

Libraries, Registration and Archives



End of Year Report (April 2018 to March 2019)

Report author:

Carol Westwood (Customer Insight and Engagement Manager)

Contents Update

	Page
Introduction	3
Executive Summary	4
Service Plan	5
Accreditation and Awards	6—7
Library Extra	8
Ceremonies in special circumstances	9
Digital Dens	10
Summer Reading Challenge	11-13
Archives	14
Libraries as a safe place for study	15
Volunteering	16
Project Updates—Tonbridge	17
Project Updates-Faversham	18
Project Updates-Bockhanger	19

	Page
Project Updates-Wellington House	20
Playground Project	21
WWI Commemorations	22-23
Strategy Consultation	24
You Asked We Did	25-26
KPI Summary	27

Introduction

Following the extensive public consultation which received over 5,500 responses, the LRA Strategy was approved by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services following consultation at the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee on 7 March. Following its approval, we have been working with staff to develop proposals for the new library opening hours. We launched a 3 week public engagement on 7 May when customers were able to express their preference on the options developed.

Following the consultation, work has been completed to update the strategy document, together with starting the work on the new branding and marketing, new mobile library vehicle specification, and a refresh of the public PCs to Windows 10.

The major projects at Tunbridge Wells and Southborough continue to progress. Work now continues on the preparations for the move into the temporary premises in Tunbridge Wells. Southborough hub continues to develop, planning permission has been granted and there are now layout plans for the new look library that will be in a key prime position in the front of the hub. The other projects being planned in 2018/19 included Herne Bay library, Dover Discovery Centre and the future move of the county register office from Archbishops Palace to Oakwood House.

There have been major refurbishments of Tonbridge library, Faversham library and Wellington House register office, Bockhanger library moved into the local Children's Centre and Herne Bay library closed for 3 weeks for urgent repairs.

This year saw the start of the new Library Extra pilot in 3 libraries and usage continues to grow with 444 customers having registered for the enhanced ticket that enables them to access these libraries out of hours. There have been 1,843 swiped Library Extra sessions since September 2019.

Digital Dens have developed across the County; they are now taking place in 9 locations. We have also developed specific sessions for those users with autism as this service offer continues to evolve.



Executive Summary

Nationally, evidence shows that the usage of libraries has been in decline for many years. The 2017/18 CIPFA figures show that nationally issues and visits dropped by 6% and 5% respectively on the previous year. The 2017/18 Taking Part survey results show that 32.7% of adults, who had taken part in the survey, had used a public library service in the 12 months prior to interview compared to 48.2% in 2005/6 (34.0%, 2016/17). The survey also shows that 3.2% of adults had visited an archive or record office in the last 12 months compared to 5.9% in 2005/06 (3.3%, 2016/17). The same survey shows that more adults visit archive or record office websites (6.7%) than actually visited an archive or record office and that 13.5% of adults had visited a library website and 17.7% had used library services online. As illustrated by the figures below there are more customers using our services online.

Figures below relate to 2018/19 and are compared to the previous year unless stated otherwise. (Figures in brackets relate to quarter 4)

Visits and issues - compared to last year visits are down **-6.4%** (Q4 1,113,675 **-5.2%**) and issues are up **+1.4%** (Q4 **+6.9%** 1,150,504) with e-issues showing an increase of **+108%** (Q4 **+85%** 190,693).

Online contacts - as is being found nationally these contacts are growing with an increase of **+36%** this year. Social media shows the greatest increase with a **+43%** increase and web hits are also **+31%**. We have encouraged our district libraries to own and update their local social media pages which is a key factor in their growth.

Wi-Fi usage – is still growing although it is slowing down with a **+7%** increase this year averaging over 10,000 sessions per month. Through the year we put on over 23,000 events and activities which were attended by over 240,000 participants, an increase of **+11%** on the previous year.

Visits to **the archive search room** are up **+24%** with a marked increase following the change in hours. During the year the service answered 3,649 remote enquires, an increase of **+8%**

In terms of **active borrowers** there was a **-5% reduction at the year end** with 148,448 borrowers. However, we have seen an increase of 8% in new borrowers across the year, with an influx after the consultation. Our Strategy and the 2019/20 service plan have actions to promote the service which will be in the first phase of the implementation work.

Community outreach—at year end there were 1,330 outreach customers compared to 1,322 in 2017/18. The service has been stable throughout the year with customer satisfaction at 98%.

Year end customer satisfaction results are detailed at the end of this report with all achieving the target, or above, with the exception of the library survey. With a result of 92% it is still above the floor but some customers were unhappy with the change to fees and charges and with the review of opening hours so a reduction on the previous year's results was expected.

The Service Plan traffic light - activity at a glance

Some highlights for the year ...

- Tunbridge Wells and Southborough developments progressing well
- Sevenoaks children's library extended
- Delivering training to doctors and hospitals to improve the registration of deaths within the 5-day target
- Ashford library recognised as Autism Friendly
- 50 community fun days held across the county
- Intergenerational events held at Broadstairs and Sevenoaks
- Public consultation on LRA Strategy completed, followed by public engagement process to decide allocation of new opening hours
- Series of poetry workshops for improving mental health
- Summer reading challenge – improved number of completers
- Library Extra launched at Deal, Higham and Paddock Wood
- Bockhanger library moved to Children's Centre
- Further Code Clubs set up in Cheriton and Folkestone together with Autism friendly club in Gravesend and Coderdojo groups introduced in Gravesend and Canterbury
- Swalecliffe library, Tonbridge library, Faversham library and Wellington House register office re-opened after refurbishments
- Digitisation of Parish Records completed as part of the Find My Past project
- Reconfiguration of Sheerness library completed
- New merchandising products introduced to generate income
- Playground project launched at Hive House, Newington, Sheerness and Showfields
- Business continuity exercises held including Brexit scenario
- Developed Dementia Forum at Hythe Library
- Open air cinema and Christmas Carols at Danson House as income generators
- New fee structure implemented
- LRA offer to schools implemented

Actions

Outcomes

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of archive collections management collection system • Review of financial procedures • Review of Access Services • Income target for Archives | <p>Testing of payment system underway. Rolled over to 2019/20 with reader registration Delayed—now expected to be completed in May 2019</p> <p>Now part of the LRA Strategy work</p> <p>Target not met. Savings made elsewhere in LRA budget to cover. Target reviewed to achievable level for 2019/20</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Record Survey • Website phase 2 • Launch Archive customer liaison group | <p>Not completed due to time restraints, will roll over into 2019/20</p> <p>Work ongoing. Rolled over into 2019/20</p> <p>Progressing. Rolled over to 2019/20</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading the South activities in Aylesham • Dartford Young Roots project | <p>Bid for external funding unsuccessful and has now been cancelled</p> <p>Bid for external funding unsuccessful and has now been cancelled</p> |

81 Activities in the Service Plan — 72 Green, 7 Amber, 2 Red



Accreditations and Awards

Archives Accreditation

In the summer the Archive service received national recognition for the way it stores and preserves evidence of the county's heritage and history. The service has been awarded Archive Service Accreditation, the UK quality standard which recognises good performance.

Customer Service Award

In September 2018 LRA successfully renewed its Customer Service Excellence Award. This year we achieved 4 new Compliance Plus criteria. We have held this award continuously since 2011.



Dementia Friendly Awards

Libraries in the Gravesham, Dartford, Folkestone and Hythe districts and Broadstairs library have all achieved Dementia Friendly status. This means they have adapted the environment in the library. This includes having no reflective surfaces, traditional looking furniture, clearly defined entrances and exits and signage using symbols as well as words.

Hythe Town Council Dementia Awareness Forum

Building on the work to achieve Dementia Friendly status, Hythe Library has been working with Hythe Town Council to deliver sessions in the library for those with Dementia and their carers. The customers share their experiences and knowledge with each other and support each other. We recently filmed the group and interviewed some of the carers, a volunteer and one of the town councillors to find out how this group is beneficial. [Link to film](#)

Accreditations and Awards

One parent whose son was 13 years old and recently diagnosed with Asperger's and memory problems, said that she is finding it hard to find events that her son feels confident enough to go along too and it has been lovely to see him interested in something and come out of his comfort zone (his bedroom). Parent of Code club participant

Autism Friendly Awards

Ashford library is now autism friendly. To gain this recognition all staff took part in training, and the environment has been adapted. They now have special sessions where they dim the lights, keep the library as quiet as possible, have pastel coloured furniture and special calming sensory aids such as a bubble tent where customers can sit to read (see below). They have developed a map of the children's library and a social story that explains how you use a library. Gravesend has Autism friendly code clubs and at Ashford they have found that their sessions attract quite a few children with autism. Gravesend is also investigating an autism friendly garden.

This library is autism friendly

Some of our visitors might make noises.

This helps them cope with stress.

Talk to a member of staff to find out more.



"He has loved the club, to the point of being in tears when he has not been able to come along. He hates school and struggles with social interaction there, but his friends are at Code Club so he has really enjoyed it."
Parent of Code Club participant



Library Extra

In September we launched “Library Extra”, a new pilot at three of our libraries; Paddock Wood, Higham and Deal.

The pilot gives customers the opportunity to access the library outside of normal opening hours using assisted opening technology. There are no staff present at these times but customers are able to access services as they would normally.

Library Extra enables customers to come into the library using a door entry system with a specially enabled swipe card. The Library Extra system controls the lights, CCTV, alarms and PA system to maximise safety and security.

Customers who choose to sign up will be able to use the self-service machines to issue and discharge books and other items, pay charges, and access the public desktop computers and Wi-Fi. Community groups such as reading groups and local history groups are able to meet in the library during Library Extra opening hours.

The pilot provides an opportunity to open these libraries earlier in the morning and later in the evening and at Higham and Paddock Wood during periods throughout the day that they are currently closed.

A mother who is home tutoring her children has said that Library Extra has worked for her as she can use the space to undertake the tutoring for them all in an open space rather than around a kitchen table. Deal library



444 customers have signed up for the enhanced card that enables them to access the Library Extra service points out of hours and have “swiped in” 1,843 times

One parent commented that her son had autism and liked coming to the library during Library Extra hours as it is quieter. Paddock Wood library

A young person has been coming in early before school to undertake their homework. Deal library

Ceremonies in special circumstances

We offer ceremonies in our Register Offices and in over 200 approved premises. In special circumstances we can carry out wedding ceremonies in other locations including hospitals, hospices and prisons.

It may be that one of the couple is in prison, or is housebound and cannot leave their home. This service is also something that we offer to couples where one party is nearing the end of their life. Very often we get requests at very short notice because a couple want to get married and there is not enough time to go through the usual process. With reference to the Registrar General we have the authority to carry out a marriage at very short notice so it can happen quickly. Dealing with the couple can be very emotional and stressful, but it means so much to the couple and it is very much appreciated at such a difficult time.

In October 2018 we were contacted by a customer who wanted to organise a wedding ceremony so that they could marry their dying partner. First contact was at 8.40am on a Saturday. By 11 am they were married. The husband died very shortly afterwards. We were also involved with the registration of the death and staff were made aware in advance of the circumstances of the death.

In 2018/19 we conducted 75 such ceremonies across our service.

In February we were contacted by the son of a couple who wished to get married. The father was very ill in a hospice in Ashford. As the mother did not want to leave his side for long it was arranged that the documentation could be dealt with locally. Within 2 hours of the Notice of Marriage being taken the couple were married at the Hospice. The ceremony staff felt that they had managed to bring a little happiness into their lives at such a sad time in the family's life.

"This has been an especially difficult situation that has been dealt with brilliantly. The couple have both at different times expressed their gratitude to the team for all their help and guidance they have provided. The bride spoke to me on New Years Eve and was very thankful for everyone's compassion and professionalism in dealing with the booking. Comment from member of staff dealing with the ceremony"

Outcome 2
Kent Communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in work, healthy & enjoying a good quality of life

Digital Dens

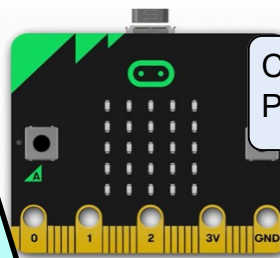
In 2017 we received Arts Council funding to introduce Digital Dens into Kent libraries. Initially we had 5 Digital Dens that were targeted to areas of high deprivation. These have been very successful and have continued past the end of the project. They have now expanded and we offer Code Clubs and Coderdojo sessions as well. These sessions are offered to children (usually aged 8 - 11) so they can learn new digital skills and work on fun projects. Each Digital Den has some of the latest educational technology available for the children to experiment with.

Children can also learn how to code in Scratch, Python and HTML. This supplements what they are taught at school, as these are all part of the curriculum. The clubs are a mix of lessons and free sessions to encourage learning and creativity.

"I want to be a Coder when I grow up!" - Phoebe

"This is so hard my brain is going to explode!" - Vincent

Children who attended Cheriton Code Club



Clockwise from top right Raspberry Pi, LittleBits, Ozobots and Micro:bits



Parent said that "her son really enjoyed the Code Club, and that it proved really good for his independent learning, which then impacted positively on his performance at school as he was more self-motivated 😊" Ashford parent

At the Digital Dens, children experiment with some of the latest technology to learn about coding, programming, building computers and robots. This includes BBC micro: bits, Raspberry Pi, LittleBits and Ozobots. The sessions are usually led by volunteers.

In 2018/19 3,059 children attended 269 events across the county. We now have sessions in Ashford, Canterbury, Cheriton, Folkestone, Gravesend, Newington, Sevenoaks, Sheerness and Swanley. Some locations are offering special autism friendly sessions.

Summer Reading Challenge

9,686 children completed the challenge by reading 6 books over the summer period. Our target was to increase the % of children who completed the challenge. 54% completed in 2017 and 57% completed in 2018

Outcome 1 — All children and young people are engaged, thrive and achieve their potential through academic and vocational education.



Proven benefits of reading over the summer

There are numerous studies and research articles which show that reading during the summer holidays holds numerous benefits for children. Children who read over the summer benefit from greater comprehension levels, greater ability to read independently and can build better communicative skills.

Research by the UK Literacy Association has demonstrated that the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) helps to prevent the 'summer dip' in literacy skills for those who took part.

<https://readingagency.org.uk/children/Overall%20Evaluation%20Results%20-%2014%20Nov%2013.pdf>

This year's theme was Mischief Makers which featured Dennis the Menace and his friends

Summer Reading Challenge

We issued 51,702 children's books whilst the challenge was on.



Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives shared a post.

3 September · 🌐



Swale Libraries is 🥳 feeling energised.

3 September · 🌐

👍 Like Page

The summer holidays are over but Gnasher has been spotted in Swale Libraries catching up on his reading to finish the Summer Reading Challenge and earn his meda

...

[See more](#)

Staff spoke at 92 school assemblies to promote the challenge to teachers and pupils



Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives

7 September · 🌐

Come and take a walk with C.S Clifford, who will take you on a journey through his books, at Tonbridge Library on Saturday 15 September 2018 at 10am.

It's the Finale of the Summer Reading Challenge.

<https://bit.ly/1kRVRH1>



Canterbury Libraries

21 August · 🌐

👍 Like Page

Mischief Makers Comic Creators at Canterbury Library

Celebrate the Summer Reading Challenge by coming to our FREE comic making workshop, led by Jim Lockey from ...

[See more](#)

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Summer Reading Challenge

In 2018 17,026 children registered for the Summer Reading Challenge compared to 18,129 in 2017 – 6% down.

Outcome 1 — All children and young people are engaged, thrive and achieve their potential through academic and vocational education.

"My son has done this for the last 3 years and loves reading. This is the first year he read all the books himself. Brilliant idea." Parent of boy aged 5

"Really good because I am a mischief maker." Anon

"Always a good way to keep the reading up in the holidays! Enjoyed using the mobile library" Parent of children aged 6 and 9



"It has encouraged my daughter to continue to read through the summer holidays." Parent of child aged 9

"My sons are very happy to read and loved the challenge. My eldest has autism and really wants the medal." Parent of children aged 4 and 6

"I think the Mischief Makers were fun and got me reading." Boy aged 10

Archives

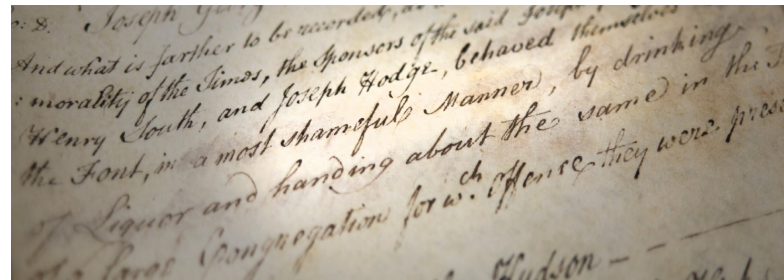
A major achievement this year was being awarded accreditation by the National Archive. This was an extensive piece of work and the award acknowledges the way we store and preserve evidence of the county's heritage and history.

Work has continued throughout this year to improve the website; access to the online catalogue, online booking, and online payments. Although everything is not in place at the moment it is progressing and should be completed in 2019.



The digitisation of over 2,500 Parish Registers is now complete and have been published on Find My Past. Work continues to digitise the Diocese collections with a view to publication on our own platform.

Outcome 2—Kent Communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in work, healthy & enjoying a good quality of life



During 2018/19 Archives

- Answered 3,649 remote enquires
- 5,515 visits to the search room
- 125,886 virtual visits via websites

"Staff were very helpful with suggestions of sources of information. I had minimal knowledge to start but got ideas about further research." Feedback from survey

Review of opening hours

Following a public consultation Archives changed and reduced the search room opening hours. Since the implementation in July 2018 the opening hours have been 9-5 Tuesday to Saturday and visits have increased by 36%

Libraries as a safe place for study

Outcome 1—Kent's communities are resilient and provide strong and safe environments to successfully raise children and young people

During the late spring and summer we noticed an increase of young people using our buildings for study. We not only offer PCs and free wi-fi but students can use our space for quiet study and to share revision. Many of these students may not have registered on our system but feel comfortable and safe within our facilities.



"I enjoy coming to Maidstone library as I can meet with my friends and we can help each other to prepare for our upcoming exams. This is because the school can be quite distracting and loud whereas the library is also quite quiet and there are lots of books to help me and my friends"

"It is a very helpful place to study, also very peaceful.

Library is great to focus on studies and meet friends who can help me study."

"One way the library has helped us is that it has provided us with a quiet space for revision and has provided us with computers and free internet if we need extra help with research."

"I come to the library to study for my medical degree, I find that the library environment suits my study needs and the staff have helped me source a medical book which enhances my studies. I am grateful for the help and the environment in which I can study at my own pace."



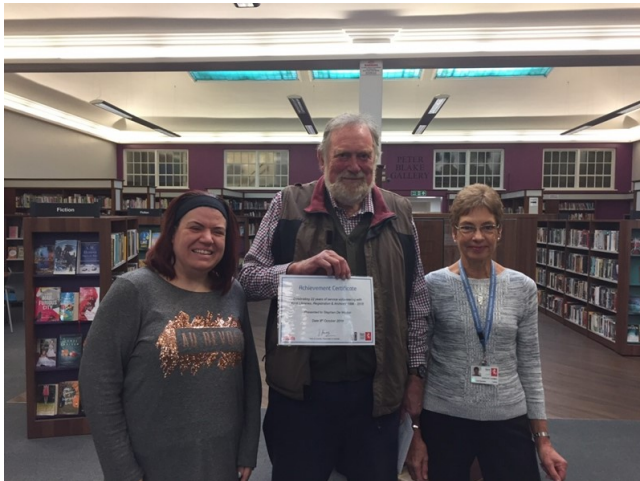
"I come to the library to use the computers as I do not have internet access at home. I find the library is a good place to concentrate and get my work done while also looking for a part time job."

Comments collected from students at
Ashford and Maidstone

Volunteering

Although many of our volunteers stay with us for years, the nature of volunteering is that some will come and then leave us when their circumstances change. We take part in recruitment events across the county to find new volunteers who have the skills that we need.

We hold Thank You events across the county where our volunteers can talk to each other and share experiences and find out about new events that they may be able to help out with. To say thank you for all they do we supply them with tea and cake and celebrate the work they do.



Stephen receiving his Certificate of Appreciation at Dartford library.



3 of our volunteers promoting volunteering in the Damian Green Job Fair in Ashford

In 2018/19 1,119 volunteers gave over 45,000 hours to add value to our work

Outcome 2 — Kent residents enjoy a good quality of life, and more people benefit from greater, social, cultural and sporting opportunities

Hayden is one of our young volunteers—
"My confidence and communication skills have grown since becoming a volunteer and I really enjoy every session I attend. I really enjoy helping younger children choose library books and reading to them."

"It helped me an awful lot after my husband died and I was very depressed so meeting and talking to people got me out of the house and I really looked forward to the Wednesday morning meetings" feedback from one of our volunteers

Project Updates—Tonbridge

Tonbridge opened on the 28 April after an extensive programme of works inside and out. The library is now lighter and brighter and more welcoming. An existing door that opened directly onto the main road had been closed for many years and it has been re-opened as part of the work making the library more accessible and visible from the main road.

"Everything is light and accessible. Being in a wheelchair. I can now reach the top shelf"

You Asked We Did

You asked that we re-instate the customer toilet. We have redecorated it and it is now available to the public again.

"Came in to the library after seeing it had been refurbished. Very impressed. Found it very welcoming and bright. Re-joined library because of it."



"Nice to get back in the library today. Like the lower shelves as I am a shortie and always found it hard to see and reach books on the top of the old shelves. I also like that the computer section is away from the books"



Since the library re-opened in April 2018 we have had 1,166 new borrowers, this is an increase of 51% on the same period the year before.

"What a lovely spacious new look to the library. A real pleasure and easy to navigate our way round."

Project Updates — Faversham

Faversham library re-opened on 21 November after being closed for 10 weeks for a major refurbishment. During the closure the inside of the library was re-configured to accommodate the Good Day programme. The works also included decoration, new flooring and shelving.

"We really like how bright and airy the library feels. The colour scheme works well and the additional seating was definitely needed..... My son Arthur who is 4 really like the new library but commented that the train engine should be attached to the carriages. Thanks for all your hard work."
Lucy and Arthur Faversham



You Asked We Did

Customers asked that we retain the train and we have. We were also asked to install more power points in the study/local reference aware and we have arranged this.

Faversham re-opened on 21 November. Since then 330 new borrowers have registered—a 61% increase on the same period the previous year.

It has also seen an increase in issues by 11% and in visits by 3%.

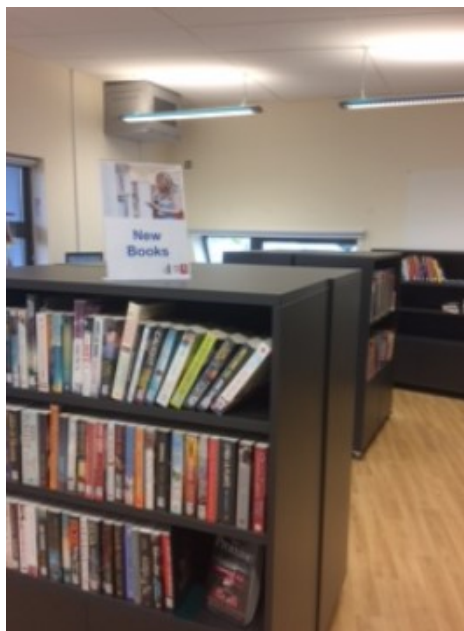
The new layout looks lovely and bright and inviting. So pleased to see the library open again.... Faversham customer

"It would be helpful if there were a couple of tables that are close to a power socket, so that people could use their own laptop computers"

Project Updates — Bockhanger

Bockhanger Library closed on the 17 December in its old location and re-opened on 5 January at the Sure Steps Children's Centre. The children's centre is located in the grounds of the Phoenix Community Primary School just a few moments walk away from its previous location. This joint venture means there is potential for lots of joint working in the future with both the children's centre and the primary school. At the moment there are plans to work jointly on activities such as Elmer Day and a Rhyme Time for National Bookstart Week's Pyjamarama.

Comments from customers about the new location

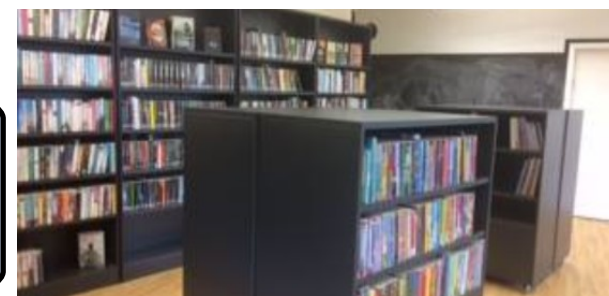


"A family told me that they like using the library as it is by the children's school so very convenient. Parking is free and parking in town is expensive. They are excited about Elmer day and the fact that it's a free event means a lot to the mum who is on a budget."

Book club customer said what a great service we provide and how it saves them so much money every month. Without free reservations and collecting books and free car park they could not run their group as they would like to. It has helped them to use the library as it is free and encourages them to order books they've not tried before.

New stock has enhanced the experience of mum and her children visiting the library, and they will come back. Mum said "The new books help my children with encouraging them to read and we will visit again. Thank you"

Elderly customer came in on Friday afternoon - told me how the library gets her out and talking to staff as she is isolated and does not talk to anyone during the week. The library and staff are a lifeline for her, an event in her week and an opportunity to get some exercise walking to the library. She likes the new stock as it encourages her to try new genres and to advance her reading as well



Project Updates — Wellington House

Wellington House Register Office (RO) was closed for January to enable a major refurbishment. Our ceremony rooms have to be kept up to a high standard to ensure couples choose to have their wedding or civil partnership with us. In 2018/19 163 wedding ceremonies took place in the Drawing Room, 238 register office ceremonies and 2,057 notice of marriage appointments took place in the offices at Wellington House. RO ceremonies in the Study have increased by 23% (43) from Feb —June this year. The refurbishment included decoration, flooring and furniture in all the public areas and the office. It was crucial that the office re-opened in February as booking had been taken for ceremonies to take place.



Andrea Fegan, Ceremonies Officer at Wellington House has had these comments from customers

“The ceremony was so lovely and the staff were amazing. The newly decorated room was a lovely bonus too.”

“We came here a few years ago for a friends ceremony and loved it so much we decided to have our own here. It looked great back then but it looks even more incredible now.”

“I booked the ceremony last year based on the images on the website and was told that the room was being redecorated but never expected anything like this. Really made our day.”

“It looks so classy and fresh and I love the colour scheme – especially as I am wearing blue too”

Playground Project

Working together LRA, ED's Culture & Creative Economy Service and the University of Kent have successfully secured £53k from Arts Council England to support the delivery of "Playground", an introduction to the arts and creativity for babies and pre-school children and their families in four libraries across Kent. This has just started and runs until the end of August.

Access to high quality creativity from an early age and involving the wider family increases interest and awareness of the positive impacts of the arts and leads to a greater likelihood of lifelong engagement.

The programme is mentored by artists who are highly experienced in engaging young children and families. Kent artists are delivering a programme to engage local families in creative activity and give them the confidence and enthusiasm to continue being creative with their young children.

The Playground project will act as a pilot to inform the development of a larger programme at the University of Kent exploring the impact of creativity in early years.

Outcome 1 — Children and young people in Kent get the best start in life

Attendances at events in March 2019

Hive House	44	Newington	96
Sheerness	86	Showfields	27



Tunbridge Wells Libraries

Page · 203 like this · Government organisation

10 May · 🌐 · PLAYGROUND - an exciting new series of events and activities taking place during library Rhyme Times at Showfields Library, 11am – midday. For all families with pre-school children. Everyone's welcome and the sessions are FREE. With songs and rhymes, music,...



👍 3

1 comment 3 shares



Tunbridge Wells District Children's Centres

1K like this · Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent · Public & government service

27 Mar · 🌐 · NEW *** PLAYGROUND *** Free sessions for families with pre-school children at SHOWFIELDS LIBRARY - Fridays 11-12am - take a look.



👍 6

4 comments 6 shares

WWI Commemorations

Staff across the County got together with local communities to commemorate Armistice Day. Staff at the Kent History and Library Centre got together with Bearsted Knit and Natter group to provide the poppies for this display.



Customers at Ramsgate said

"The 'Poppy' decorations look great, a lovely tribute to our fallen."

"Staff have made an impressive display for WW1, well done. All the staff are helpful and did a great job knitting all the poppies with a little help."



Staff at Cliftonville, Margate and Ramsgate libraries also had displays to commemorate this occasion. The Margate display included newspaper articles from the time that can be found in their local history collection.

WWI Commemorations

The Imperial War Museum partnered us up with Stephen Barnaby, poet and writer. We supported him with linking his research/written piece using our archive and local history resources as part of the Lives of the First World War project. We also facilitated his link with the Kent WW1 Centenary Service in Canterbury.

CRICKET LEGEND REMEMBERED IN A CENTURY OF WORDS AT KENT WW1 CENTENARY SERVICE

Legendary Kent and England cricketer Colin "Charlie" Blythe, who was killed at Passchendaele in November 1917, is commemorated in a 100-word story being published for the first time at the Kent Centenary Service.

Stephen Barnaby has written 100 words – a so-called centena – as part of the Imperial War Museum's 26 Armistice project.

They will be published on the project website on Monday September 24 – but everyone attending the Kent Centenary Service the day before – Sunday September 23 – at the Spitfire Ground, Canterbury, the home of Kent cricket, will be able to read it first.



"Thank you so much again for bringing the '26 Armistice' project - and my piece on Charlie Blythe - to the attention of the Kent Lieutenancy with regard to the commemorative service at the Spitfire ground" - Stephen Barnaby

Diversity House: Breaking the Myths, Africa in WW1

Rob Illingworth, our Community History Officer, facilitated research and partnership work for this project. He spoke at the project closing event in London.

Strategy Consultation

Following the extensive public consultation which received over 5,500 responses, the LRA Strategy was approved by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services following consultation at the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee on 7 March. Following its approval, we have been working with staff to develop proposals for the new library opening hours. We launched a public engagement on 7 May when customers were able to express their preference on the options. Work has commenced to update the strategy document following the consultation, together with starting work on branding and marketing, new mobile library vehicle specification, and a refresh of the public PCs to Windows 10.

Libraries, Registration and Archives Draft Strategy 2019-2022



For consultation November 2018
kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy



Each library is taking part in a public engagement exercise to determine the new opening hours

Tell us what you think about the opening hours for the Kent History & Library Centre

LRA is implementing a new approach to the opening hours of its libraries. Whilst the total hours open per week for a given library is defined by the library's Tier, the pattern of opening hours for each library can be tailored to better fit local needs.

The options for the opening hours pattern below are based on usage data, equality considerations and local knowledge.

Please consider the options below, then fill in a feedback form and hand it to a member of staff by 27 May 2019.

<u>Option A</u>	
Monday	10:00 to 17:00
Tuesday	10:00 to 17:00
Wednesday	10:00 to 17:00
Thursday	10:00 to 17:00
Friday	10:00 to 17:00
Saturday	10:00 to 17:00
Sunday	Closed

<u>Option B</u>	
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	09:00 to 17:00
Wednesday	09:00 to 17:00
Thursday	09:00 to 18:00
Friday	09:00 to 18:00
Saturday	09:00 to 17:00
Sunday	Closed

<u>Option C</u>	
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	09:30 to 18:00
Wednesday	09:30 to 18:00
Thursday	09:30 to 18:00
Friday	09:30 to 18:00
Saturday	09:00 to 17:00
Sunday	Closed

You Asked We Did

You Asked

Tonbridge Library—in summer 2018 we had a lot of students using the library space for study. Some of them mentioned that they would like to have access to drinking water as there was nowhere to fill up their bottles and the also wanted to access the toilet facilities.

Kent History and Library Centre — customers have asked for a Book Return box

Faversham Library—When we refurbished the library customers asked for more power points in the new study area

Archives search room— customers asked for better trained staff

Ashford Library— customers asked if we could make the library more accessible for those with autism

We Did

As a result we have redecorated and opened the public toilet. We have also had a water fountain installed for people to fill up their water bottles.

We have now installed one at the front of the building

We have arranged to have them installed so customers can charge up and plug in their own devices

Staff have been trained and we now have dedicated search room staff who are better able to help customers

The library now offers autism friendly sessions

You Asked We Did

You Asked

Dover Library—customers commented that it was not easy to find the registration area

Online registration appointments—customers have commented that the system should be more user friendly

Archive—customers asked for a more intuitive catalogue with better searchability

Kent History and Library Centre—customers requested a quiet space for study

Registration appointments—customers asked that we offer more convenient appointments

New Ash Green Library—customers requested some noticeboard space to display local posters/leaflets

We Did

2 new signposts have been installed and reception staff escort customers to the waiting area when possible

We are working on a new system with our system providers. This will send confirmation emails, offer all available appointment slots and will work on a mobile phone

We have implemented a new website with a much improved integrated catalogue

We have set aside an area for quiet study

We now offer Notice of Marriage appointments in the evening and on Saturdays

We have now purchased a noticeboard to display information about local event and activities

KPI Summary

	Type of KPI	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year-end target	18/19 Outturn	17/18 Outturn	Direction of travel
KPI 1a	Visits to libraries and Archives venues	1,178,865	1,239,794	1,129,879	1,113,675	5,180,000 4,700,000	4,662,213	4,980,000	↓
KPI 1b	Visits to the Archive search room	1,032	1,871	1,356	1,256	n/a	5,515	4,447	↑
KPI 2	Library Issues	1,150,137	1,299,459	1,132,006	1,150,504	4,860,000 4,420,000	4,732,106	4,667,000	↑
KPI 3a	Events across LRA venues	5,754	5,167	5,721	6,378	n/a	23,085	21,890	↑
KPI 3b	Attendees at LRA Events	57,168	65,725	55,622	61,655	215,000	240,483	216,000	↑
KPI 4	Active Library and Archive Borrowers (rolling year)	153,977	151,954	148,448	148,580	n/a	148,580	156,500	↓
KPI 5a	Customer Satisfaction – Libraries	n/a	n/a	n/a	92%	95%	92%	97%	↓
KPI 5b	Customer Satisfaction – Archives	n/a	n/a	n/a	95%	90%	95%	91%	↑
KPI 5c	Customer Satisfaction – Births and Deaths	96%	95%	94%	95%	95%	95%	94%	↑
KPI 5d	Customer Satisfaction – Wedding Ceremonies	97%	96%	96%	96%	95%	96%	96%	↔
KPI 5e	Customer Satisfaction – Citizenship Ceremonies – NEW	n/a	98%	98%	98%	95%	98%	93%	↑
KPI 6a	% of Registration appointments booked online	35%	37%	39%	32%	n/a	35%	35%	↔
KPI 6b	% of birth appointments booked online	72%	73%	76%	77%	77%	74%	74%	↔
KPI 6c	% of death appointments booked online	36%	36%	39%	41%	n/a	38%	40%	↓
KPI 7	PC hours used in Libraries	108,535	109,566	105,252	101,864	n/a	425,216	467,200	↓
KPI 8	Library Community Outreach (rolling year)	1,308	1,323	1,300	1,330	1,500	1,330	1,322	↔