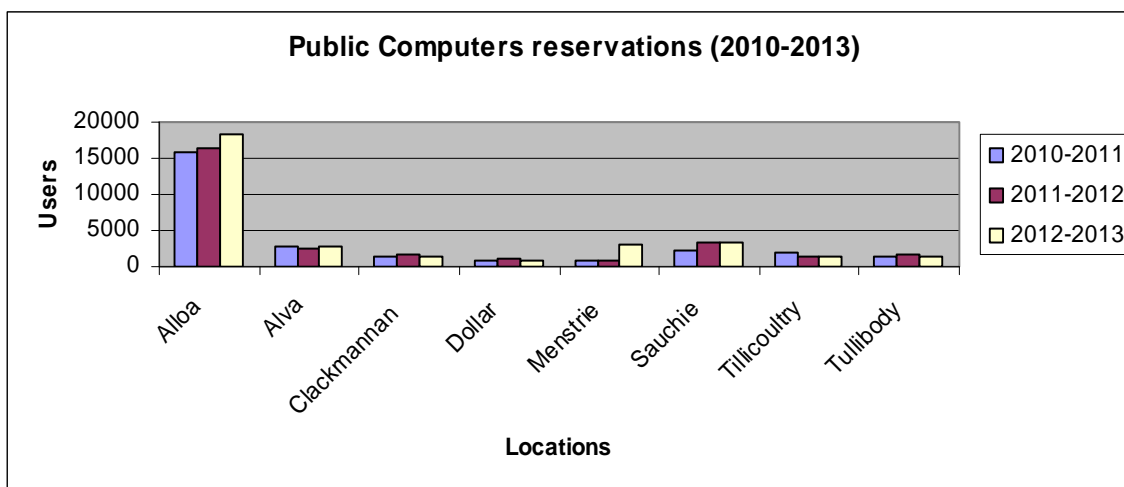
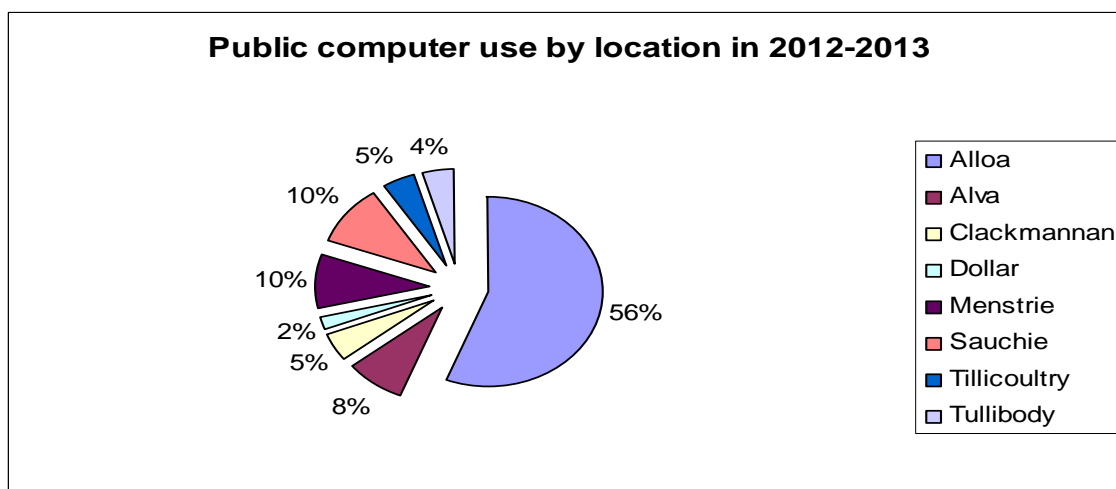


Figure 4 - Computer usage by location in 2012/13



2.3.3 Number of people visiting each office

Figure 5 shows the number of people visiting each office, recorded by an automatic counter at the front door. Some of the local offices are co-located with leisure facilities (Menstrie, Dollar and Tillicoultry) and provide other council services such as payments and council enquiries, therefore these figures are not a true reflection on the number of library customers alone.

It does demonstrate however that there is an ongoing reduction in footfall in almost all local offices.

Figure 5 - Customer footfall in last 3 years

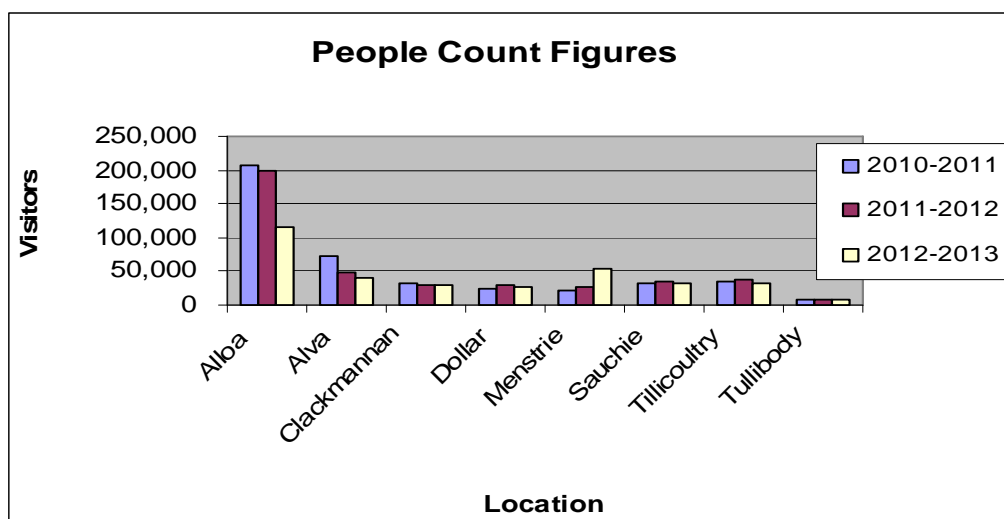
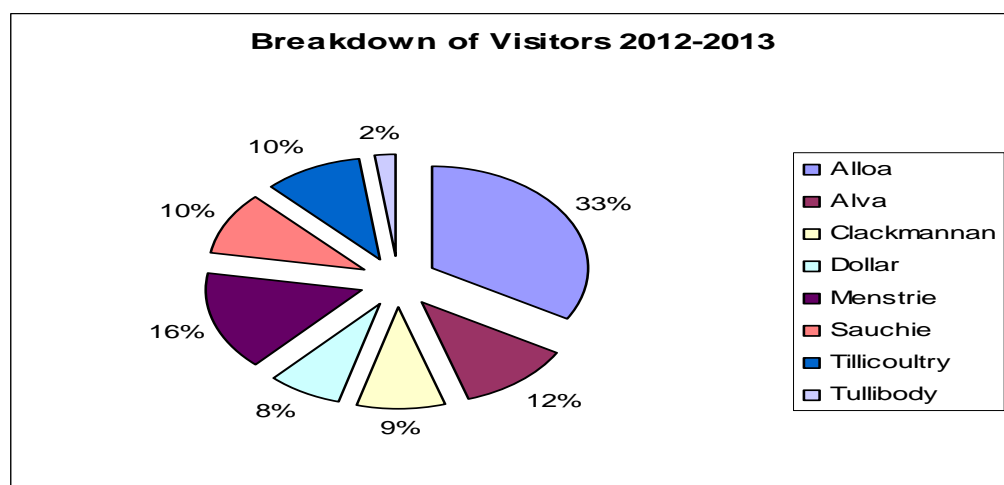


Figure 6 - Breakdown of footfall in 2012/13



At £1.41 per visit, Clackmannanshire Council has the lowest cost per visit than any other local authority in Scotland.



2.4 What Our Customers Say

User consultation used to inform this Strategy, provided a number of key messages, summarised as follows:

- Current users value the library service
- Main use of library is currently for books or public internet computers
- Customer satisfaction levels are high
- Libraries are increasingly seen as places to relax, read a newspaper or magazine, have a coffee, a meeting space, access learning, participate in reading groups or other events
- Customers like the concept of all council services being under one roof i.e. a 'one stop shop' including making payments, bookings and other council enquiries
- Until recently, some of the libraries were seen as outdated and in need of refurbishment, particularly the old Alloa Library in Drysdale Street and the old Tillicoultry Library
- Library stock needs improved in certain areas, for example newer adult stock and talking books. Book stock needs to be changed more frequently
- A number of customers want to see new technologies introduced, particularly downloadable ebooks
- Other new technologies should also be considered such as Wi-Fi access and plasma screens for providing information. Others would like to see electronic games such as Wii/Xbox/PS3 to encourage more young people to use libraries
- Library events and activities are popular, particularly children's storytelling, Rhyme Time and author visits
- Some people are keen on volunteering, for example to help out with storytelling or wider learning



"The refurbished library in Menstrie is a very good facility, staffed by very helpful staff and a great facility for the whole community."

"The Library has always been a source of pleasure to me because I like to read."

"I really like what you've done with the interim Speirs facility.... I can't wait to see this building once it's fully refurbished."

User Feedback from Customer Survey 2012/13

3 DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

There are currently many factors affecting the future provision of library and information services in Clackmannanshire including:

- Public sector reform and budget pressures
- Rapid decrease in book lending and increasingly rapid take-up in ebooks
- Competition from online bookshops such as Amazon
- Scottish Library and Information Council, the advisory body responsible for providing leadership and support to the Scottish libraries suggests that Clackmannanshire has too many public libraries and should invest in fewer, high quality facilities
- Need to refocus libraries role in supporting improving literacies in key priority outcomes, including improving health, parenting, income and employment, and enhancing employability
- Opportunities to contribute to economic regeneration and improve community cohesion and pride through better information and marketing of Clackmannanshire's rich cultural heritage
- Higher citizen expectations in terms of ease of access, at more convenient times or 24x7
- Greater demand for new digital content and online resources
- Need to improve the look and feel of some older library buildings, and refocus role in bringing communities and people together
- Need to invest in new and emerging technologies and provide more modern stock to remain relevant to customers - particularly younger people/teenagers
- Opportunities for more partnership working, sharing services and buildings, and making better use of existing modern facilities such as those in schools
- Opportunities presented by refurbishment of Speirs Centre in Alloa Town Centre





4 OUR MISSION

4.1 Mission

"Deliver modern and accessible information, library and learning opportunities that help people and communities realise their full potential in life, and that promotes the rich cultural heritage of Clackmannanshire."

4.2 Principles

We want community learning resources to have a central, creative and dynamic role at the heart of Clackmannanshire's communities. We want to provide community spaces where people can find information, support learning and personal development, foster reading habits, explore the cultural heritage of the area and get involved in events and activities - all in a safe, welcoming and modern environment.

Libraries are a valued and cherished public space where people can stay and relax in what has been described as The Living Room of the Community. All our community learning resources should be welcoming, with flexible spaces available for a range of uses. Individuals and communities will be encouraged to make maximum use of these learning environments. Within the bounds of affordability we want to provide a range of stimulating and exciting events informed by user need and demand. We will strive for quality of provision whilst trying to balance the many and varied needs of our customers.

Accordingly, our decision-making and actions in relation to the Strategy is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Prevention & Early Intervention:** service design must reflect a decisive shift towards prevention & early intervention setting behaviours early in life. Forming habits early is best, but it's never too late to start learning, therefore, we should work with communities and community groups to raise awareness and tailor responses based on need, both in terms of place, and life stage
- **Community Participation & Problem Solving:** should lie at the heart of service design to ensure need is met
- **Partnership Working:** the totality of all assets should be brought to bear through Partnership Working & Integrated Service Delivery, e.g. those of council, partners, third sector and communities



- **Customer Focus** - recognition that one size doesn't fit all, and that preferences, needs and trends change over time and as people transition through various life stages, therefore flexibility and adaptability will be key
- **Sustainability & Affordability** - solutions must be affordable, stand the test of time and should not result in unsustainable future liabilities, neither for partners nor communities.



5 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To enable us to implement our Vision, we have identified the following overarching aims.

Aims:

- 1 Improve adult literacies and learning in Clackmannanshire;
- 2 Increase usage of community libraries and community learning resources and boost economic and community regeneration and learning;
- 3 Develop a core infrastructure that is sufficiently flexible to support different customer needs and changing demand.

The next pages explain these aims and set out specific objectives we intend to pursue under each of the aims. A summary of improvement actions is also provided at Appendix 2.



5.1 Aim 1: Improve Adult Literacies & Learning in Clackmannanshire

Libraries, Literacy and Learning

Improving literacy and learning will be an important element of a new operating model. It has never been more important with high unemployment, current educational attainment levels, and employers requiring people to obtain new skills.

At present libraries support people's learning through free access to books and resources, the internet and online information, free computing classes and low cost English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. We also provide adult literacy support on a one to one and group basis. The small team of tutors are ably supported by volunteers who help address people's literacy, numeracy, language and IT skills.

Staff provide basic level courses to anyone who needs the service, with learners given advice on routes to further progression when they finish the basic courses. These routes to progression can take them into further education, employment or volunteering.

Libraries foster people's reading habits from infancy and throughout people's lives. We will continue to promote our Reading Groups to encourage reading for pleasure and to support lifelong learning.

However, libraries in Clackmannanshire will become much more than simply a place for accessing reading materials. We will continue to develop libraries as community learning resources, in partnership with other agencies providing broader information and advice services.



Within the SOA 2013-23 a number of adult and community learning priorities are identified. These include:

- money, debt and income management;
- employment and employability;
- healthy living and healthy lifestyles, including, information on mental health issues
- parenting; and
- community development, regeneration and resilience.



Improvement Actions:

- Within the context of community planning, develop an adult learning partnership with all providers in Clackmannanshire, including the third sector, to deliver a more integrated information, advice and learning programme and experience centred around strategic priorities and need.
- Forge deeper partnerships with schools and Forth Valley College to provide further routes to progression for learners.
- Tailor computer classes to target priority areas.
- Increase participation in reading groups throughout Clackmannanshire, and support them with books and advice on how to run a group successfully.
- Develop the volunteer network which supports the work carried out by the Adult Literacy, ICT and ESOL tutors. Seek out more volunteers through events and publicity and provide them with training in their area of support.



5.2 Aim 2: Increase usage of community learning resources and boost economic and community regeneration and learning

Resources and Reading Stock

There are currently 187,000 items of stock in our libraries which is nearly four books for every person living in Clackmannanshire. People read for information, education and recreation and the library service aims to connect our customers with books, ebooks and other resources which are appropriate to their needs.

We will strive to improve the quality of provision whilst trying to balance the many and varied needs of our customers. Library stock will reflect the broad needs of the community, ensuring a balance of online and printed materials. We will develop a book buying strategy that ensures that reading stock at each library is varied, wide-ranging, modern and attractive.

We will use customer feedback to better inform our stock selection. We will set up customer focus groups and use customer feedback to target resources in areas such as children's books, adult stock and talking books, or in a particular library where there is a perceived need.



We currently offer two main online reference works, Newsstand and Britannica Online, but will increase the number and range of electronic reference materials to reflect how our customers are accessing information.

Digital content will be extended, particularly through the digitisation of our local archives, local history, local newspaper and museum collection, providing digital access to the story of Clackmannanshire. Physical collections will be preserved and maintained, with further improvements made in the way local collections are stored and presented.

Improvement Action:

- Using new technology, systematically use customer feedback from present and potential users to inform our book buying and learning resource policy.
- Increase the number and range of digital reference material available to meet modern preferences.

- Sustainably expand the use of electronic processing and cataloguing from booksellers, improving efficiency and releasing staff for more customer contact.

Events & Activities

We currently undertake a broad programme of events and activities for all ages such as weekly Book Bug sessions for babies and toddlers, Rhyme Time, storytelling and competitions, Junior events during the school holidays and Author visits.

We want to attract new users to our learning resources and will develop and expand the range of events and activities on offer at local libraries. We will seek new volunteers to help run activities in local libraries.



The service will develop closer links with other council services and organisations aimed at supporting children, families and hard-to-reach groups to ensure that the information, library and learning service supports and complements the work they do.

We will develop a more integrated approach to programmes run in The Ben Cleuch Centre in Tillicoultry and other community learning resources, maximising the links with the mother and toddler groups using that facility, and encouraging children and their families to become more active library users. We will actively encourage individuals and local groups to run events in the refurbished Speirs Centre.

A marketing plan will be developed, in partnership with other council services to make people aware of what's on offer at their local library/community hub.

Customer facing staff and user groups play a key role in raising awareness with the public about what's on offer. We will develop processes to ensure that customers and staff have an active role in the ongoing development of the library and one stop shop service.

Improvement Actions:

- Develop an annual integrated programme of regular events, learning opportunities and activities offered in community learning hubs.
- Promote and increase participation in community activities within community learning resources.



- Develop a marketing plan to make people aware of what's on offer at local community learning resources.

Local Libraries to Community Learning Resources

A new model of local public service provision needs to develop in Clackmannanshire, with local public services increasingly coming together in one location. The traditional model of stand-alone libraries was replaced in the mid/late 90s by small 'one stop shops' known as Community Access Points. This next phase sees the CAP model further developed to include wider integrated local public services and learning resources.

This approach sees the development of libraries as part of a broader package of services under one roof, providing a seamless service to customers. This makes better use of public buildings and resources, helping reduce operating costs.

These resources will be a gateway for residents and visitors seeking information and advice, access to public services, leisure and learning, culture, employability and jobs, relaxation and fun. They will be used by all age groups and provide opportunities for other public, private and voluntary sector agencies to co-locate with council services to share buildings and services.

The Ben Cleuch Centre was launched in late November 2012, bringing together a modern library, payments and enquiries facility, community spaces for hire, a dedicated space for young people and community space for local events and activities.

This is a start of a process towards integrated community hubs. Moving forwards, further links will be established to identify new opportunities to provide library services alongside other council services and partner agencies.

Improvement Actions

- Develop further opportunities to extend the range of learning and information services provided from the Ben Cleuch Centre, Tillicoultry, and all community learning resources, in partnership with other local service providers.
- Increase usage of the Ben Cleuch Centre and other community learning resources by 10% in 2014/15, 5% in 2015/16 and a further 5% in 2016/17.
- Within the context of the Making Clackmannanshire Better programme create opportunities to extend the range of learning and information services provided within all communities



- Review opportunities to further extend the outreach service into communities, with an emphasis on traditional 'hard to reach' groups.



New Speirs Centre, Alloa

The fully refurbished Speirs Centre will open in 2014 providing a modern, state-of-the-art community learning resource in one of Alloa's historic landmarks.

We will equip the Speirs Centre with a range of modern technological features including Wi-Fi access to enable people to connect to the internet from their own mobile devices and tablets, self-service machines for issue/return of books (budget allowing), and access to digital resources and online reference materials.



In May 2013, Council agreed the uses of the Speirs Centre will evolve over time, however in the first instance the Centre is expected to deliver the following core services:

- a modern library facility



- Council / local public service 'one-stop-shop' processing a range of council enquiries, payments, bookings etc
- gateway to information regarding the heritage of Clackmannanshire
- displays and exhibits
- local and family history service
- registration of births, deaths and marriages
- support areas for health and wellbeing
- learning facilities with access to public computers and wifi

Improvement Actions:

- Re-launch the refurbished Speirs Centre by May 2014, and create a community and events facility which will be the destination of choice for people coming to Alloa and Clackmannanshire wider.
- Develop a programme of regular events and activities to be held in the refurbished Speirs Centre, encouraging greater usage by the local community.
- Increase usage of the Speirs Centre learning resource by 10% in 2014/15, 5% in 2015/16 and a further 5% in 2016/17.



5.3 Aim 3 - Develop a core infrastructure that is sufficiently flexible to support different customer needs and changing demand

Library Management System

A new open source library management system called Evergreen has been procured and introduced in May 2013. Evergreen was initially developed by 270 public libraries in the US state of Georgia, using open source software which means the software is free to use, with no annual licence fees. It has now been updated for use in Scottish local government by a consortium of councils.

Evergreen will give users access to a much wider range of material and functionality, and enhance the overall customer experience. It will provide an improved online service offering, allowing, in time, users to join the library, check the catalogue, request and renew books at the click of a mouse.

The introduction of Evergreen allows us to improve internal processes through greater automation. It also provides the opportunity to standardise approaches with Stirling Council, who introduced the Evergreen system earlier in 2012. Using the same library system provides mutual benefit to both organisations making it easier to carry out inter-library loans, staff training and development. The opportunity will also be taken to standardise library policies between both organisations, including fine structures, number of books that can be issued at any time and book borrowing times.

Improvement Action:

- Complete the migration to the Evergreen library management system by December 2013 and fully roll-out functionality by the end of 2014.



Electronic Books (e-books)

An ebook is an electronic version of a traditional printed book that can be read by using a personal computer or an electronic reader such as an Amazon Kindle, iPad, Google Nexus or Sony Reader.

There was a 134% increase in the value of ebook sales in the UK in 2012, with larger increases predicted by end 2013. The growth in ebook consumption is being driven by older readers, particularly those aged 45-54. Just over a quarter of this age group bought an ebook in the six months to March 2012.¹

An increasing number of public libraries have introduced (or plan to introduce) ebooks. In order to meet growing demand, Clackmannanshire library service will introduce ebooks for our readers in 2013/14.

Ebooks are acquired by entering into a licence agreement, normally with an 'aggregator' who sell ebooks directly to libraries and host the purchased ebooks on their website, accessed via council websites. Customers then log on to the website and download the ebook onto their device. The file automatically disappears from the e-reader at the end of the loan period.



There are a number of technical/non-technical issues still to be ironed out. For example, there are different ebook standards that are often not compatible; Kindle ebooks are not currently available to borrow from UK libraries due to licensing issues; different book publishers partner with different aggregators therefore public libraries can't offer all

commercially available ebooks from a single website. Additionally, users struggle with the concept of ebooks not being in stock and subsequently having to wait for popular ebooks. Key issues are likely to be resolved before we invest heavily in ebooks. We will therefore take a prudent approach initially, with the cost met by shifting procurement from print to ebooks.

Improvement Action:

- Procure and introduce an ebooks solution for Clackmannanshire readers by end 2013.

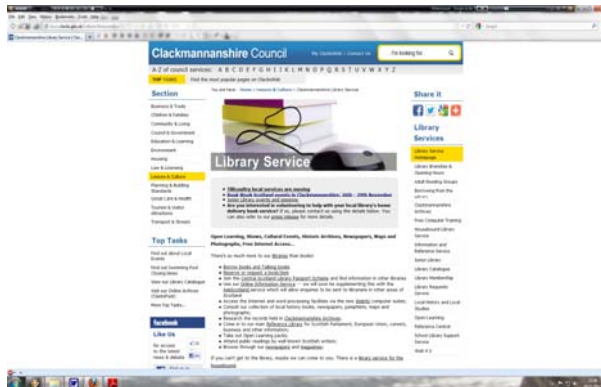
¹ Bowker, May 2012. *Understanding the Digital Consumer*



Online Services

We aim to encourage more people to access our services online and communicate with us electronically. The cheapest way for us to serve the customer is for the customer to serve themselves. Whilst this brings welcome efficiencies for the council, it is also increasingly becoming customers' preferred method of accessing services.

A new improved website - Clackmannanshire Digital Library - will be developed and launched by end 2013, and thereafter developed, providing access to new learning services and resources.



Users will be able to check their library account, renew and reserve books online without having to leave their home. E-books will be available for immediate download. The digital library will provide access to online catalogues and digital resources.

Users are increasingly using mobile devices and smart phones to access library services, therefore this will become a key access channel in future. A 'My Clacks Library' app will be developed for mobile users, allowing more people to interact and download library information and resources on the move.



Greater use will be made of the Council's Facebook and Twitter social networking sites to raise awareness of what's happening in your local library service.

Improvement Actions:

- Launch a new and improved, interactive website - Clackmannanshire Digital Library by end December 2013, providing 24/7 access to library services and resources.
- Develop and launch a 'My Clacks Library' app for smart phone and mobile users in 2014.

- Actively market Clackmannanshire community learning resources on social networking websites to increase usage and appeal to wider audiences.

Technology & Enhancing the Learning Experience

The rapid increase in new technologies, particularly mobile devices, provides challenges and opportunities to deliver library services in more modern and smarter ways.

Customers expect a high quality customer experience across multiple platforms and access channels - whether via a local library, online, on their smart phone or social media sites.

This Strategy includes a number of technology developments over the next 3 years:



- Wi-Fi access will be introduced in community learning resources.

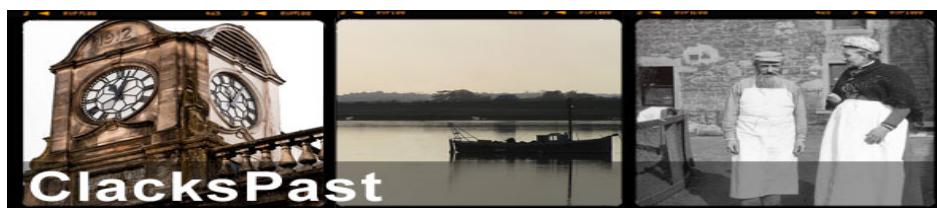
- Self service machines will be piloted for use in the refurbished Speirs Centre, making borrowing items much easier and faster, giving staff more time to support customer learning needs.



- Access to online digital resources and reference materials will be extended and made available in community learning resources and online.
- Digitisation Strategy - digitisation of local archives, local history, local newspaper and museum collection will improve access to the cultural heritage of the area.
- ClacksPast will be enriched with digital content.
- Launch of new Local and Family History Centre in the Speirs Centre.

Improvement Actions:

- Introduce Wi-Fi access in all Clackmannanshire community learning resources
- Implement Digitisation Strategy covering local archives, local history, local newspaper and museum collection, whilst preserving the original items
- Extend digital content in ClacksPast
- Develop a Local and Family History Centre in the refurbished Speirs Centre
- Upgrade/replace public computers in all community learning resources over the 3-year period of this Strategy



Our Assets

As is mentioned above, customer usage and demand varies widely across the council area. Clackmannanshire has eight public libraries and a number of outreach library services, and libraries within the school estate. Many libraries are within a mile or so of each other.

Feedback from the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC), the advisory body responsible for providing leadership focus and support to the Scottish library and information sector, suggested that Clackmannanshire has too many public libraries and should invest limited and reducing resources on fewer, high quality libraries. Work has already begun on improving community learning resources with the opening of Ben Cleuch Centre in late 2012, and the Speirs Centre, scheduled for May 2014. However, Clackmannanshire simply has too many facilities to ensure they can all operate at the high quality standard all learners need and expect.

Furthermore, the public and school library services are currently managed separately, with school libraries being managed locally by the Head Teacher. There is a clear potential to forge stronger links between the public and school library services through creating an integrated and seamless service,



providing better pathways for learning as part of the Curriculum for Excellence.

Not only could such an approach better facilitate efforts focused on pre-school and primary school children to foster the reading habit at an early age, but through the Making Clackmannanshire Better programme, a consolidation of all learning facilities presents potential significant and sustainable opportunities to improve our estate.

Improvement Action:

- In 2014/15, undertake a review of learning facilities within the context of the Making Clackmannanshire Better programme, as part of the developing Capital Asset Management Strategy and budget process.

Our People

The library service as we know it, is rapidly changing and staff need to be re-trained in new skills to deliver new learning and information and advice services in a digital world.

Moving forwards, library staff need to be technologically savvy and more attuned to the digital need of community learning resource users.

Staff need to be skilled in delivering modern learning services through new mobile devices and new online services. Staff will be trained in all 'one stop shop' services including payments, bookings and processing requests for other council services, and in providing information, and where appropriate, signposting to advice and support services.

There will of course be a continuing focus on Customer Service Excellence, with recruitment and selection, and learning and development geared towards making this happen.



Improvement Actions:

- Ensure all staff are suitably skilled to handle enquiries related to digital and non-digital media, and can answer customer enquiries received from all access channels and multi-media sources.
- Ensure staff remain up-to-date with digital and social networking developments to ensure effective communication with young people.



Potential Income Streams

Financial pressures are presenting challenges across the board. Within this context there are a number of potential income streams that could be considered to allow funds to be re-invested in learning and information services. Consultation with service users would need to be undertaken but consideration will be given to the following options:

- Paying an annual subscription to become a 'Friend of Clackmannanshire Libraries', either as an individual, family or local business
- Sponsoring a service (eg competitions, events, author visits)
- Book donations
- Bequests / leaving a legacy to the local library
- Genealogy service
- Access to digital archives



Further consideration will be given to income generation as part of an ongoing budget challenge process. Meanwhile, we will continue to seek out opportunities for accessing sustainable external funding sources to further improve learning facilities and services.



6 TAKING FORWARD THE STRATEGY

This Strategy sets out a clear way ahead for delivering modern information, library and learning services. With significant pressures on public spending, the Strategy supports the continued delivery of local library services in local communities, but challenges us to consider new operating models, delivered through more integrated local community hubs that make better use of public and community assets.

An Action Plan is provided at Appendix 2. Implementation will be led by the Customer Services Manager, supported by colleagues across all council services to help ensure integrated service delivery and through-life support.

The Strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.





Appendix 1 - Strategic Background

Through its Corporate Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), the Council is committed to improving the long-term outcomes for our communities in Clackmannanshire. Both plans recognise that a step change is required in order to break the cycle of deprivation that creates inequalities in Clackmannanshire, and to manage the demand for sustainable services essential for the most vulnerable individuals in our communities.

We will realise our Vision, by enabling:

- Better services
- Better opportunities
- Better communities

The Council has a number of key corporate strategies in place to guide how we will achieve these aims, objectives and priorities. These strategies complement one another and promote a strategic, organisation-wide approach for delivering positive outcomes for our customers and our communities. This Information, Libraries & Learning Strategy is therefore closely aligned with the Council's other corporate strategies, and is integral to the Council's significant and ambitious programme of transformation, '*Making Clackmannanshire Better*'.



Appendix 2 - Information, Libraries & Learning Strategy 2013 - 2017

Improvement Actions	Timescale
<p>Libraries, Literacy and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the context of community planning, develop an adult learning partnership with all providers in Clackmannanshire, including the third sector, to deliver a more integrated information, advice and learning programme and experience centred around strategic priorities and need. • Forge deeper partnerships with schools and Forth Valley College to provide further routes to progression for learners • Tailor computer classes to target priority areas • Increase participation in reading groups throughout Clackmannanshire, and support them with books and advice on how to run a group successfully. • Develop the volunteer network which supports the work carried out by the Adult Literacy, ICT and ESOL tutors. Seek out more volunteers through events and publicity and provide them with training in their area of support. 	<p>March 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014 - review annually</p> <p>December 2015</p>
<p>Resources and Reading Stock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using new technology, systematically use customer feedback from present and potential users to inform our book buying and learning resource policy. • Increase the number and range of digital reference material available to meet modern preferences. • Sustainably expand the use of electronic processing and cataloguing from booksellers, 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2014</p>



Improvement Actions	Timescale
improving efficiency and releasing staff for more customer contact.	
Events & Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an annual integrated programme of regular cultural events, learning opportunities and activities offered in community hubs. Promote and increase participation in community activities within community learning resources. Develop a marketing plan to make people aware of what's on offer at local learning centres. 	<p>August 2014, annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2014, annually</p>
Local Libraries to Community Hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop further opportunities to extend the range of learning and information services provided from the Ben Cleuch Centre, Tillicoultry, and other facilities, in partnership with other local service providers. Increase usage of the Ben Cleuch Centre by 10% in 2014/15, 5% in 2015/16 and a further 5% in 2016/17. Within the context of the Making Clackmannanshire Better programme create opportunities to extend the range of learning and information services provided within all communities. Review opportunities to further extend the library outreach service into communities, with an emphasis on trying to reach the traditional 'hard to reach' groups. 	<p>December 2015</p> <p>March 2015, March 2016, March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>December 2015</p>
New Speirs Centre, Alloa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-launch the refurbished Speirs Centre by May 2014, and create a community facility which will be the destination of choice for people coming to Alloa. Develop a programme of regular cultural, heritage and learning events and activities to be held in the refurbished Speirs Centre, encouraging greater usage by the local community. Increase usage of the Speirs Centre library and learning resource by 10% in 2014/15, 5% in 	<p>May 2014</p> <p>Annual programme</p> <p>March 2015, March 2016,</p>

Improvement Actions	Timescale
2015/16 and a further 5% in 2016/17.	March 2017
Library Management System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the migration to the Evergreen library management system by December 2013 and roll out full functionality by the end of 2014. 	December 2014
Electronic Books (e-books) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure and introduce an e-books solution for Clackmannanshire readers by end 2013. 	December 2013
Online Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch a new and improved, interactive website - Clackmannanshire Digital Library by end December 2013, providing 24/7 access to library services and resources. Develop and launch a 'My Clacks Library' app for smart phone and mobile users. Actively market Clackmannanshire community learning resources on social networking websites to increase usage and appeal to wider audiences. 	December 2013 May 2014 Ongoing
Technology & Enhancing the Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Wi-Fi access in all Clackmannanshire community learning resources Implement Digitisation Strategy covering local archives, local history, local newspaper and museum collection, whilst preserving the original items Extend digital content in ClacksPast Develop a Local and Family History Centre in the refurbished Speirs Centre Upgrade/replace public computers in all community learning resources over the 3-year period of this Strategy 	May 2014 March 2017 March 2017 May 2014 March 2016
Our Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2014/15, undertake a review of learning facilities within the context of the Making 	March 2015



Improvement Actions	Timescale
Clackmannanshire Better programme, and as part of the developing Capital Asset Management Strategy and budget process.	
Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all library staff are suitably skilled to handle enquiries related to digital and non-digital media, and can answer customer enquiries received from all access channels and multi-media sources.• Ensure staff remain up-to-date with digital and social networking developments to ensure effective communication with young people.	March 2014 Ongoing