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Kent County Council

LRA Draft Strategy 2019-2022

Consultation Results

Final Report
February 2019



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Project details

Title	Libraries, Registration and Archives Draft Strategy
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Project number	18132
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We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Kent County Council for all their work in developing the project. We would also like to thank all the residents, organisations and groups who took the time to complete the consultation questionnaire.

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Executive summary

Consultation response profile

In total, 5,547 responses were received for the consultation across individuals and organisations/groups. Individuals account for 96% of the sample with organisations/groups accounting for 3% of the sample – 1% were unknown.

The gender profile of the individual consultees broadly reflects the Libraries, Registration and Archive (LRA) Borrower profile. Whilst the LRA borrower profile is skewed towards the under 50 age groups, more residents aged over 50 have responded to the consultation.

Of the organisations/groups responding, 56 indicated they were a representative of a local community group, 46 indicated they were responding on behalf of a Parish/Town/Borough/District Council and 47 from a VCS organisation. A further 28 responded on behalf of an education establishment (19) or a business (9).

Use of Libraries, Registration and Archive service

- Most consultees (98%) indicated that they have used a Library, Registration and Archive Service in the last 12 months. The results are also similar between individuals (98%) and organisations/groups (96%).

Ease of understanding the strategy

- All consultees were asked to indicate how easy they found the LRA strategy to understand. Some three-quarters (77%) found it easy to understand. Just 13% of all consultees did not find it easy and 10% were unsure. The results are almost identical when comparing the results by respondent type but respondents who completed the questionnaire on paper and returned by post were significantly more likely to agree the LRA strategy was easy to understand.
- When analysing the results by individuals, there were marked significant differences between certain demographic groups. Residents under 50 and carers were less likely to agree, while White residents were significantly more likely than BME residents to feel that the LRA strategy was easy to understand.
- Common reasons for agreeing that it was easy to understand was because it was clear, well written and free from jargon and it was well explained with clear objectives. This

was reflected in the comments contained in the letters the Council received. One resident said, *“The document was well produced and easy to follow”*. However, a relatively large number of respondents (220 mentions) also felt the strategy was too long and detailed.

Agreement for the way forward for LRA services

- 44% of all consultees supported the way forward for LRA services as described in the LRA strategy.
- Whilst the majority of respondents supported the way forward, those who had used an LRA service in the last 12 months were more likely to **disagree** with the way forward for LRA services (38% compared to 12% of respondents who have not used the service in the last 12 months).
- All respondents who had visited a library in the last 12 months were asked which library/libraries they had visited. Consultees who visited a Tier one (47%) or two (45%) library were significantly more likely to agree with the way forward for LRA services. This compares to 36% who visited a Tier five library.
- There were significant differences between demographic groups for individuals. Men, those over 75 and those without caring responsibilities were most likely to agree with the way forward compared to their respective counterparts.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the way forward for LRA services. The most frequently mentioned ‘positive’ theme related to the general agreement with the aims of the strategy or proposals. A high number of respondents also understood the need to make savings or changes to current provision.
- The most common ‘negative’ theme related to concerns about the cuts to opening hours or services. This was followed by concerns about the impact of the changes on the local community if the changes go ahead. These concerns were also echoed during most of the drop-in sessions and the additional correspondence the Council received from residents and local community groups. One resident said, *“Libraries should be seen as a critical component in carrying out the country’s public health obligation particularly around mental health and related issues such as social deprivation”*.

- All consultees were then given the opportunity to suggest alternative ideas or areas that should be included in the strategy. Common suggestions included: making rooms available for other purposes such as events, increased marketing to promote library services and wider use of volunteers.

Agreement with the tiering approach

- 43% supported the tiering approach for libraries. The results indicated that individuals were significantly more likely to agree with this approach than organisations/groups.
- Whilst the majority of respondents supported the approach, those who have used an LRA service in the last 12 months were more likely to **disagree** with the tiering approach for libraries (38% compared to 16% of respondents who have not used the service in the last 12 months).
- Consultees who visited a Tier one (45%) or two (42%) library were significantly more likely to agree with the tiering approach. This compares to 33% who visited a Tier five library.
- When analysing the results by individuals, there were marked significant differences between certain demographic groups. Residents under 75 (34%-49%) were significantly less likely to agree with this approach than their counterparts.

Agreement with the criteria used to tier libraries

- 42% supported the criteria used to tier libraries. Individuals were significantly more likely to agree with the criteria than organisations/groups.
- Whilst the majority of respondents supported the criteria, those who had used an LRA service in the last 12 months were more likely to **disagree** with the criteria used to tier libraries (33% compared to 15% of respondents who have not used the service in the last 12 months).
- Consultees who had visited a Tier five (30%) library were significantly less likely than other tiers to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries (35%-45%). All respondents were asked to provide their reasons for their response to this question. The most common reason related to the fact the criteria should be tailored to suit local needs (e.g. demographic profile, size, deprivation levels, etc).

- When analysing the results by individuals, Men were significantly more likely to agree than women with the criteria used to tier.
- All consultees were also given the opportunity to suggest alternative criteria for tiering libraries. The most common frequently mentioned themes related to making sure the criteria considered local needs (e.g. population size, demographics and deprivation levels) and undertaking more detailed analysis of usage patterns (e.g. analysis over a longer period than one month).

Introduction

Background

Kent County Council's Libraries, Registration and Archives service (LRA) is a statutory and highly valued public service. LRA's wide range of services are delivered across Kent to anyone who lives, works, studies or visits the county.

Kent County Council (KCC), along with many other English local authorities, are facing a period of unprecedented financial pressure which demands continued and sustained innovation, change and focus on positive outcomes from all services. Since 2013/2014, LRA has delivered savings of around £6 million but up to a further £1 million is required over the next two financial years.

Alongside the financial pressures, the communities and customers that LRA serves are changing and will continue to change over time, including changes in demography, where people live, how people want to access services and their expectations of those services, technology and IT literacy. The service also needs to review its marketing and promotion to residents and businesses, as well as developing its commercial approach.

To help meet these future challenges, KCC has produced a draft strategy for 2019-2022. The strategy sets out the Council's proposals (which includes library tiering and opening hour review) to achieve the necessary savings, while continuing to provide a sustainable service to meet the needs and choices of customers and communities.

To help finalise the strategy and proposals, the Council ran a county-wide public consultation between 21st November 2018 and 29th January 2019.

The draft strategy consultation document which was also available in an easy read format covered:

- Details of how people could take part in the consultation, where they could find additional information and how they could request alternative formats;
- A foreword written by Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services;
- An overview of the LRA service in Kent, the new three-year strategy, national picture for libraries, registration and archives and financial challenges;
- Proposed ways of delivering LRA services in the future;

- Details of the five ambitions (Everyone is welcome, Enriching people’s lives, Resilient and connected communities, Sustainable and innovative and Helping everyone to live well);
- Appendices (map of KCC libraries, mobile library stops, proposed library tiers and opening hours).
- There were also the following supporting documents produced which were again available on the website and in hardcopy in libraries;
 - Consultation questionnaire (downloaded on website 10,728 times)
 - Equality Impact Assessments for the strategy (downloaded on website 418 times) and the tiering proposal (downloaded on website 360 times)
 - Frequently asked questions and answers that were updated during the consultation period (downloaded on website 563 times)
 - Document outlining how the proposed tiering model was developed and the supporting data (downloaded on website 587 times)
 - Copies of the consultation postcard and poster to promote the consultation

M·E·L Research was commissioned to analyse and report the findings.

Methodology

Consultees were invited to submit their views on the strategy and proposals via the following channels:

- An online questionnaire, accessed via the KCC’s Consultation Directory on Kent.gov.uk website (www.kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy);
- Or in hard copy at all Kent libraries, register offices, gateways and on request.

Consultation material was also made available in Easy Read and upon request in Large Print and Nepalese.

The council has produced a summary engagement record of how the consultation was promoted that details all the steps taken to promote to Kent residents to raise awareness. In summary this included;

- A direct LRA email to registered email addresses with the service. This was sent to 173,938 email accounts.
- KCC sent an email via the consultation directory to 704 registered users.

- Social media posts from the LRA Facebook page and on local district Facebook pages. This also included a direct push to non-users of the services.
- Press releases were sent out at the beginning of the consultation and towards the end.
- Email or letter promotion to LRA partners and stakeholders that included Kent Members of Parliament, District, Parish and Town Councils.
- Entries in newsletters of a range of Kent organisations.
- Attendance at meetings including the Kent Safeguarding Children's board and Kent Youth County Council.

Further details can be found in the LRA produced consultation engagement record in **Appendix B**.

The Council also ran 20 drop-in sessions across the County to give consultees the opportunity to talk to staff about the strategy and proposals. The Council spoke to over 500 residents across the 20 sessions. A summary of these discussions can be found in **Appendix C**.

All hard copy paper questionnaires received by 5th February 2019 were processed by the data entry team at M·E·L Research. These questionnaires were then combined with the online responses received by KCC. A total of 5,547 responses have been received comprising of:

- 3,764 online returns;
- 1,783 postal responses (including 80 easy read versions and 40 Nepalese);

21 supplementary emails and letters were also sent directly to KCC by individuals, community groups and organisations. These have been reviewed and illustrative free text comments have been included in this report.

Response rate and robustness of results

The majority of respondents to this consultation are users of the libraries, registration and archive service; 98% stated that they had used an LRA service(s) in the last 12 months. They therefore do not represent wider Kent residents as a whole.

According to KCC's borrower profile, 148,437 library users actively borrowed items from a library between January 2017-2018. With 5,547 consultees having completed the consultation questionnaire (and the vast majority indicating they are a library user), this suggests a response rate of roughly 3.7%.

For the purposes of the report, we have also used the borrower profile figure as a proxy to estimate a 'confidence interval' for the data¹. 5,547 responses provides a confidence interval of $\pm 1.3\%$ for a 50% statistic at the 95% confidence level.

This simply means that if 50% of consultees indicated that they agreed with the way forward for LRA services, the true figure could lie within the range of 48.7% and 51.3%, and that these results would be achieved 95 times out of 100.

Notes on analysis

Results are based on 'valid' responses and therefore where a respondent has selected 'not applicable' or left a question blank, these have been excluded from analysis for that question. The base size shows the total number of respondents included in the analysis for each question.

For indicative purposes, we have carried out sub-group analysis by different demographic characteristics and some other variables by computing Z-tests to test if differences in proportions are statistically significant (at 95% confidence level). Where this is the case, we have highlighted these within each section. Where there is a statistically significant difference between groups, this has been noted in the report as a "significant difference".

It should be noted that only a proportion of Kent residents participated in this consultation rather than all residents of the KCC area; sub-group analysis results are therefore subject to sampling error and not all differences will be statistically significant or necessarily important.

Within the main body of the report, where percentages do not sum up to 100 per cent, this is due to computer rounding or multiple-choice answers.

Where '**Individuals**' are mentioned in the report. This includes: an individual, carer or relative of a service user, a member of KCC staff or KCC Member/Councillor. All other categories are classed as '**Organisations or Groups**'.

In order to analyse the results by district. We have assumed the following:

- East Kent- Thanet, Dover & Canterbury;
- West Kent- Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells & Tonbridge;
- North Kent- Dartford, Gravesham & Swale;

¹ The achieved confidence interval gives an indication of the precision of the results, assuming a random sampling approach.

- Mid Kent - Maidstone, Ashford & Folkestone;

Open ended responses have been coded into broad themes and these, together with the number of mentions for each theme, are presented in the corresponding tables. The total number of mentions might differ from the total number of valid comments as some residents may have mentioned more than one theme in their comments.

Consultation findings

Section 1: About you

5,547 responses have been received for this consultation from individuals, groups and organisations comprising of:

- 5,337 individuals (accounting for 96% of the sample)
- 177 organisations/groups (accounting for 3% of the sample)
- 1% unknown (left question blank)

Table 1 below shows the detailed breakdown of responses by respondent type.

Table 1: Breakdown of respondent type

Percentage of respondents- base size 5,547 (all respondents)

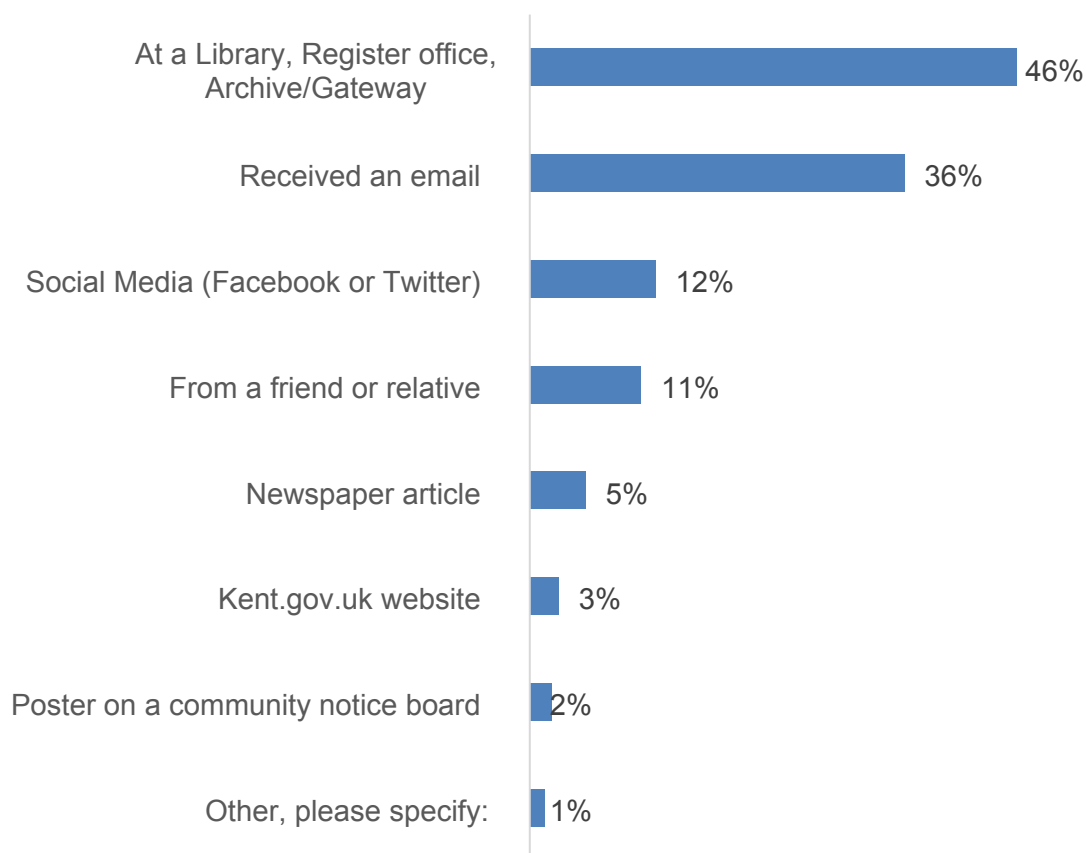
Individual	5,337
Group/organisation	177
- Representative of a local community group	56
- Parish/Town/Borough/District Council	46
- VCS organisation	47
- Educational establishment	19
- Business	9
Unknown	33

How consultees found out about the consultation

Figure 1 overleaf shows that the main method(s) of finding out about the consultation was at a library, register office, archive or gateway (48%) and/or via email (35%). Only 3% found out the consultation via the Kent.gov.uk website.

Figure 1: How found out about the consultation (multiple choice question)

Percentage of respondents- base size 5,506



Profile of individuals responding to consultation vs. LRA borrowers & census statistics

Generally, a greater proportion those responding online are under 50, whilst a greater proportion of those responding in hard copy are women.

Table 2 overleaf compares:

- The Kent Census Population Statistics for Kent by age and gender;
- KCC's libraries profile by gender and age sourced from borrowers recorded between 2017 and 2018 (latest data available by demographics for a complete year);
- The profile of individuals who took part in the consultation by gender and age;

Comparing these statistics reveals that the gender profile of those taking part in the consultation broadly reflects KCC's libraries borrower profile.

Whilst the Libraries borrower profile is skewed against the under 50 age group, the profile of individuals taking part in the consultation is more heavily skewed towards residents aged 50 or over.

Table 2: Profile of individuals compared to LRA borrower profile and census statistics (age and gender)

Percentage of respondents- base size (all respondents)

	2011 Census Population	Kent LRA Borrower Profile*	Profile of LRA consultation response
GENDER			
Male	48%	36%	37%
Female	52%	64%	63%
AGE			
Under 50	63%	65%	26%
50+	37%	35%	74%

*Excludes blanks or unknown, based on 2017-2018 data

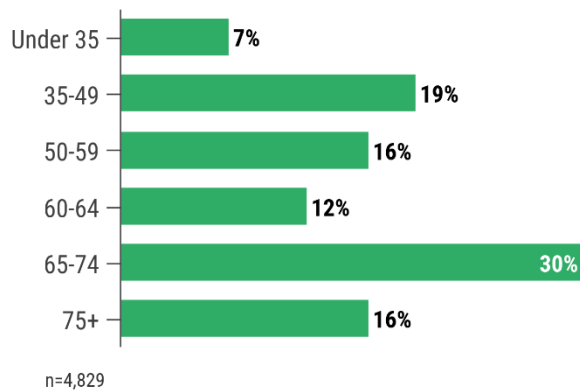
Profile of individuals responding

The infographic overleaf shows the profile of individuals who responded to the consultation. In summary:

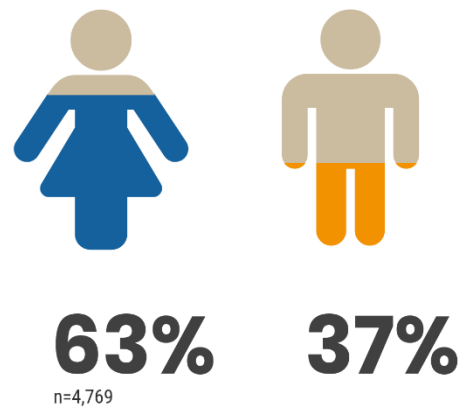
- Online was the most common completion method with 68% taking part in the consultation using this method. 32% submitted their response on paper;
- 74% of individuals who responded were aged 50 or over;
- 63% of the individuals were female;
- 11% considered themselves disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010. 44% of these indicated they have a physical impairment and 28% indicated they have a sensory impairment. 35% have a long-standing illness or health condition;
- 96% of individuals indicated they are White and 4% indicated they are of BME origin;
- 47% of the individuals indicated they belonged to a religion or belief;
- 9% indicated they were a carer.

Profile of responding individuals

Age group



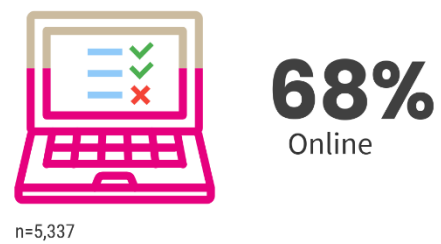
Gender



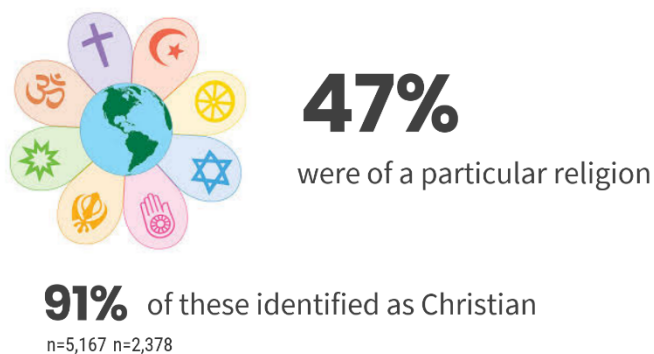
Ethnic group



Survey method



Religion



Classified as a carer



*n=number of responses

Individual consultees were asked to enter the first five characters of their postcode for analysis purposes. The table below represents the number of responses by area. The majority of the responses to the consultation questionnaire came from residents living in West Kent (accounting for 75%).

Table 3: Geographical distribution of respondents

Percentage of respondents- base size 5,272 (all respondents)

Area	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
West	3,960	75%
East	953	18%
North	236	4%
Mid	123	2%

Use of libraries, registration and archive (LRA) service

Table 4 shows that most consultees (98%) have used a Library, Registration and Archive Service in the last 12 months. The results are also similar between individuals (98%) and organisations/groups (96%).

Table 4: Breakdown of LRA service usage in the last 12 months

Percentage of respondents

	Overall (5,496)	Individuals (5,301)	Organisation/grp (171)
Used LRA service in the last 12 Months	98%	98%	96%
Not used LRA service in last 12 Months	2%	2%	4%

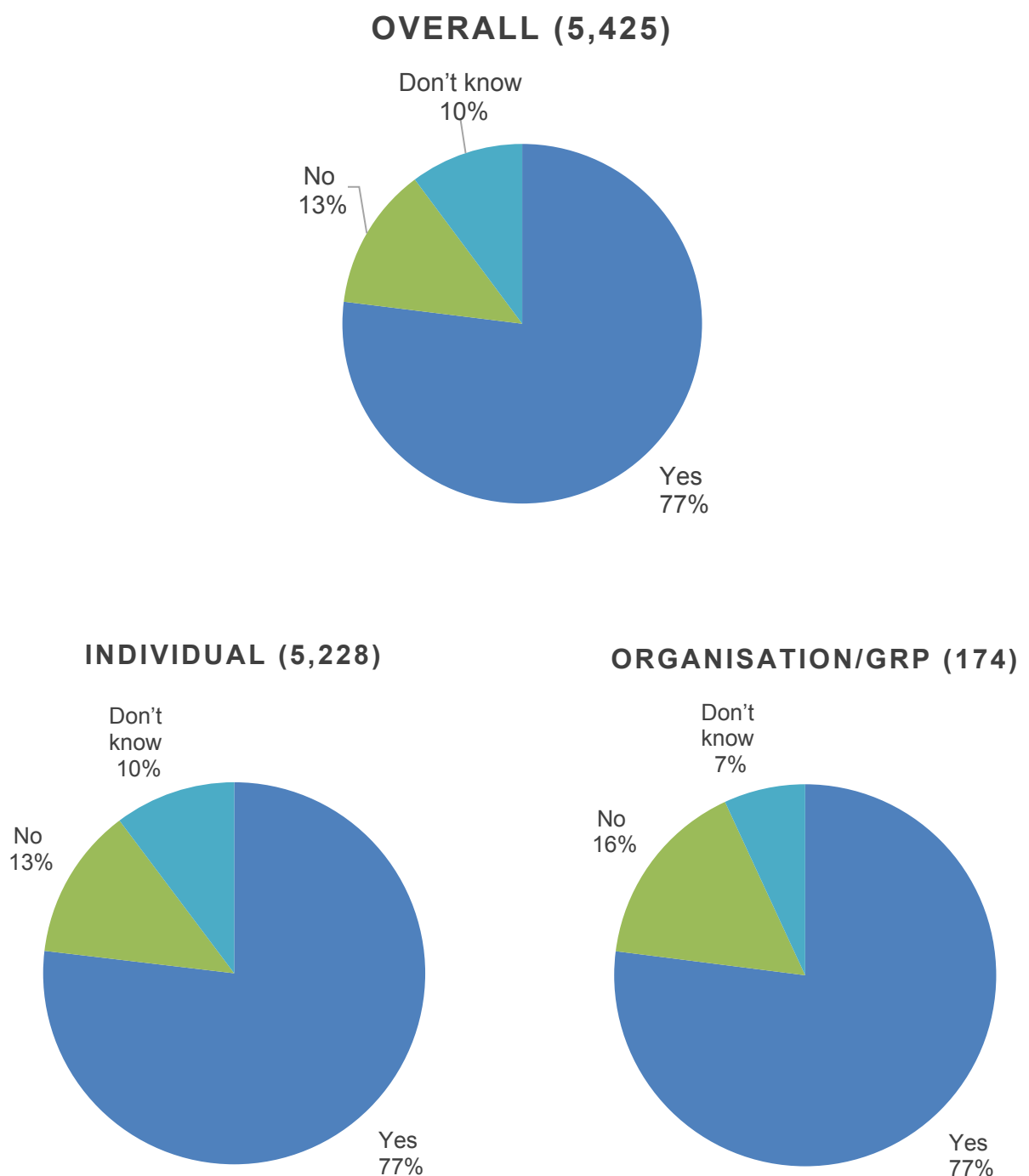
Section 2: Our Strategy

Ease of understanding

Firstly, all consultees were asked to indicate how easy they found the LRA strategy to understand. Figure 2 shows that three quarters (77%) of all consultees found it easy. 13% of all consultees did not find it easy and 10% were unsure. The results are almost identical when comparing the results by respondent type.

Figure 2: Ease of understanding of the strategy

Percentage of respondents



When analysing the results by questionnaire completion method, respondents who completed the questionnaire by post (83%) were significantly more likely to agree that the LRA strategy was easy to understand. This compares to 74% who completed the questionnaire online.

Sub group analysis (Individuals)

Sub group analysis for individuals indicates the following significant differences:

- Residents under 50 (67%-73%) were significantly less likely than those 50+ (78%-83%) to say that the LRA strategy was easy to understand.
- Residents who considered themselves to be carers (74%) were significantly less likely to say that the LRA strategy was easy to understand. This compares to 79% of residents who were not carers.
- White residents (79%) were significantly more likely than BME residents (66%) to agree that the LRA strategy was easy to understand.

All consultees were asked to provide a reason for their response to this question. A total of 3,202 provided a valid response, including 'don't knows'. As respondents who stated 'don't know' to question 5 also provided relevant suggestions these have been included in the analysis.

Their responses have been analysed and categorised into themes and are presented in Table 5 (positive themes) and Table 6 (negative themes). Individual responses could have contained more than one theme (including positive and negative comments) and as such the total presented in the table may be higher than the number of respondents. The most common 'positive' themes related to the fact that the strategy was clear and written in plain English (792 mentions) and was well explained with clear objectives (508 mentions).

Table 5: Positive themes (base 3,202, total number of valid comments)

Positive theme	Mentions - 'Yes' only	%
Clear and well written/written in plain English	792	25%
Well explained and clear objectives	508	16%
Document is generally easy to understand/read	482	15%
Clear structure, format, presentation	472	15%

Below is a selection of quotes for the top two (positive) themes:

Example quotes from respondents (clear, written/written in plain English)

It was written well. It's clear and says exactly what you want to do in the future.

Clear, concise and easy to read. Everything was explained well.

Example quotes from respondents (well explained and clear objectives)

Clear goals outlined with reasons for the proposed changes.

Both the objectives and the means of achieving these objectives were stated clearly and expansively.

Table 6 summarises the negative themes. The most frequently mentioned theme suggested the strategy was too detailed or there was too much to read (220 mentions). Interestingly, even amongst respondents who answered 'yes' when asked if the strategy was easy to understand, there were 171 who also thought the consultation document was too lengthy. The second most frequently mentioned (negative) theme related to the fact the document contained too much jargon (121 mentions).

Table 6: Negative themes (base 3,202, total number of valid comments)

Negative theme	Mentions - 'No' only	%
Too long and detailed	220	7%
Too much jargon	121	4%
Lack of information/difficult to find information in the document	73	2%
Misleading information/information did not make sense	46	1%
Unnecessary or repetitive information	44	1%

Below is a selection of quotes for the top two (negative) themes:

Example quotes from respondents (document too long and detailed)

Too lengthy and wordy and sounded like a sales brochure rather than a proposal to shorten opening hours to Library services.

Too long, too much to read. Make an animated video out of the content there's lots of free online tools to help convey strategies and their aims these days.

Rather long at 46 pages - could have benefitted from a summary page.

Example quotes from respondents (too much jargon)

Too much waffle and management jargon, such as "delivering outcomes".

There was lots of management speak rather than plain English. It seemed to be for White middle-class readers rather than striving to engage a diverse community.

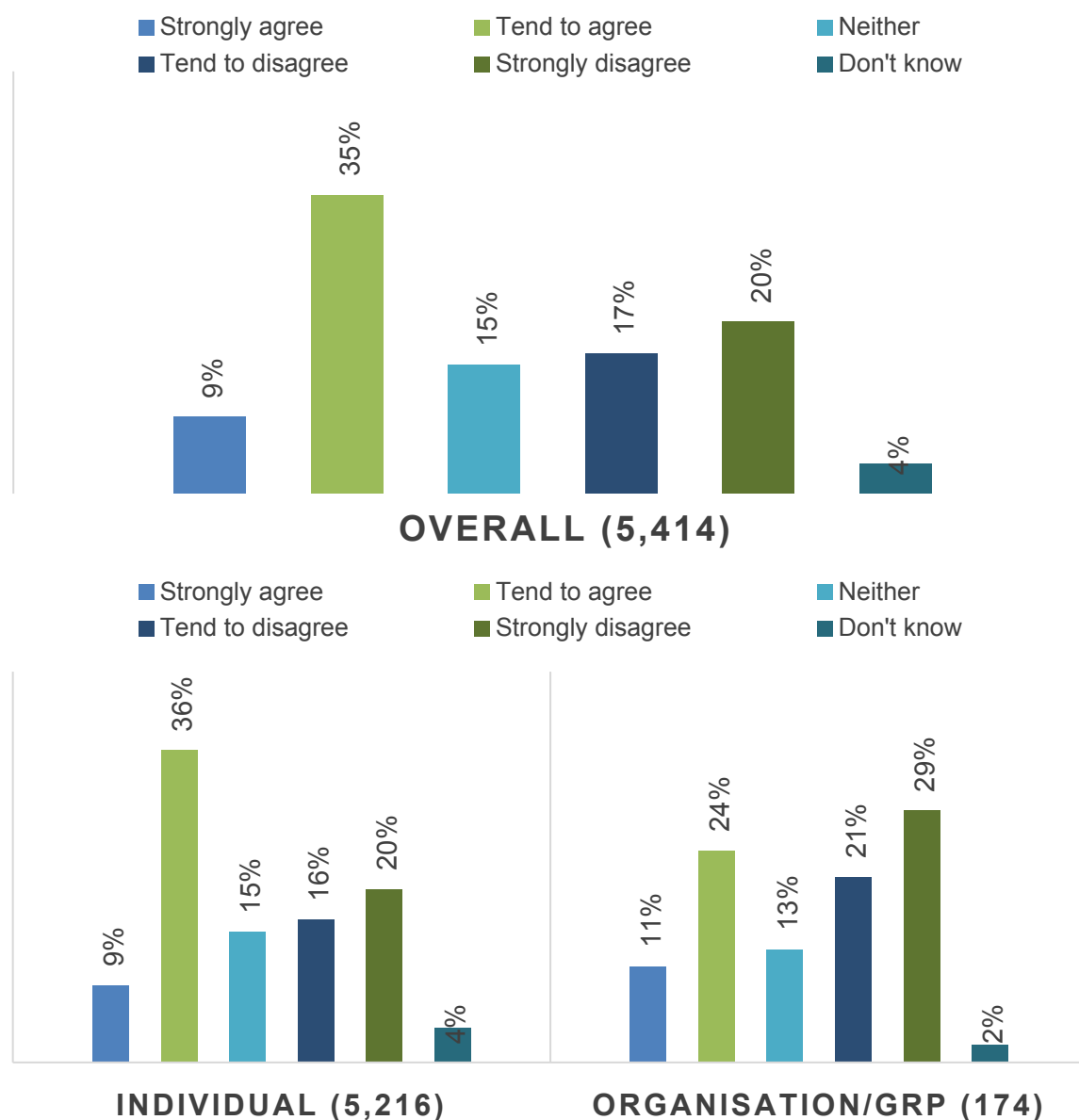
Agreement with the way forward for LRA services

Consultees were then asked to indicate their agreement with the way forward for LRA services as described in the LRA strategy. Figure 3 shows that 44% of all consultees supported this proposal, although a further 37% indicated they disagreed with the way forward as described in the draft strategy. Almost one fifth (19%) indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure.

When analysing the results by respondent type, Figure 3 also shows that organisations/groups (36%) were significantly less likely to agree with the way forward than individuals (45%).

Figure 3: Agreement with the way forward for LRA services

Percentage of respondents



When analysing the results by questionnaire completion method, respondents who completed the questionnaire by post were significantly more likely to agree (47%) with the way forward for LRA services. This compares to 43% who completed the questionnaire online.

Respondents who have used an LRA service in the last 12 months were most likely to disagree with the way forward for LRA services (38% disagreed compared to 12% of respondents who had not used a service in the last 12 months).

All respondents who have visited a library in the last 12 months, were asked which library/libraries they have visited. The libraries they selected were grouped into one of the five proposed tiers (as per Appendix C of the consultation document). Consultees who visited a

Tier one (47%) or Tier two (45%) library were significantly more likely to agree with the way forward for LRA services. This compares to 36% who visited a Tier five library. The main reason for this could be due to the changes in opening hours at smaller, rural libraries and the perceived impact on their communities.

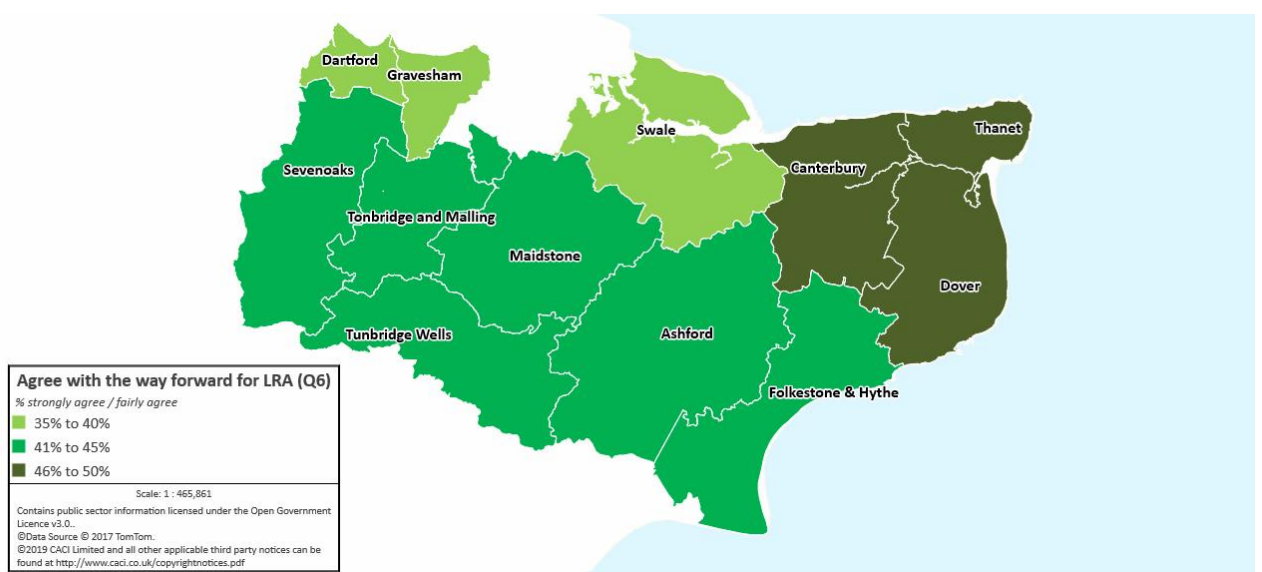
Sub group analysis (Individuals)

Sub group analysis for individuals indicates the following significant differences:

- Men (49%) were significantly more likely to agree with the way forward for LRA services. This compares to 46% of women.
- Residents over 75 (58%) were significantly more likely than all other age groups to agree with the way forward for LRA services (33%-49%). Residents under 50 (33%-36%) were significantly less likely than other age groups to agree with the way forward for LRA services (43%-58%).
- Residents who considered themselves to be carers (41%) were significantly less likely to agree with the way forward for LRA services. This compares to 47% who were not carers.

When analysing the results by geography, respondents who live in East Kent (49%) were significantly more likely than those living in North (36%) or West Kent (44%) to agree with the way forward for LRA services (Map 1).

Map 1: Residents who agreed with the way forward for LRA services (Base: 119-3,746)



All consultees were then given the opportunity to provide comments on the way forward for LRA services. A total of 3,054 provided a valid response, including 'don't knows'. As respondents who stated 'don't know' to question 6 also provided relevant suggestions these have been included in the analysis.

Table 7 summarises the key 'positive' themes for this question. The most common theme related to general agreement with the aims of the strategy or proposals outlined in the consultation document (350 mentions). The second most frequently mentioned theme related to an understanding of the need to make savings or changes to current provision (190 mentions). This is likely because this was detailed in the draft strategy document and a result of ongoing publicity in the national news surrounding cuts to council budgets and the need to make substantial savings in the coming years.

Table 7: Positive themes (base 3,054, total number of valid comments)

Positive theme	Mentions - 'Agree' only	%
Agree with the aims of the strategy/proposal (general comments)	346	11%
Understand the need to make savings/changes to current service provision	190	6%
Agree to shortening opening hours rather than closing libraries	155	5%
Agree with improved use of technology (e.g. self-service etc)	74	2%
Agree with some aspects (e.g. reduced hours instead of closures)	57	2%

Below is a selection of quotes for the top two (positive) themes:

Example quotes from respondents (Agree with the aims of the strategy/proposals)

I agree with your draft strategy and am looking forward to it hopefully being implemented soon.

The position to retain 99 libraries is admirable but is there a real need to have them so close together, so collaboration with other services should be an essential way to protect and retain those locales. I like the idea of consistent hourly opening and the innovation.

Example quotes from respondents (Understand the need to make savings/changes to current provision)

I ticked 'strongly agree' as I am a realist and I realise that the way forward in the current financial climate, is bound to involve some cutbacks. Any strategy which keeps as many libraries as possible open (and this strategy seems to) has my support.

We all need to tighten our belts. If savings can be made to protect our services, we should embrace them.

Table 8, overleaf, summarises the key 'negative' themes for this question. The most common theme overall, related to concerns surrounding cuts to opening hours or services (852 mentions). However, when looking at just the respondents who disagreed with the way forward, most mentions (646 mentions) related to concerns around the impact on the local community.

One of the main impacts on the community highlighted by respondents was the impact on parents and young children. For example, one respondent stated that the library is used for ***“Thriving Bounce and Rhyme groups that parents really depend on”***. Another respondent was concerned that ***“The reduction in hours will significantly impact the ability of children to visit after school”***.

Another impact on the community which was consistently highlighted is the ways that these cuts will impact employment opportunities. With one consultee stating that ***“If the libraries close then I'm worried I won't be able to do all my job searching and then I'll lose money”***. This issue was supported by another respondent who highlighted that ***“The staffing of the library service also contributes to the employment of Kent residents, of which employment opportunities will clearly be negatively affected by this strategy...”***.

The potential impact on the vulnerable groups within the community, such as the elderly and the poor were also highlighted by respondents. One consultee was particularly concerned that ***“There are not many elderly social activities elsewhere or anyone to talk to, maybe the librarian is the only person they speak to weekly...”***. Another respondent voiced concerns that ***“cutting library hours in a time when poorer people, especially children, need access to books, computers and a library environment is a retrograde step”***.

The impact of the cuts and associated impact on the community was also highlighted during the drop-in sessions and correspondence (e.g. letters, emails) received by the Council. One consultee at the Margate drop-in session said, “*Libraries are a home away from home for many people*”. Another consultee who sent a letter to the Council said, “*Libraries are a major asset to the elderly, disabled, etc*”.

Table 8: Negative themes (base 3,054, total number of valid comments)

Negative theme	Mentions- 'Disagree' only	%
Disagree/concerned with cuts to opening hours/services	646	21%
Concerns relating to the impact on the local community	405	13%
Disagree with the strategy (general comments)	283	9%
Cutting services/hours will impact on usage/accessibility	262	9%
Disagree with tiering approach	153	5%
Other concerns (e.g. over reliance on volunteers etc)	101	3%
Concerns about job losses/redundancies	86	3%
Cuts will eventually lead to library closures in the future	41	1%
It is just a cost cutting exercise	34	1%

Below is a selection of quotes for the top two (negative) themes from the complete consultation questionnaires:

Example quotes from respondents (Disagree/concerned with the cuts to opening hours/services)

I do not agree that the opening hours of libraries should be cut. It is an invaluable resource that I use regularly with my daughter.

I don't believe that cutting hours in any library is a good idea. In particular, XXX is a well-used Library in a town which is currently undergoing massive expansion of around 500 homes. Also, the library is in a Gateway building, which also houses the Main Post Office.

Example quotes from respondents (Concerns related to the impact on the local community)

Libraries are core to our community and providing access for people who can't afford books otherwise.

Libraries play a vital role for communities, and reducing their availability may produce short-term financial savings, but will lead to long-term detriment to communities and individuals.

As well as providing positive or negative comments relating to the way forward for LRA services, some respondents also took the opportunity to provide suggestions for the Council to consider. Table 9 provides a summary of the suggestions provided. The need for increased marketing/ promotion of library services and the requirement to be more commercial going forward was also mentioned during the drop-in sessions and in the correspondence received by the Council.

Table 9: Suggestions - Way forward for LRA services (base 3,054, total number of valid comments)

Theme (suggestions)	Mentions	%
Need more information	150	5%
Increased promotion and marketing of libraries is needed	108	4%
Expand or update services/facilities (e.g. range of books etc)	85	3%
Libraries should start being more commercial (e.g. room hire etc)	75	2%
Cost reductions should take place in other areas (e.g. higher paid staff, use of volunteers, etc)	61	2%
Libraries should only be used for library services, not integrated with other services	27	1%
Other (such as reservation fees, more data to inform strategy etc)	214	7%

Suggested ideas or areas for inclusion in the strategy

All consultees were given the opportunity to suggest alternative ideas or areas that should be included in the strategy. A total of 1,876 respondents provided a valid response.

Table 10 shows that the most frequently mentioned suggestion (287 mentions) related to making rooms available for other purposes (such as events or hire etc). This was followed by increased marketing to promote the services of libraries (174 mentions). Some respondents also suggested an making wider use of volunteers (169 mentions). This was also reflected in the additional correspondence received from the council. One resident said, ***“Promotion and marketing is vital but has already been poor in Kent in recent years. You need to work with other library authorities for a national TV or radio commercial”***.

A large number of respondents also suggested that ‘things should stay the same’ and the budgets for libraries should be ring fenced (316 mentions). Finally, some respondents (116

mentions) highlighted queries with the consultation document and/or they required further information (e.g. more information on how the tiers were calculated etc).

Table 10: Suggested ideas or areas for inclusion in the strategy (base 1,876, total number of valid comments)

Theme	Mentions	%
Using rooms for other purposes/room hire/organised events/trainings/clubs/integrate with other services	287	15%
Improve marketing/ encourage people to use libraries	174	9%
Use of volunteers (e.g. community-run libraries)	168	9%
Provide more/better facilities and services (e.g. café/food/faster Wi-Fi/toilets/parking)	166	9%
Ensure opening times are convenient/ meet demand/ideas for revised opening hours	161	9%
Other suggestions (e.g. delivery service, new activities, more visible mobile libraries)	148	8%
Sponsorship or partnerships with local businesses/voluntary organisations	136	7%
Improve links with schools, care homes etc.	104	6%
Charge for some services/raise money/donations etc	97	5%
Better online facilities /improve online accessibility/ develop online offer	84	4%
Update/review/rotate library stock	80	4%
Make better use/increased visibility of librarians	71	4%
Review charges for LRA services	53	3%
Close/reduced hours of less used libraries/use mobile libraries instead	51	3%
Look at needs of individual libraries/review on case by case basis	42	2%
Need to consider library facilities in growing areas	42	2%
Pay/job cuts amongst highest paid Council/councillors	41	2%
Out of hours collection/drop off service/self-service options	34	2%
Improve accessibility (e.g. public transport) to libraries	28	1%
Spread cuts more proportionally across all libraries/areas	23	1%
Cut some services (e.g. DVD/CD loans)/save money in other areas	20	1%
Misc. (Refurbishment costs, improve literacy and less online investment)	48	3%
No change (to opening hours, ring fence cuts etc)	316	17%
Queries on consultation/more information required	116	6%

Overleaf is a selection of quotes for the top three themes for this question:

Example quotes from respondents (Using library space for other purposes)

Incorporating more council services within library spaces to make the most of the buildings and their proximity to town/village centres.

Taking the community aspect one step further, in various locations across the country are community shops and cafes, run by volunteers. If this could be integrated with the library service, what a great way to bring more people into the library, embracing diversity, helping the elderly with loneliness etc.

Example quotes from respondents (Improve marketing and promotion of libraries)

I think more could be done to advertise the services you offer. For example, I had no idea you had an Archive Centre in Maidstone. Or a service called Ask a Librarian. Or a death registration service until recently.

Better advertising of services. KCC is really bad at this. Promotion is awful! Posters in libraries are ok if people use the libraries but many don't. What are KCC doing county wide to attract new customers to our services? Advertising in all doctors' surgeries, or dentists would work, as people wait here. Why not advertise on sides of buses, that everyone sees driving around? Advertise on Kent Radio, Heart or other local radios. This would get the word out.

Example quotes from respondents (Use of volunteers)

The Library services already use volunteer staffing but could this be expanded in order to keep libraries open for longer.

Could more use be made of volunteers, there are many lonely people in our communities who would relish the idea of volunteering to make them feel more part of the community and help with their levels of self-worth-volunteering in libraries needs to be advertised and supported far more.

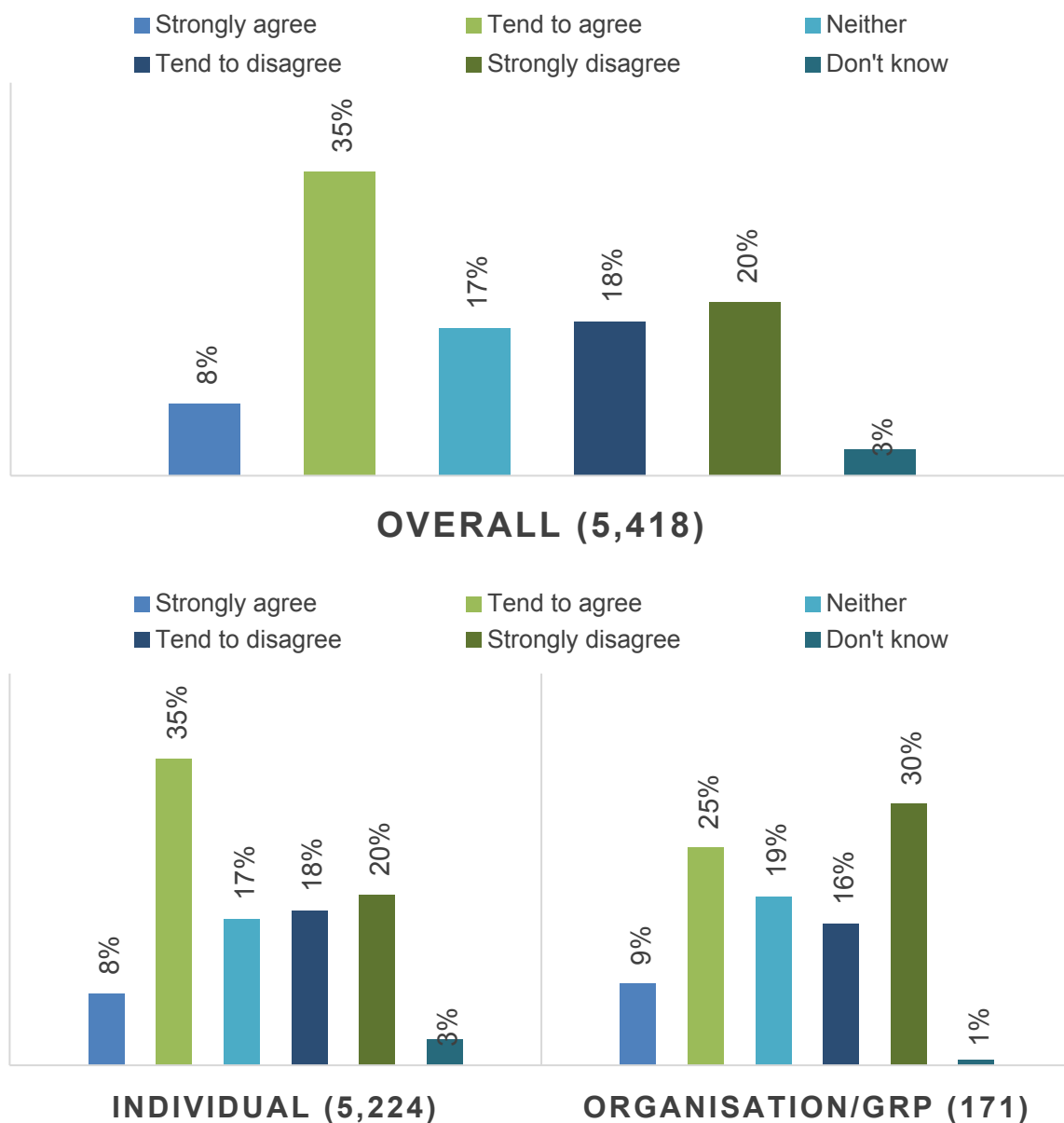
Agreement with tiering approach

All consultees were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with KCC's proposal to arrange 99 libraries into five tiers. 43% of all consultees supported this approach, whilst 38% disagreed. 19% of all consultees indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure.

When analysing the results by respondent type, Figure 4 also shows that individuals (43%) are significantly more likely to agree with the way forward than organisations/groups (34%).

Figure 4: Agreement with the tiering approach

Percentage of respondents



The results by questionnaire completion method were almost identical (42% agree for postal and 43% online).

Respondents who have used an LRA service in the last 12 months were most likely to disagree with the tiering approach for libraries (38% compared to 16% of respondents who have not used the service in the last 12 months). Consultees who visited a Tier one (45%) or two (42%) library were significantly more likely to agree with the Council’s proposed approach. This compares to 33% who visited a Tier five library.

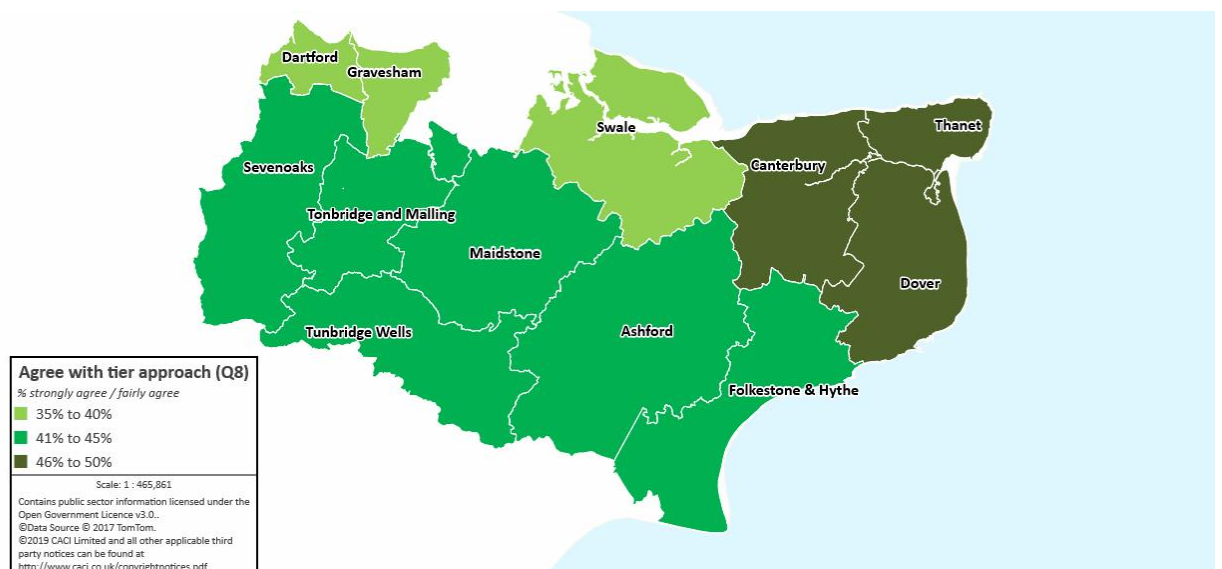
Sub group analysis (Individuals)

Sub group analysis for individuals indicates the following significant differences:

- Residents over 75 (54%) were significantly more likely than all other age groups to agree with the tiering approach (34%-49%). Residents under 50 (34%-35%) were significantly less likely than all other age groups to agree the tiering approach (44%-54%).
- Residents with a disability (40%) were significantly less likely to agree with the new tiering approach than those without a disability (46%).
- Residents with caring responsibilities (39%) were significantly less likely to agree with the tiering approach. This compares to 46% of residents without this responsibility.
- White residents (46%) were significantly more likely than BME residents (39%) to agree with the tiering approach.

When analysing the results by geography, respondents who live in East Kent (46%) had the highest level of agreement with the tiering approach. (Map 2). Please note: there were no significant differences when compared to other districts.

Map 2: Residents who agreed with the tiering approach

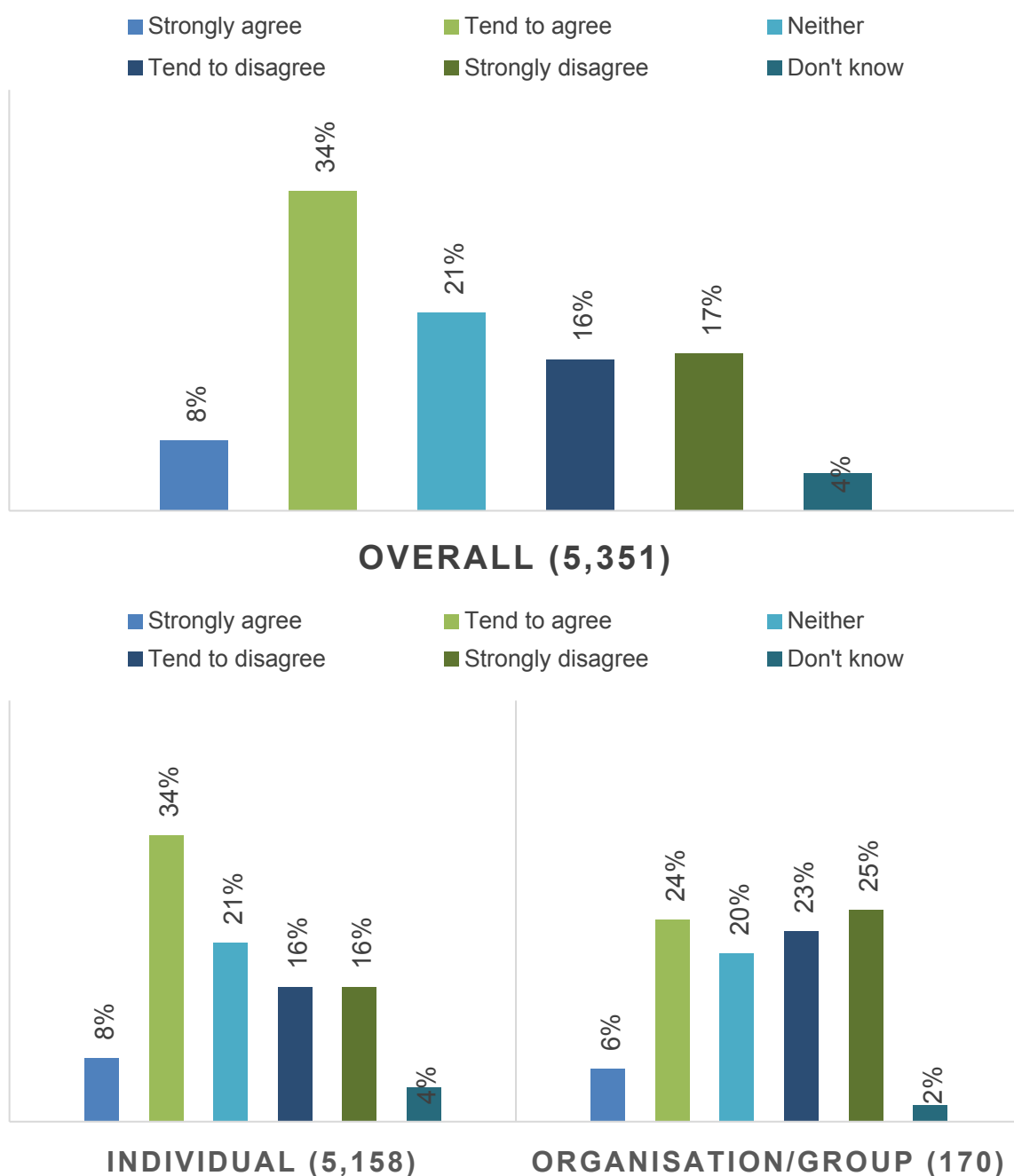


Agreement with the criteria used to tier libraries

All consultees were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the criteria used to tier libraries. 42% of all consultees agreed with the criteria used compared to 33% that disagreed. The remaining 25% of all consultees indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed or didn't know. When analysing the results by respondent type, Figure 5 also shows that individuals (42%) were significantly more likely to agree with the way forward than organisations/groups (31%).

Figure 5: Agreement with criteria used to tier libraries

Percentage of respondent



Respondents who had used an LRA service in the last 12 months were most likely to disagree with the criteria used (33% compared to 15% of respondents who have not used the service in the last 12 months).

Consultees who visited a Tier five (30%) library were significantly less likely than other tiers to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries (35%-45%). All respondents were asked to provide their reasons for their response to this question. Detailed analysis of the open-ended responses is detailed below but the most common reasons related to the fact the criteria should be more tailored to local needs (e.g. demographic profile, size, deprivation levels etc) and the need for more detailed analysis of usage patterns (e.g. analysis over a longer period of time).

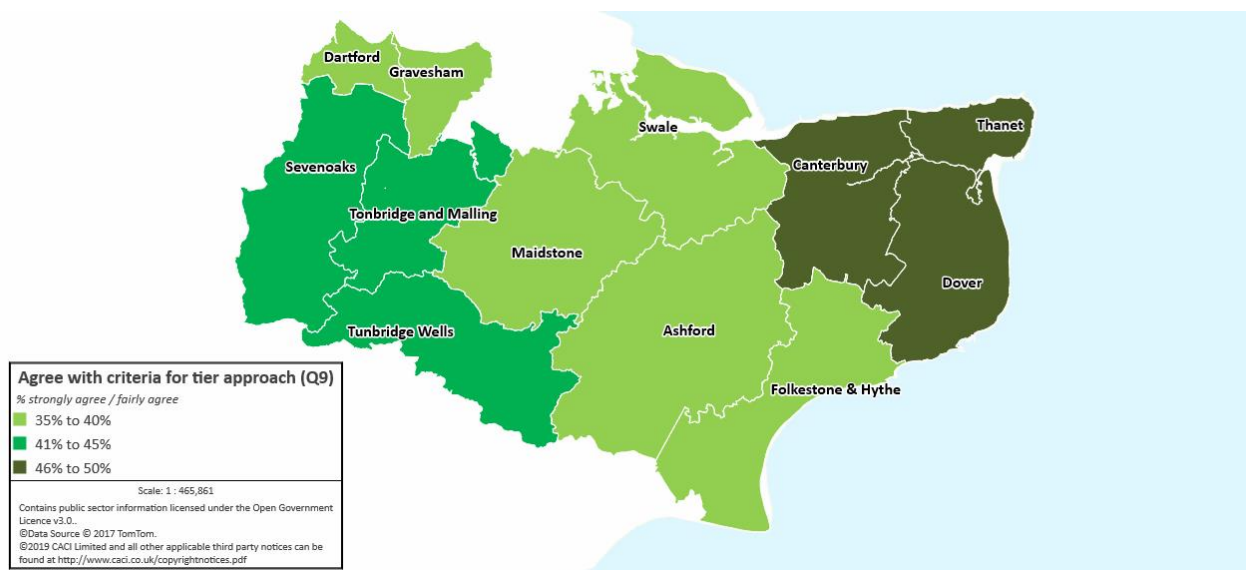
Sub group analysis (Individuals)

Sub group analysis for individuals indicates the following significant differences:

- Men (47%) were significantly more likely to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries. This compares to 42% of women.
- Residents aged 75+ (53%) were significantly more likely to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries than any other age group (36%-47%).
- Residents with a disability (39%) were least likely to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries. This compares to 45% of respondents without a disability.
- Residents with caring responsibilities (38%) were less likely to agree with the criteria used to tier libraries. This compares to 45% of residents without.

When analysing the results by geography, respondents who live in East Kent (46%) were significantly more likely than those living in West Kent (42%) to agree with the tiering approach. (Map 3 overleaf).

Map 3: Residents who agreed with the criteria used to tier libraries



Suggestions for alternative criteria for tiering libraries

All consultees were asked to provide suggestions for alternative criteria for tiering libraries. A total of 1,775 respondents provided a valid comment.

Their responses have been analysed and categorised into themes and are presented in Table 11. Individual responses could have contained more than one theme and as such the total presented in the table may be higher than the number of responses.

The most common themes focused on the need to take tailor the criteria to suit local needs such as the population size, demographics and deprivation levels (580 mentions). This is followed by a need for greater analysis on usage patterns (257 mentions).

Table 11: Suggestions for alternative criteria for tiering libraries (base 1,775, total number of valid comments)

Theme	Mentions	%
Tailored to suit local needs (e.g. population size/growth demographics etc)	580	33%
More detailed analysis of usage patterns (e.g. analysis over a longer time period and not just August, etc)	257	14%
Distance from other libraries/community facilities	148	8%
Services & social events offered at individual libraries	106	6%
Consider footfall at different times of day	55	3%
Should be based on more criteria or more than five tiers	53	3%
Proximity to schools, colleges etc	52	3%
Need to consider customer service or helpfulness of staff	34	2%
Wi-Fi/online use at individual libraries	33	2%

More weighting on number of loans/unique visits	22	1%
Allow for regular review of tiers/footfall	21	1%
Other comments		
<i>Other (e.g. social mobility, economic/financial/productivity uses etc)</i>	233	13%
<i>General comments – disagreement with tiering proposal</i>	550	31%

Example quotes from respondents (Tailored to suit local population/demographics)

I am opposed to a one size fits all formulaic approach which does not take into account the needs of local communities.

Age and mobility of the population within the catchment area should be a major (criterion).

Areas with large numbers of unemployed/disadvantaged people who will regularly need to access computers for job searches etc should have access to longer opening hours - this should be one of the criteria.

Example quotes from respondents (Dependent on usage/more detailed analysis of usage)

Opening times should be dictated by current demand and should be reviewed at least annually.

It should be based on library usage rather than size of place it's located.

Base it on the number of people using the facility rather than location. I have often been into XXX library and the number of people using it is comparable to XXX at times, but the proposed opening hours are significantly different.

Other comments on the tiering proposal

All consultees were given the opportunity to provide any other comments on the tiering proposal including name suggestions. A total of 1,158 respondents provided a valid comment.

Their responses have been analysed and categorised into themes and are presented in Tables 12 and 13. Individual responses could have contained more than one theme and as such the total presented in the table may be higher than the number of responses. The most frequently 'positive' theme related to agreement with the tiering approach (49 mentions).

Table 12: Positive themes (base 1,158, total number of valid comments)

Positive theme	Mentions	%
Agree with tiering approach (e.g. happy with the strategy, hope it goes ahead)	49	4%
Logical criteria	27	2%
Understand the reasons for tiering	25	2%
Positive about revised/unchanged opening hours	17	1%

Below is a selection of quotes for the positive themes:

Example quote from respondents (Agreement with tiering approach)

I agree with the tiering proposal as long as it means that no libraries will be closed.

Example quote from respondents (Logical criteria)

I think this is a logical and results-based approach that will provide the limited resources in a most effective and efficient way. The whole strategy has to optimise the resources as there is no open-ended provision of library support.

Example quote from respondents (Understand the reasons for tiering)

Any attempt to limit access to libraries is regrettable, but I can understand why it is necessary. As long as all libraries are kept open even with slightly reduced hours, that is the important thing. Please never consider closing down libraries, as has happened in other parts of the country.

Example quote from respondents (Positive about revised/unchanged opening hours)

I am very pleased to see that Sunday opening is being maintained at the XXX Library. This is a boon to the local community.

Table 13 summarises the 'negative' themes relating to the tiering proposals. The most frequently mentioned related to disagreement with the proposed cuts and changes (303 mentions) and general disagreement with the tiering proposal (182 mentions).

Table 13: Negative themes (base 1,158, total number of valid comments)

Negative theme	Mentions	%
Disagreement with the proposed cuts and changes to opening times/staff	303	26%
General disagreement with the tiering proposal	182	16%
Library placed in wrong Tier	150	13%
Proposal is over-simplistic (e.g. should consider demographics, community needs etc)	147	13%
Impact on community (e.g. vulnerable)	117	10%
Proposal not clear/missing information (e.g. how opening times were determined)	77	7%
Waste of Money/Time	27	2%
Negative impact on small libraries	19	2%

Below is a selection of quotes for the top two negative themes:

Example quotes from respondents (Disagreement with the cuts and changes)

Libraries need investment, not cuts. They are the cornerstone of education.

Any reduction in library time is unacceptable.

Example quotes from respondents (General disagreement with the tiering proposal)

I don't agree with the tiered approach. If you're going to make cuts, all libraries should face these equally. Otherwise you're fairly obviously going to have the effect of wiping out smaller community libraries. Maybe that's the aim - in which case let's not pretend otherwise.

I think it's a shame to Band libraries into tiers. It would be better to look at each specific library use and make decisions based on that for the opening hours, rather than it being a universal opening time based on each tier.

As part of the same question, respondents were also given the opportunity to offer alternative names for the proposed tiers. 16 respondents said they were happy with the names proposed in the consultation document. 33 either disliked the names or did not feel 'names' were necessary. 49 respondents provided alternative suggestions. Some examples included:

- IE town library, Community library and Rural library;
- Town Extra, Town Community Extra, Community and Community Express;
- Top Rank, Middle Rank and Bottom Rank;
- Numbers 1 - 5 or letters A – E;

Any other comments on the Council's draft strategy

All consultees were given the final opportunity to comment on the draft strategy. A total of 1,985 respondents provided a valid comment.

Their responses have been analysed and categorised into themes and are presented in Table 14. One response could have contained more than one theme and as such the total presented in the table may be higher than the number of responses. Most of the themes in this question are already covered in other questions.

The most frequently mentioned (and only) 'positive' theme related to an agreement with the proposals (269 mentions). This may be because the proposals only relate to reduction in opening hours and no closures are planned at this stage.

The most 'negative' comment related to the impact on the local community particularly amongst the elderly and vulnerable (566 mentions). For example, one respondent comments on the impact it will have on poorer parents within the community and elderly who visit the library to avoid social isolation. This respondent said ***“Just think it's a shame, penalising staff, parents who can't afford books for their children, limiting the friendly & warm spaces for elderly folk to go out from home”***.

This is followed (and potentially linked) to the disagreement with reduced hours and/or concerns about future closures (467 mentions).

Table 14: Themes – any other comments on draft strategy (base 1,985, total number of valid comments)

Theme	Mentions	%
POSITIVE		
Agree with the proposals (e.g. no libraries closing)	269	14%
NEGATIVE		
Impact on community particularly amongst the vulnerable, elderly etc)	566	28%
Disagree with reduced hours/concerns about future closures	467	24%
Don't understand reasons for cuts/keep things the same	143	7%
Concerns about job cuts/redundancies	132	7%
SUGGESTIONS/OTHER COMMENTS		
Feedback or queries on strategy document/tiering criteria	408	21%
Review alternative options (e.g. self-service, volunteers etc)	206	10%
Suggestions for alternative services /review services available	154	8%
More choice/facilities/resources in library	108	5%
Greater promotion/targeted marketing of services	85	4%
Use/rent library space for other purposes (e.g. community events)	68	3%
Rely on volunteers	38	2%
Review reservation charges	34	2%
Other	159	8%

Below is a selection of positive quotes:

Example quotes from respondents (Agreement with the proposals)

I am delighted such a positive approach is being taken to do as much as possible to retain the library facilities and services, despite the budget restraints.

It is a preferable and fairer proposal than closing libraries, so I am broadly in favour.

Overleaf is a selection of negative quotes for the top two themes:

Example quotes from respondents (Impact on the community)

I don't feel you should close any of the libraries as many elderly people and young mothers with children use them and it is a chance to interact with other people.

It is important the library remains an essential part of the community and even small villages rely on them, particularly elderly and parents with small children. Sometimes tiering may take away the smaller less frequented libraries which still have a vital role to play.

Example quote from respondents (Disagree with reduced hours/concerns about future closures)

The strategy looks set to start libraries on the path to decline in use by cutting hours in well used libraries & cutting staff, which are the libraries biggest asset. It appears this is the desired effect to give the excuse to legitimately close libraries, which always causes uproar, & is politically unpopular. Be brave. Close underused libraries & improve the core libraries.

Comments on the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA)

Kent County Council completed two Equality Impact Assessments to assess the impact of the proposals on residents, one on the overall strategy and a second on the Library Tiering proposal. 91% of consultees did not answer this question, had nothing to add or their response did not relate to the question asked. Table 15 shows that 4% provided a positive comment and 65% of those answering made a cautionary or negative comment. 24% felt libraries should be accessible to all and therefore felt the EqIA was a waste of money. The remaining 7% felt the EqIA should cover more areas (such as the impact on rural communities and local literacy levels etc).

Table 15: Comments on the Equality Impact Assessment (base 614, total number of valid comments)

Theme	Mentions	%
POSITIVE		
It is all inclusive/fair	22	4%
NEGATIVE		
Impact on those with disabilities	99	16%
Impact on vulnerable/poorer communities (e.g. those who cannot afford PCs, consider social needs of people who live alone / are socially isolated)	96	16%
Impact on elderly	74	12%
Impact on children	68	11%
Impact on students	27	4%
Impact on employed	26	4%
Impact on ethnicity/religion	8	1%
Impact on gender	6	1%
OTHER		
Libraries should be accessible to everyone/EqIA waste of money	150	24%
Needs to cover more areas (e.g. rural and smaller communities, literacy levels etc)	46	7%

Below is a selection of comments:

Example quotes from respondents

It seems all inclusive.

Some of the smaller libraries can be in more deprived areas where people may not be able to afford transport to bigger libraries - I hope that has been considered.

Equality impact assessments are pointless exercises. People either use libraries or they do not. They are accessible to all, so don't need a strategy in this area.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Appendix B: Consultation engagement record

Appendix C: Summary of drop-in session discussions

Appendix A: Copy of questionnaire

Libraries, Registration and Archives Draft Strategy 2019 2022
Consultation Questionnaire



Libraries, Registration and Archives Draft Strategy

Consultation Questionnaire

21 November 2018 to 29 January 2019

We are seeking your views on our draft Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA) strategy and proposals to introduce a tiering model for our 99 libraries.

What information do you need before completing the questionnaire?

We recommend that you read the LRA strategy document before filling in this questionnaire. All consultation material is available on our website kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy or in hard copy from any Kent library.

We are also hosting 20 consultation drop-in events across the county where you can speak to members of our LRA team. Visit our website or libraries for more information.

This questionnaire can be completed on our website. Alternatively, you can fill in this paper form and return it via:

Freepost LRA STRATEGY CONSULTATION

(please use this exact format – the consultation name must be in capitals)

Please ensure your response reaches us by 23:59 on Tuesday 29 January 2019.

Alternative Formats: If you need this questionnaire or any of the consultation documents in an alternative format, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine which is monitored during office hours.

Privacy: Kent County Council collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. Kent County Council respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Read the full Privacy Notice on kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy.



Section 1 – About you

Q1. Are you responding...?

Select the option from the list below that most closely represents how you will be responding to this consultation. *Select **one** option only.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	As an individual
<input type="checkbox"/>	As Carer or relative of a service user
<input type="checkbox"/>	As a member of KCC staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	As a KCC Member / Councillor
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of an educational establishment, such as a school or college
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a Parish / Town / Borough / District Council in an official capacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a business
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)
<input type="checkbox"/>	As a representative of a local community group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify: <input type="text"/>

Q1a. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us the name of the organisation.

Q2. Please tell us the first five digits of your postcode:

Please do not reveal your whole postcode. We use this to help us to analyse our data. It will not be used to identify who you are.



Q3. How did you find out about this consultation?

Select all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper article
<input type="checkbox"/>	Received an email
<input type="checkbox"/>	From a friend or relative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Media (Facebook or Twitter)
<input type="checkbox"/>	At a Library, Register office, Archive or Gateway
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poster displayed on a community notice board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kent.gov.uk website
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify: <input type="text"/>



Q4. Have you used any of the following Library, Registration or Archive (LRA) services in the last 12 months?

Select *all that apply*.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Visited a Kent library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a Kent library service online, e.g. eBook, eMagazine, eNewspaper or eAudiobook or Ask a Kent Librarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visited the Kent archive search room at the Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone
<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a Kent archive service online, e.g. ordered a digital image or requested conservation work
<input type="checkbox"/>	Held or attended a wedding or citizenship ceremony at one of the register offices in Kent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Been married by one of KCC's registrars / celebrants at a venue of your choice in Kent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered a birth or death
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have not used any Kent LRA services in the last 12 months
<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other LRA service please specify

Q4a. If you have visited a Kent library in the last 12 months, please tell us which library / libraries you visited in the box below:



Section 2 – Our Strategy

Q5. Was the LRA strategy easy to understand?

*Select **one** option.*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q5a. Please tell us why in the box below.



Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the way forward for LRA services as described in the draft strategy?

Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q6a. Please add any comments in the box below.



Q7. Do you have any alternative ideas or areas you think the strategy should cover that it does not currently?

Write in the box below.

Q8. We are proposing to arrange our 99 libraries into five tiers. Each tier will have a consistent level of opening hours. See page 31 of the draft strategy for more information.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach?

Select one option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the criteria we have used to tier libraries? See page 32 of the draft strategy.

Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Q9a. Do you have any alternative criteria you would like to suggest for tiering libraries?

Write in the box **below**.



Q10. Please add any other comments you have on our tiering proposal, including name suggestions for the proposed tiers, in the box below.



Q11. We have completed initial Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) on the draft strategy and the proposal to tier our libraries.

An EqIA is a tool to assess the impact any service change, policy or strategy would have on age, gender, gender identity, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership and Carer's responsibilities. The EqIA is available online at www.kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy or on request.

If you have any comments about the Equality Impact Assessments, please provide them here:

Q12. Finally, do you have any other comments to make about our draft strategy?

Write in the box below.



Section 3 - More about you

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we are asking you these questions. We won't share the information you give us with anyone else. We'll use it only to help us make decisions and improve our services.

If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you don't have to.

It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Q13. Are you.....? Select one option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q14. Is your Gender the same as your birth? Select one option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q15. Which of these age groups applies to you? Select one option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	0-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-59	<input type="checkbox"/>	65-74	<input type="checkbox"/>	85 + over
<input type="checkbox"/>	16-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	35-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	75-84	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

**Q16. Do you regard yourself as belonging to a particular religion or holding a belief?
Select one option.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say
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Q16a. If you answered 'Yes' to 16, which of the following applies to you?

Select **one** option.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<i>Please write in below</i> |

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q17. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

Please select **one** option.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

Q17a. If you answered 'Yes' to Q17, please tell us the type of impairment that applies to you.

You may have more than one type of impairment, so select **all that apply**. If none of these applies to you, please select 'Other', and give brief details of the impairment you have.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Physical impairment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sensory Impairment (hearing, sight or both) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Longstanding illness or health condition, or epilepsy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mental health condition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learning disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) |
-



A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be Carers.

Q18. Are you a Carer?

Select **one** option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q19. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong?

Select **one** option. (Source: 2011 Census)

White English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arab	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Asian or Asian British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>		

***Other Ethnic Group - If your ethnic group is not specified on the list, please describe it in the box below**



Q20. Are you?

Select one option

<input type="checkbox"/>	Heterosexual/Straight	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi/Bisexual	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay woman/Lesbian	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay man	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	

Thank you for taking the time to complete this consultation response.

How we use your information

The information you provide on this form is collected and dealt with in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

We are relying on the lawful bases of the 'performance of a public task in the public interest' to process your personal data for a specific purpose of facilitating a consultation.

We also rely on 'processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest' as the lawful basis on which we collect and use your special category data for the purposes of equalities monitoring.

Kent County Council will share your details with services within the Council who are responsible for management of this consultation. Responses will be shared with a third-party supplier who has been contracted to independently analyse the consultation responses. Any information given will not be used to identify you.

Responses will be held securely stored for the period of 6 years.

Appendix B: Engagement record

Stakeholder Groups	Consultation Method/Activity	Details	Accessibility Requirement
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Team briefing • Trade Union reps briefed • Briefing LRA Staff & Volunteers • Wider KCC staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting 5 November 2018 • Meetings 5/6 November • Webinar 6 November 2018 • Promoted on KNet homepage, KMail, Directorate newsletters and on KCC-wide building TV screens throughout the consultation 	
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper at cabinet committee 15 November 2018 • Member Information Bulletin from Information Services Team 17 November 2018 • Hard Copy consultation material at Members' desk 21 November 2018 • Attended member briefing sessions 6th December- Swale and Canterbury & Dartford and Gravesham. 12 December Thanet and Dover 	
LRA customers – face to face promotion	<p>Between 21 November 2018 - 26 January 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and hard copy questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available and promoted at all service points • Postcards handed out or attention drawn to the consultation during regular groups/meetings (book clubs, baby rhyme time etc.) at Libraries during the consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibitions/display stands in accessible parts of Library buildings • Consultation material in plain English • Hard copies of consultation document and questionnaire available in libraries, Gateways, register

			<p>offices, County Hall and on request</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freepost address for hard copy questionnaire returns for customers to use. • Easy Read version of the consultation document for people with learning disabilities – 2 copies requested by email • Consultation document available in Large Print - 4 copies requested (three by email, one by phone) • Details of how people can request the consultation documents in alternative formats on all promotional material • Library and Gateway staff briefed to provide support if required • Consultation document and questionnaire available in an accessible Word version for people using audio transcription software • Consultation document and questionnaire available in Nepalese as a translation was requested
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<p>LRA customers - online promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct LRA email shot • Corporate e-mailshot • Facebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailchimp newsletter sent 5 December 173,938, opened by 53,140 (approx. 30%) • Invite sent via the consultation directory to 704 registered users who have expressed an interest in being kept informed of LRA and General Interest consultations • Posts on LRA Facebook pages: Main countywide FB page: 21 November 7,193 people reached; 980 Engagements; 65 shares 23 November 2,147 people reached; 146 Engagements; 11 shares 26 November 7,743 people reached; 565 Engagements; 38 shares 30 November 3,225 people reached; 190 Engagements; 9 shares 9 December 589 people reached; 12 Engagements; 1 share 11 December 4,127 people reached; 169 Engagements; 17 shares 14 December 1,684 people reached; 134 Engagements; 5 shares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRA public computers • Website 	<p>18 December 2,447 people reached; 91 Engagements; 8 shares</p> <p>2 January 867 people reached; 13 Engagements; 2 shares</p> <p>22 January 1,756 people reached; 105 Engagements; 19 shares</p> <p>29 January 2,379 people reached; 147 Engagements; 12 shares</p> <p>Also shared locally on district LRA FB pages each time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation featured on library computer welcome screens • Downloads from KCC website <p>Consultation document: 10,728</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF document 8665 • Accessible word document 490 • PDF Large Print 85 • Accessible word Large Print 37 • Easy Read: 1443 • Nepalese Translation 8 <p>Questionnaire: 447</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible word document 447 <p>FAQs: 563</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF document 352 • Accessible word document 211 	
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		<p>Equality Impact Assessment, Tiering Proposal: 360</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF document 252 • Word document 108 <p>Equality Impact Assessment, Draft Strategy: 418</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF document 313 • Word document 104 <p>Proposed tiering model data: 587</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF document 452 • Word document 135 	
<p>Wider Kent residents – may well not use the services at all or irregular users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 x Library drop in sessions advertised widely to encourage everyone to attend • Press releases • Television • Radio • Press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 total customer conversations • Press release 21 November 2018 • Press release 17 January 2019 • 2 x recorded items on KMTV • Featured on BBC Radio Kent on 17, 26, 27, 28 January with a potential listenership of 68,000. • Featured in county-wide print and online newspapers, including Kent Messenger with a potential readership of 20,800. • Featured in several local newspapers, online and in 	As above

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Online • Other 	<p>print, including, KM Faversham News, Sittingbourne News Extra, Times of Tonbridge, Folkestone and Hythe Express, KM Dartford Messenger and KM Sheerness Times Guardian</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweets and posts from KCC's corporate social media accounts • Facebook adverts to non LRA users: People reached 11,760; Engagement 1,435 • District Councils asked to re-tweet posts • Banner on Kent.gov homepage • Posters and postcards in public buildings distributed locally 	
Other stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email 	<p>Consultation detail emailed to the following on 21 November & 14 January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beanstalk • Childminding Service Manager, The Education People • All KCC Children's Centres (68) • Ashford Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Canterbury City Council (to leader and CEO) • Dartford Borough Council (to Managing Director) • Dover District Council (to leader and CEO) 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folkestone & Hythe District Council (to leader and Head of Paid Service) • Gravesham Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Maidstone Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Sevenoaks District Council (to leader and CEO) • Swale Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Thanet District Council (to leader and CEO) • Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (to leader and CEO) • Early Help and Preventative Services (to the Director of Integrated Children's Services) • East Kent Mencap (to the Strategic Operations Manager and the Valuing People Now officer) • Folkestone MIND • Hi-Kent • Kent Prisons (all governors) • Home Education (to the County Access to Education Manager) • East Kent Housing Association (to Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe and Thanet offices) • Hastoe Housing Association • Housing 21 • Hyde Housing Association 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moat Housing • Sage Housing Association • Salvation Army Housing Association • West Kent Housing Association • Inclusion Support Service Kent (to the virtual Head Teacher for GRT, The Education People) • KCC Rainbow Staff Forum • Kent Association for the Blind (to the Head of Client Services and Team Leader) • KCC Level Playing Field staff group • Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services • Mental Health Action • Age UK • Arts Council England • CILIP (to the CEO) • Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport • Department for Work and Pensions • General Register Office (GRO) • Libraries Connected, previously SCL (to the CEO) • Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust (to the Head of Library Services) • East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (to the Knowledge Services Manager, Clinical Outreach Librarian and Clinical Librarian) • Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (to the 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone & Mid Kent Mind • Rethink • Skillnet Group • SNAAP (Special Needs Advisory & Activities Project) • Take Off • The Parents' Consortium • Tunbridge Wells Access Group • Dover Access & Mobility • Alzheimers Society • Compaid • Headway • Leonard Cheshire • The Field Lane Foundation • Avenues • Healthwatch Kent • West Kent Mind • Maidstone & Mid Kent Mind • Maidstone Mencap • Take Off Folkestone • Dartford & Gravesham District Partnership Group • Kent Learning Disability Partnership Board • Canterbury Hard Of Hearing Club • Maidstone Mobility Team • International Glaucoma Association • Community Alcohol Partnerships • Aspen • North Kent Independent Advisory Scheme • Gay Outdoors Club • Metro Centre (Kent & Medway) • Thanet Leisure Force • University of Kent Student Union LGBT Group 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bengali Association of Lewisham and Kent • Bells of Revival Worldwide Ministries • Diversity House • Four by Four Bhangra Youth Club • Guru Nanak Day Centre • Guru Nanak Hockey Club • Indian Overseas Congress Group UK • Kent Zimbabwe Society - Kent Union • Maidstone Nepalese Community • Polish Association in Kent • Refugees Group • Zen • Maidstone Baptist • NWR • WKFWI • West Kent MCA • The Freedom Club • Transgender Peer Associates (TGPals) • Kent Council of Christians and Jews • Kent Liberal Jewish Community • Margate Mosque • North Kent Council for Interfaith Relations • Sikh Education & Cultural Association UK/NWKIC • Thanet & District Reform Jewish Community • Thanet Inter-faith • Global Generation Church • Kent Refugee Action Network (KRAN) • Young refugee & asylum seekers group • British Red Cross • KRAN Refugee Youth Hub • Kent Kindness 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Refugee Action Group • Migrant Help • SE Strategic Partnership for Migration • Carers First • Involve Kent • Carers Ashford • Kent Young Carers • Carers Support (Canterbury, Dover & Thanet) • Rethink Sahayak Carers Service • Carers First in Kent & Medway • Carers First in South West Kent • Involve Carers Kent • Advocacy for All • The Bridge Trust • Caring Hands • Tunbridge Wells Churches Street Teams • House of Mercy - help single homeless • West Kent YMCA 16-25 yrs. • Emmaus, Dover • Folkestone Rainbow Centre • Social Enterprise Kent CIC • Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce • Active Business Group (ABG) Networking Association • Thanet & East Kent Chamber • Stronger Kent Communities 	
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		<p>Consultation communicated at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Safeguarding Children Board • Kent Safeguarding Children Board – online safety sub group • Kent & Medway Growth Hub • Kent Youth County Council 12 January • Children’s Centre meeting (with Improvement Officer, Information & Intelligence) • Booktrust (with Regional Manager) • Home Education meeting (with County Access to Education Manager - for Elective Home Education families) • Featured in Kelsi Newsletter 	
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email 	<p>KCC Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email from Mr. Hill to all KCC Members requesting promotion to their constituents 	
Members of Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from Mr. Hill to all Kent MPs 	

Appendix C: Drop-in session discussions

Library	Summary of questions or comments
Ashford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shut other libraries and put hours into town centres • Under-used building now • Need private sector partnership or sponsorship
Deal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile service is useful • “You’re not closing are you”? • Not concerned as retired can use library whenever convenient • Small part time libraries are not so useful. • Doesn’t think this is a real consultation, it is meaningless. Too few questions, waste of money
Dover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots mainly around cuts/closures • Felt questionnaire/strategy was a done deal • Need more promotion • Main concerns related to reduced hours particularly amongst communities who use it the most • Concerned this is the first step to closures • Concerned Dover is tier 2 – busy library. • Community uses – where will people go? • Worried it will eventually close?
Folkestone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of interest in the tiering • Should be open earlier on a Sunday • Please keep public access to PCs • Limited buses on a Sunday • Ask the lottery for additional funding
Herne Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could charge for books • Where was consultation advertised in Herne Bay? • How will the hours be arranged? • All about cuts, people at the top have all the money • Keep the hours as they are • Staff at Herne Bay so helpful, helping people choose audio books • Lovely staff • Hours reduction would be OK
Margate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals seem OK, reasonable • Less impact on retirees, have more flexibility time wise • Charge for events • Staff -how will they cope with increased pressure of different services • How will people who can’t complete form be able to input? • Worried about closures, Margate won’t close presumably

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> because of partnership with Gateway? “Libraries are a home away from home for many people” Thanet 2nd most deprived area & elderly population in Kent Read strategy thought it was fair Asked why do you have to reduce your budget?
Meopham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeline & if a decision has already been made? % of budget that £1 million equates to? Why have fees and charges been introduced? Look at other areas where revenues can be made Open Plus access being increased? How are hours determined/ will be reduced? Will staffing be reduced? How are stats collated? Concerns about groups, local history, availability & staffing Concerns about closures
Ramsgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of students use library for study Libraries are a thing of the past Very unhappy about Newington reductions Very important to be able to access libraries more More adult classes at Ramsgate 80p too much, no concessions for pensioners Library has provided an excellent service
Sevenoaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions raised re: opening hours How will the closure hours be determined? How to encourage move to use the library and reach out to those that don't use IT How many hours will the library close for? Why does this consultation not link into education with KCC (Adult Education)? Potential to link into Higher Education more?
Sheerness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of hours What was the cost of the consultation?
Sittingbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why no county councillors available to answer questions?
Tenterden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleased Council will ask locals about the best hours to open Concerned about need for savings Can't understand why Sheerness is in the tier above compared to Tenterden Should tie open hours into bus times Opposed to any cuts in opening hours Tenterden is isolated if use public transport Tenterden needs to be open more (i.e. until 9pm every day) as it's a rural location and people come from other places
Tonbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Libraries should not close Hours should not be cut

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hildenborough Library makes a real difference and should not have its hours cut, it's in the wrong tier• Get Tourist Information in the building• Concerns re: opening hours• Please keep libraries open• Provides a wonderful service
Tunbridge Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asked about the hub and whether reservation charges would still be in place• Asked when moving to the Hub