DATAORCHARD

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Final Report on Herefordshire Council's 2016 Library and Customer Services Consultation

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to all those who responded and took part in this consultation, and the staff who allowed us to ask people questions in libraries, customer service centres and training centres.

Executive summary

Data Orchard was commissioned by Herefordshire Council to research preferences and patterns of use of libraries and customer service centres across the county. To understand more about why some people don't use libraries and customer service centres and what services might encourage them to do so; to explore all possible options and impact on any changes to libraries and customer services centres. The key findings are presented here with further detail given in the full report and appendices.

USERS OF LIBRARIES & CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

There were 2,254 responses to the user survey: just over a 1,000 online; 71 face to face interviews in most of the library and customer service centres; the rest were paper surveys from all of the library and customer service centres in Herefordshire.

Pattern of visits to libraries and customer service centres

- Compared to the 2013 survey, a higher proportion of respondents visit centres in Leominster and Ross-on-Wye, and Belmont library.
- 62 per cent use a library or customer service centre at least once a week or more and about 30 per cent using them at least once a month. In the 2013 survey, 73 per cent used them at least once a week or more with a quarter using them about once a month.

Reason for visit to library or customer service centre

- The main reasons given for visiting a library and/or customer service centre was predominantly to borrow, renew or return a book or other item (88 per cent) followed by ordering a book (45 per cent), obtaining information (41 per cent) and research (26 per cent).
- Respondents who attend a library or customer service centre **very regularly** are more likely to use the computers, Wi-Fi, pay a bill or access a council service or research, compared to those who use it less frequently.
- There were some differences found between what people use the library and customer service centres for, and which centre they used.

Aspects that are considered important

- The range of stock available in libraries and accessing information were the most frequently rated as important aspects.
- There were some differences in what respondents felt was important depending on how often they used the library/customer service centre. Users who visit a centre **very regularly** tend to feel that the following aspects are important compared to those who use the centre less frequently: access to information; speak to an advisor; use free Wi-Fi and computers; meet people; and feel less lonely.
- The range of stock available was the most important aspect for all age groups; however, there were some key differences for other services used as follows:
    - A good place to go with children is more important to the younger age groups (25-34 and 35-44).
    - Speaking to a customer service advisor and needing help to complete forms is more important to younger age groups, particularly those aged 25 to 34.
    - The proportion of users who felt free Wi-Fi and access to computers is important decreased with age, so less important to the elderly compared to the younger age groups.
    - Supporting health and well-being is more important to the 25-34 year age group and the 45-64 year olds.
    - Meeting people is important to the 25-34 years, 45-64 years and 80 years and over age groups.
- For those respondents with a disability, long-term illness or health problem it was more important to access a library/customer service centre to support their health and well-being, speak to a customer service advisor and to feel less lonely.
- Overall the range of stock available and accessing information was important to most users of all libraries and customer service centres. A few differences were found in the importance ratings by location of library or centre used.

Future use

54 per cent of respondents would like to do courses and classes at the library or customer service centre and 33 per cent would specifically like to do IT courses including internet training. 42 per cent would like get information and advice.

In terms of accessing services in a different way, 51 per cent of respondents said they could find information online; 49 per cent said they are likely to borrow (from family or friends) or buy books from elsewhere (from charity shops or online) and 45 per cent said they are likely to phone the council if they couldn't come to a centre. 30 per cent said they would go somewhere else that provides this service, such as another library or customer service centre. Using social media to contact Herefordshire Council had the highest proportion who said they were unlikely to use this (46 per cent).

Of the barriers faced by people in accessing services differently, 39 per cent said they need to speak to someone in person and 26 per cent said they are not confident that their information will be safe on-line (the top two barriers also highlighted in the 2013 survey). There were some differences since the 2013 survey for other barriers faced, such as lower proportions saying they do not have access to the internet due to cost, or that they do not know how to use it.

Impact of any changes
Just under 1,500 comments were analysed about how any changes may affect individual respondents and those with particular (protected) characteristics.

Which service affected and how
- The service most frequently mentioned as being affected was library lending rather than customer services. Concerns about closing, moving or reducing library services - particularly the need for a local library and for children.
- The most common response was simply that any change would have a negative impact. Any changes could:
    - affect education, knowledge and cultural experiences.
    - be a loss for the community, as they add character to towns and city.
    - mean residents would miss out on social interaction.

Size of impact
- There were a number of respondents, who felt there would be little or no impact on themselves personally, but felt others may be more affected depending on their needs.
- There was also a significant proportion who felt unable to give an answer as to the impact of any changes as no details were given.

Particular groups of people affected:

- Age was the single most common characteristic of people that respondents felt would be most affected, cited in nearly a quarter of comments - particularly older people and children/young people.
- Disability was cited in nearly one in every five comments - particularly those with mobility, sight and hearing issues
- Face to face support and the risk of social isolation - particularly in relation to older people - was the next most frequently mentioned comment.
- Other 'at risk' groups to be considered were those on low income or who do not have access to a car which limits transport options.

Mitigation

In terms of what should be done to protect these groups, the overwhelming single response from respondents was to "keep the libraries open". Easy access was identified as a key aspect, particularly about keeping access to libraries local for a rural county; including physical access and parking. Other suggestions for libraries/customer service centres:

- making it more of a community resource/hub, offer more services in one place
- provide more classes/information
- making/keeping it a free service
- staff training
- maintain or extend opening hours

Charging for services

Most people thought that charging for photocopying, printing, overdue items and room hire is acceptable (70 per cent of respondents or more). Just over half thought it was also acceptable to charge for activities/events for adults and 40 per cent for non-book items, although many thought talking books should not be charged for but DVDs should. Opinion on charging for reserving requested items was nearly equally split.

Any other comments

Most of these were in support of keeping library and customer service centres as they are, describing the wider benefits of libraries as places of education, knowledge, equality and well-being; particularly face to face contact with others.

NON-USERS OF LIBRARIES & CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

This research aimed to gather views from people who do not or no longer use a library or customer service centre. Informed by a brief review of published research on the topic, the consultation included a non-user survey (140 online responses and face to face interviews) and several focused discussions with groups of people. The literature review found that life circumstances can affect library usage. Common trigger points for people starting to use libraries again include studying, becoming unemployed, having children or retiring. So for this research, small focused group discussions were conducted with people in different life circumstances, all in Hereford. They were: young people; elderly (aged 80 and over); job-seekers; women who run their own businesses.

Most non-users are actually lapsed users with only 10 per cent of survey respondents never having used a library or customer service centre before. For 29 per cent, it was over five years ago or two to five years ago (25 per cent). 18 per cent had used a library or customer service centre about a year ago.

Awareness of available services at libraries and customer service centres

Most survey respondents said they know about the availability of free computers and access to the internet, but don't need to use it at the centre. There were lower levels of awareness about the Well-being and Information Service (WISH) followed by information and advice on healthy lifestyles. This was similar to views from the focus groups.

Why they no longer use a library or customer service centre

Most survey respondents accessed services elsewhere when needed, particularly for events/activities. Just over half of respondents do not need books for children and 44 per cent don't need to apply to the Council for anything. The Council's website was most frequently accessed by respondents to contact the Council or for information and advice.

About one in five comments from the survey about what puts people off using a library or customer service centre were 'nothing' or 'don't need/access services online'. Other reasons given were service constraints such as queues, fines and range of books; opening hours or closed (Broad Street); access to the location (parking or time constraints if working) and 'get books from elsewhere' (online or e-

books). A handful of comments were about health or disability related constraints to going to the library and also 'don't read much'.

Views from the focus groups found that non-use related to changes in life stages and circumstances. Elderly people find it difficult to read with poor eyesight and prefer to socialise when they go out, like at a coffee morning. Business women no longer need to use as their children are now grown-up. Similarly, young people last went to the library when at school and most no longer read books.

Other reasons given by focus group participants that put people off using a library included the limited range of large print books for elderly people, more difficult to get to in winter with limited mobility, computers often full so job seekers can't use them. Young people said they were put off by the atmosphere of a library and they feel unwelcome and out of place.

What would encourage you to use a library or customer service centre

About one in five comments about what might encourage people to use a library or customer service centre was also 'nothing' as they have no need to go to a library or customer service centre. However, one in five suggested a broader range of services from special services, exhibitions and events to coffee shops and intergenerational activities such as a tool library. Longer opening hours for working people or the library actually being open in Broad Street was also frequently mentioned in the comments, as was access (such as parking), children's activities and better advertising of what's on offer as a whole. Views from focus groups also included a cafe/good coffee nearby and awareness of opening hours, more computers and multi-use centres with dedicated space for children's activities so noise doesn't disturb other users. (Different generations have different needs).

Impact of a reduced library and customer service to non-users

35 per cent of respondents to the non-user survey said there would be little impact if library and customer services were reduced and a further 35 per cent said there would be no impact. Only 16 per cent said it would have a great impact on them personally. None of the focus group participants said they would be personally affected.

However more than half of survey respondents said it would have a great impact on other people and a further 13 per cent said it would have a little impact. The types

of people specified were similar to those identified by users of libraries and customer service centres. Families with children, those with no internet access at home, the elderly, vulnerable, isolated, disabled, people on low incomes. This was echoed by the focus group participants.

Just under a third of the impacts described were about access to books and information. Other impacts were geographical access to a centre and potential social isolation if a library or centre was removed; overall loss of service and contact with public services; help and support. People on low incomes, unemployed, without internet access and families with young children were all seen as being disproportionately affected.

1. Introduction

Data Orchard was commissioned by Herefordshire Council to research preferences and patterns of use of libraries and customer service centres across the county. To understand more about why some people don't use libraries and customer service centres and what services might encourage them to do so; to explore all possible options and impact on any changes to libraries and customer services centres. This follows on from previous consultation in 2013 done by Herefordshire Council ('Assessing the impact').

All five of the market towns in Herefordshire have centres where both library and customer services are provided, in addition to other services such as healthy lifestyle trainers and the Well-being Information Service Herefordshire (WISH). In the city of Hereford, Herefordshire Council customer services are provided at Franklin House. Hereford library is temporarily housed in the Town Hall as its usual location in Broad Street is closed for refurbishment but there is another library available in Belmont. There are four villages with libraries, three of which are volunteer run (Leintwardine, Peterchurch and Weobley) and one is funded by the parish council (Colwall). The locations and services provided from them are shown in the following table.

SERVICE AVAILABLE	Bromyard Centre	Kington Centre	Ledbury Centre	Leominster Centre	Ross Centre	Hereford Centre	Belmont library	Hereford library*	Colwall Library	Leintwardine library	Peterchurch library	Weobley library
Baby Play		X										
Computers (free)	X	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Council Services	X	X		X	X	X						
Early years music & rhyme		X		X								
Exhibition space			X	X	X							
Healthy Lifestyles service	X	X		X								
Heritage events												
Heritage events & tours			X									
Library	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Registrar				X	X		X	X				
Room Hire		X	X		X							
Photocopying		X	X		X	X			X			
Early years story time				X	X							
Wi-Fi (free)		X	X	X	X				X			
WISH		X	X	X	X							
Other (specific to centres)*	X	X	X		X	X						

Bromyard Centre: Halo gym.

Kington Centre: baby play, breastfeeding support (both parent-led); English classes, massage therapy.

Hereford Centre: Military charities helpdesk, parent partnership service

Ledbury Centre: Age UK, heritage event & tours, poetry festival, Market Theatre bookings

Ross-on-Wye Centre: Job centre

2. Methodology

The aim was to provide as many different options for people to respond to the consultation, to gather a broad range of views. Response rates and recruitment to groups were helped by posters, press releases and social media activity by Herefordshire Council, informed by updates from Data Orchard.

2.1 Users of libraries and customer service centres

The previous user survey was reviewed, with Herefordshire Council and the Joint Action for Herefordshire Libraries, to ensure relevant questions were repeated to track trends since 2013. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix 2. The consultation ran from **27th June to 5th August** with a further week allowed for paper responses to be returned from centres. There were 2,254 responses in total.

a) **Online survey** (1,059 responses)

b) **Paper survey** forms were made available on request to users at libraries/customer service centres. Available at all libraries and customer service centres (including libraries run either fully or in part volunteers in Colwall, Leintwardine, Peterchurch and Weobley). Returns went into a response box at libraries and were then collated. (1,124 responses)

c) **Face to face interviews** at each of the customer service centres and libraries: Belmont, Franklin House and Town Hall in Hereford; Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington, Bromyard. (71 done)

2.2 Non-users of libraries and customer service centres

A brief literature review was conducted of non-user research in the UK to inform the development of questions for this research (see Appendix 1 Brief review of published research). Key to this was the identification of types of people to consult, who typically do not currently use libraries or customer services or who have not been well-represented in the previous user survey in 2013. A questionnaire was developed (see Appendix 3) to investigate reasons why people don't use the libraries and customer service centres, potential barriers to accessing the services and future preferred patterns of use (if any, or if accessed online). The methods of consultation used were as follows:

a) **Online survey** advertised by press releases and social media.

b) **Face to face surveys/interviews** with people who do not currently use libraries or customer services by on-street surveys in Hereford, Ross and Ledbury.

c) **Targeted group discussions:**
    i.   Time poor business people: focussed discussion before and after a business training course in Hereford in July.
    ii. Lower incomes/job-seekers: engagement event at the Learning Box where training courses are provided to help people get jobs.
    iii. 16-24 year olds: focus group of 17 to 18 year olds at Nova training, who provide six month training courses for 16 to 18 year olds towards apprenticeships, work placements and qualifications.
    iv. Older people: coffee morning at Belmont community centre attended by people aged 80 and over.

2.3 Presentation of results

This report presents the results of the surveys mainly in the form of tables and charts. For the most part the base for each question is the total number of survey respondents. This makes it easier for readers to understand and compare results for different questions and between tables.

The tables show the percentage of respondents who selected each option, as well as a count of responses per option. When percentages are presented, they are rounded to the nearest whole number. This may give rise to occasions where the total number of respondents sums to just under or over 100 per cent. Note that if respondents could select more than one answer to a particular question, the percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Where the questions are the same or similar, comparisons are made with the 2013 survey of libraries and customer service users. For brevity, locations are described as simply 'library' where just those services are provided and 'centre' where customer services and others are also provided.

3. Results

3.1 USERS OF LIBRARIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

3.1.1. Current patterns of use

Location visited (Q1)

Hereford and Leominster have the highest number of respondents who use those centres. Compared to the 2013 survey, a much higher proportion visit Leominster and Ross centres, and Belmont library.

Q1. Which location did you visit? (tick all that apply)	Number	2016 %	2013 %
Hereford Library (Broad Street or Town Hall)	702	31	34
Leominster Centre	667	30	14*
Ross Centre	492	22	15
Ledbury Centre (Master's House)	335	15	14*
Belmont Library	279	12	6
Hereford Centre (Franklin House)	142	6	7
Kington Centre	129	6	6
Bromyard Centre	111	5	4
Colwall Library	55	2	4
Leintwardine Library	36	2	2
Weobley Library	32	1	2
Peterchurch Library	19	1	<1
Total responses	**2,233**	*99%*	
Not answered	**21**	*1%*	
Base	2,254		

*2013 Only library services provided.

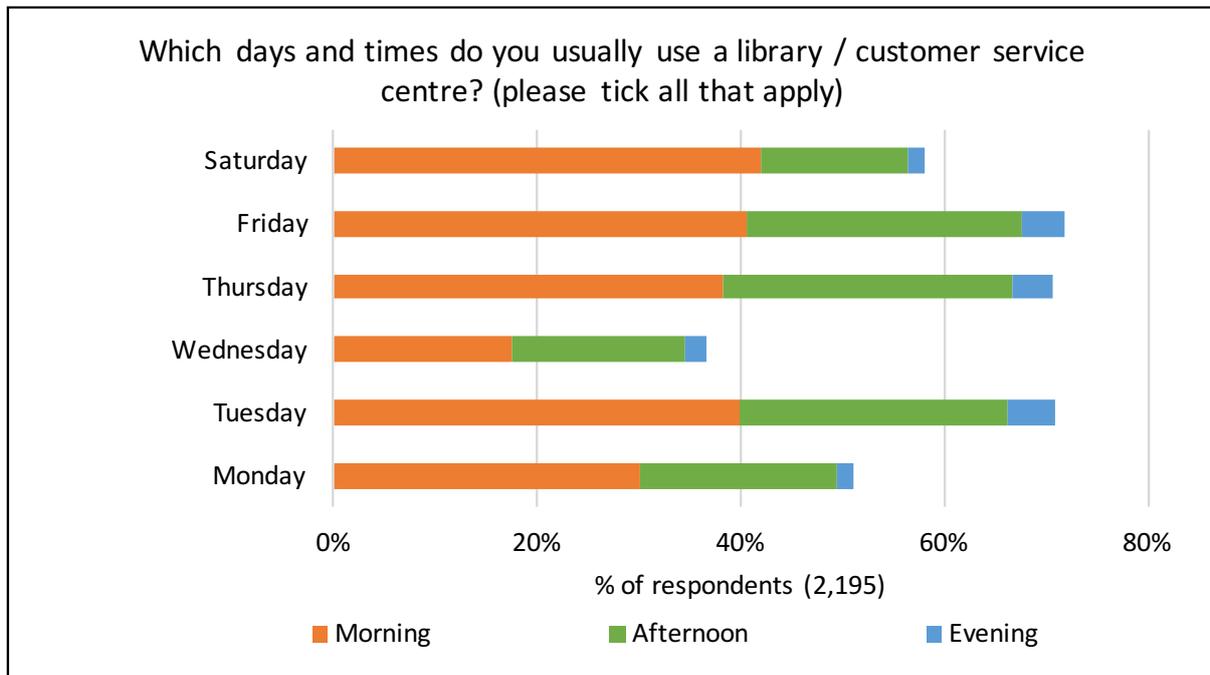## How often do you use any library/customer service centre? (Q4)

The majority of respondents (62 per cent) use a library or customer service centre at least once a week or more with 30 per cent using them about once a month. For libraries the latter tends to be every three weeks when books are due back. (The answer options in the question did not adequately account for this, as this should not be classed as 'infrequent use'). In the 2013 survey, 73 per cent used them at least once a week or more with a quarter using them about once a month. See the chart below.

How often do you use any library / customer service centre?

Rarely (less than monthly), 6%

Very regularly (2-3 times a week or more), 16%

Infrequently (once a month), 28%

Regularly (once a week), 46%

Base: 2,254
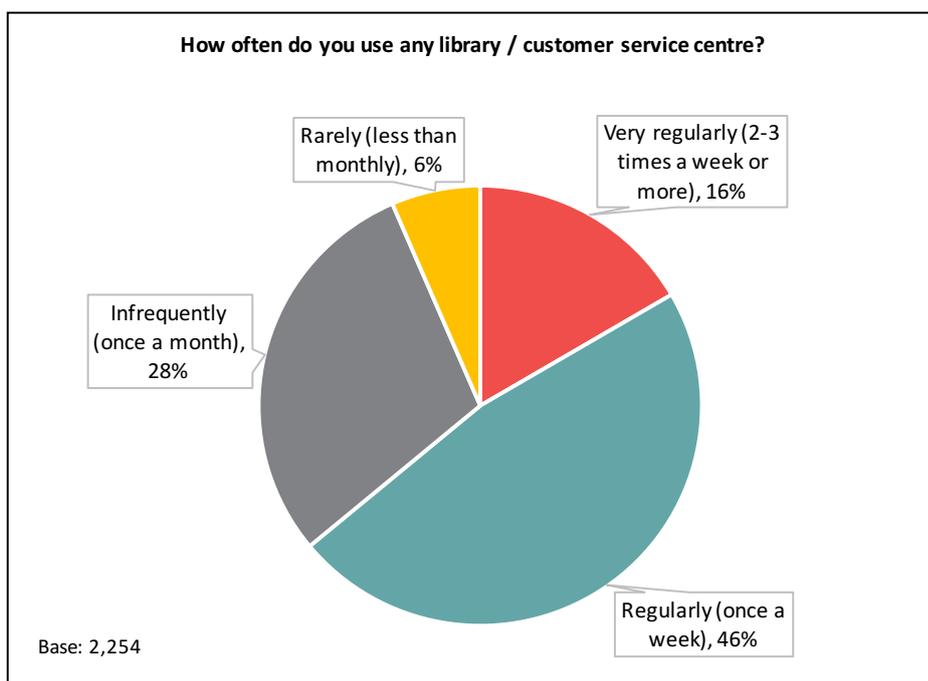
Times that respondents used library and customer service centres (Q5)

The results from this question only show when respondent visit not overall usage figures. The following chart shows when respondents to this survey tend to use the centres (Friday, Thursday and Tuesday) but this is constrained by opening times, which are shown in the following table. Many centres are closed on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Which days and times do you usually use a library / customer service centre? (please tick all that apply)

% of respondents (2,195)

Legend: ■ Morning ■ Afternoon ■ Evening

The following table shows the current opening hours of libraries and customer service centres in Herefordshire. Most centres are open during the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Not many are open in the evenings and none beyond 7pm.

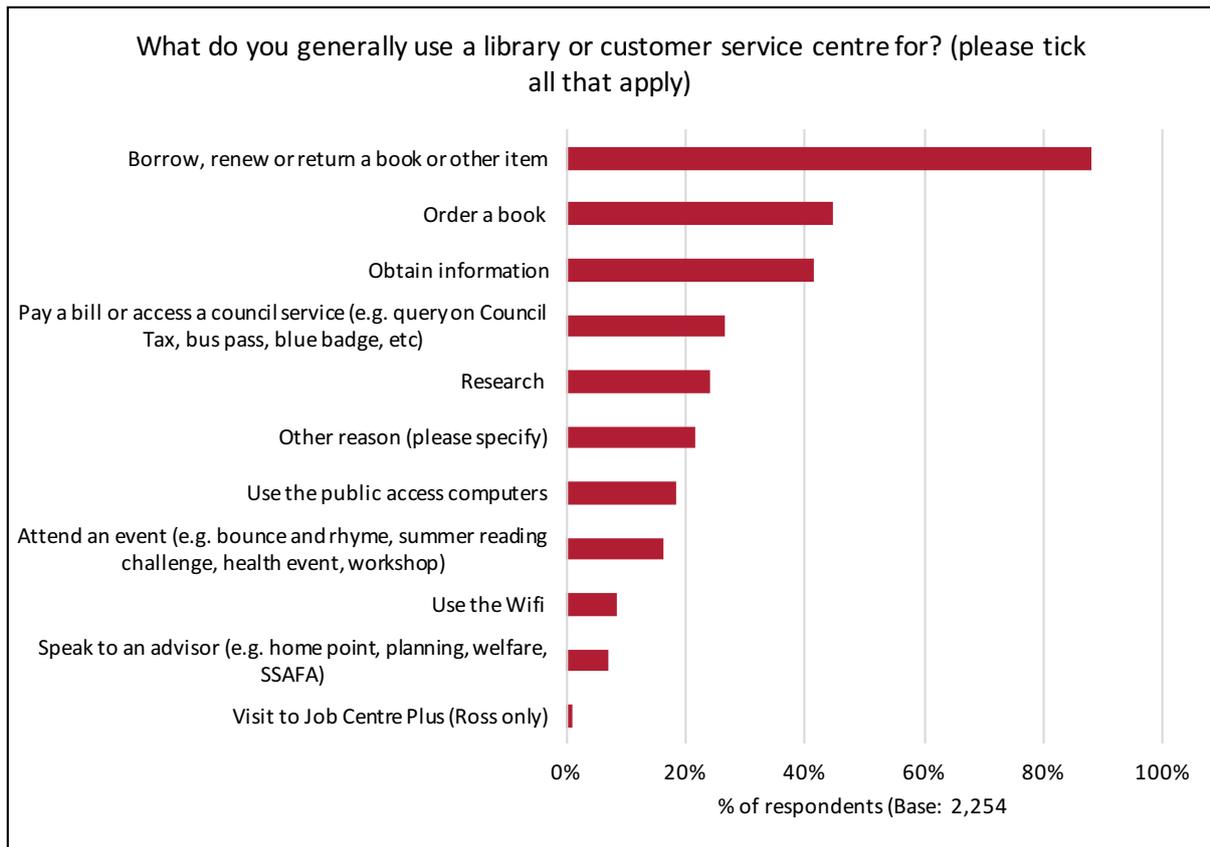| Location	Opening times (morning, afternoon, evening)																
	Mon.			Tues.			Wed.			Thu.			Fri.			Sat.	
	mor	aft	eve	mor	aft	eve	mor	aft	eve	mor	aft	eve	mor	aft	eve	mor	aft
Bromyard Centre																	
Kington Centre																	
Ledbury Centre																	
Leominster Centre																	
Ross Centre																	
Hereford Centre																	
Belmont library																	
Hereford library																	
Colwall Library																	
Leintwardine library																	
Peterchurch library																	
Weobley library																	

Morning from 9.30/10am, afternoon from 2pm, evening until 6.30/7pm

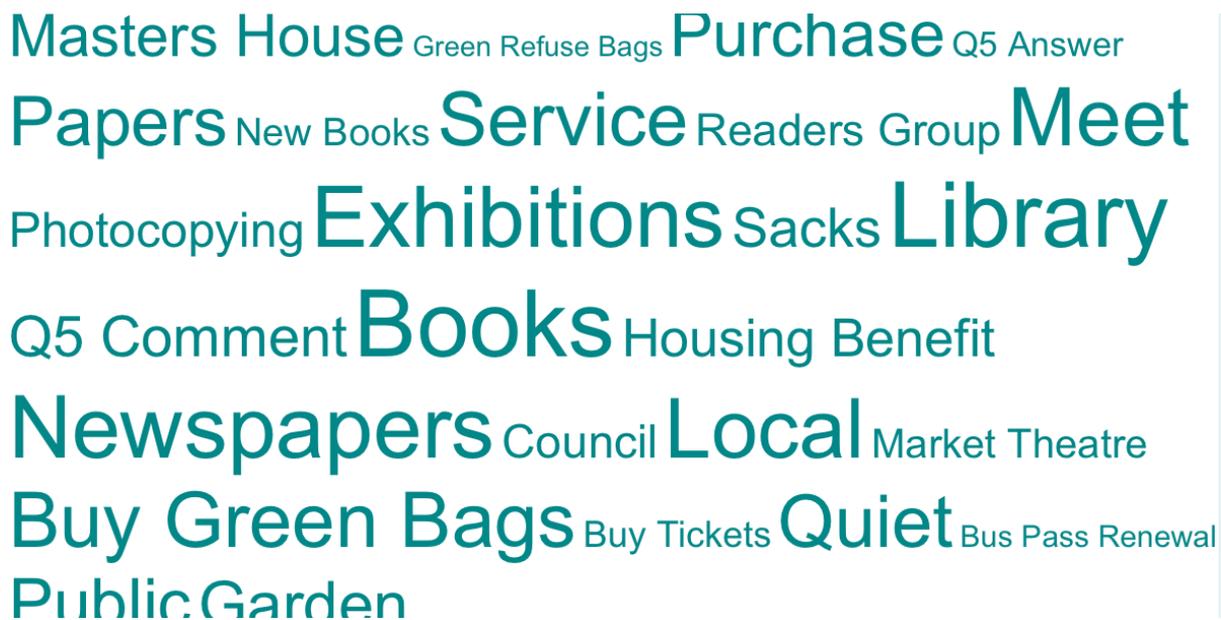## Reason for visit to library or customer service centre (Q6)

The main reasons given for visiting a library and/or customer service centre was predominantly to borrow, renew or return a book or other item (88 per cent) followed by ordering a book (45 per cent), obtaining information (41 per cent) and paying a bill or access a council service (26 per cent). Detail is shown in the following table and chart.

| Q6. What do you generally use a library or customer service centre for? (tick all that apply)	Number	2016%	2013 %
Borrow, renew or return a book or other item	1,985	88	*
Order a book	1,009	45	*
Obtain information	932	41	6
Pay a bill or access a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)	597	26	6
Research	546	24	15
Other reason (please specify)	491	22	11
Use the public access computers	416	18	13
Attend an event (e.g. bounce and rhyme, summer reading challenge, health event, workshop)	365	16	not asked
Use the Wi-fi	191	8	not asked
Speak to an advisor (e.g. home point, planning, welfare, SSAFA)	156	7	6
Visit to Job Centre Plus (Ross only)	20	1	not asked
Total responses	**2,227**	99	
Not answered	**27**	1	
Base	**2,254**		

* The options in the 2013 survey were slightly different here: 'borrow a book or another item' (69% of respondents) and 'renew or return a book/item' (55%)

What do you generally use a library or customer service centre for? (please tick all that apply)

Category	%
Borrow, renew or return a book or other item	~88%
Order a book	~44%
Obtain information	~41%
Pay a bill or access a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)	~27%
Research	~24%
Other reason (please specify)	~21%
Use the public access computers	~19%
Attend an event (e.g. bounce and rhyme, summer reading challenge, health event, workshop)	~16%
Use the Wifi	~8%
Speak to an advisor (e.g. home point, planning, welfare, SSAFA)	~7%
Visit to Job Centre Plus (Ross only)	~1%

% of respondents (Base: 2,254)

There were 491 other reasons given as illustrated in the word cloud below. Includes exhibitions, to buy green garden bags, use the public library, for quiet and other details. Respondents put comments in from the previous question here too, such as no particular times, anytime, it depends, every 3 months, once a fortnight.

Masters House Green Refuse Bags Purchase Q5 Answer
Papers New Books Service Readers Group Meet
Photocopying Exhibitions Sacks Library
Q5 Comment Books Housing Benefit
Newspapers Council Local Market Theatre
Buy Green Bags Buy Tickets Quiet Bus Pass Renewal
Public Garden

There are a few differences in what respondents generally use a library/ customer service centre for depending on how often they used it. See the following chart.
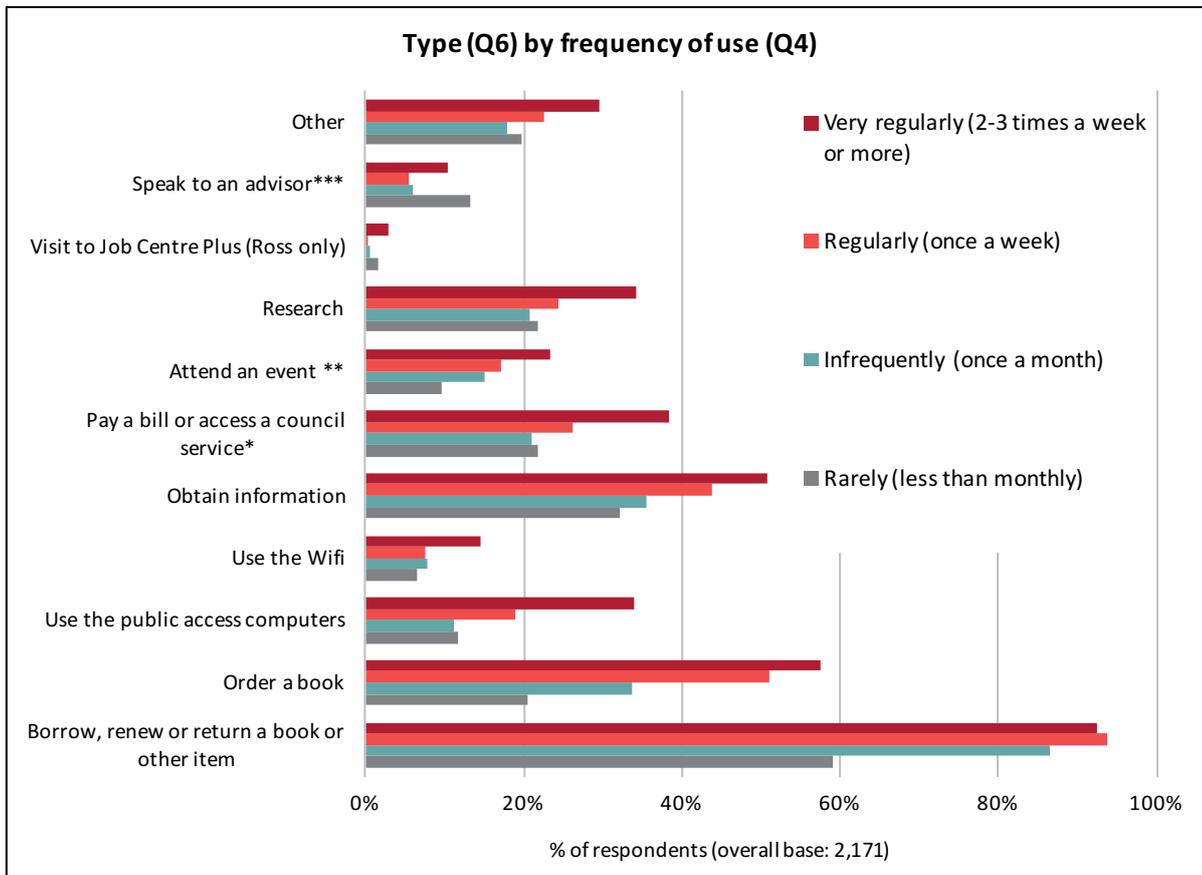
Type (Q6) by frequency of use (Q4)

% of respondents (overall base: 2,171)

Respondents who attend a library or customer service centre **very regularly** are more likely to do the following tasks compared to those using it less frequently:

- Use the public access computers
- Use the Wi-Fi
- Pay a bill or access a council service
- Research

There are a few differences between what people use the library and customer service centres for depending on the locations respondents said they visited, see the following table.

Per cent of respondents by location (Q1) by what they come to do (Q6) *(Blue shading = library only)*	Belmont	Bromyard	Colwall	Hereford Centre	Hereford Library	Kington	Ledbury	Leintwardine	Leominster	Peterchurch	Ross
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Borrow, renew or return a book or other item	95	88	96	70	93	90	95	100	89	89	91
Order a book	48	46	60	42	50	44	56	44	43	47	44
Use the public access computers	19	34	24	29	21	24	17	17	24	11	22
Use the Wifi	8	11	7	13	10	12	11	11	8	11	12
Obtain information	34	52	38	59	44	46	48	28	47	42	47
Pay a bill or access a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)	12	39	13	58	19	31	27	14	35	5	32
Attend an event (e.g. bounce and rhyme, summer reading challenge, health event, workshop)	13	16	2	10	17	16	29	11	17	11	18
Research	20	31	24	31	32	24	24	17	33	42	27
Visit to Job Centre Plus (Ross only)	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
Speak to an advisor (e.g. home point, planning, welfare, SSAFA)	3	10	4	24	5	6	6	0	10	0	8
Other reason (please specify)	18	19	25	28	23	27	23	22	22	32	24

Key differences between locations were:

- A higher proportion of Bromyard centre users come to use a computer, obtain information and pay a bill

- Colwall library had the highest proportion of respondents who order a book

- The Hereford Centre, unsurprisingly, had a higher proportion of users who came to obtain information, pay a bill or access a council service and speak to an advisor.

- The Ledbury Centre had a higher proportion who come to attend an event (heritage events and tours are provided)

- 100% of users in Leintwardine come to borrow, renew or return a book

- Peterchurch had a high proportion who came to do research (however these are very low numbers of users 8 out of 19 users)

Aspects that are considered important (Q7)

The range of stock available in libraries and accessing information were the most frequently rated as important aspects as shown in the table and chart below.

What is important to you about customer services and libraries? (tick all that apply)	Important	Not sure	Not important
Range of stock available (e.g. books, talking books, DVDs)	83%	2%	1%
Access information	70%	4%	4%
Speak to a customer services advisor	46%	10%	8%
Events and exhibitions	45%	9%	10%
Supports my health and well being	41%	9%	12%
Free Wi-Fi and access to PCs	37%	5%	18%
A good place to go with children	36%	4%	15%
Meeting people	29%	10%	19%
Feel less lonely	20%	9%	23%
I need help to complete forms	9%	5%	32%

* (e.g. books, talking books, DVDs)

** (e.g. can't do online/ disability/ reading and writing difficulties/ English is a second language)
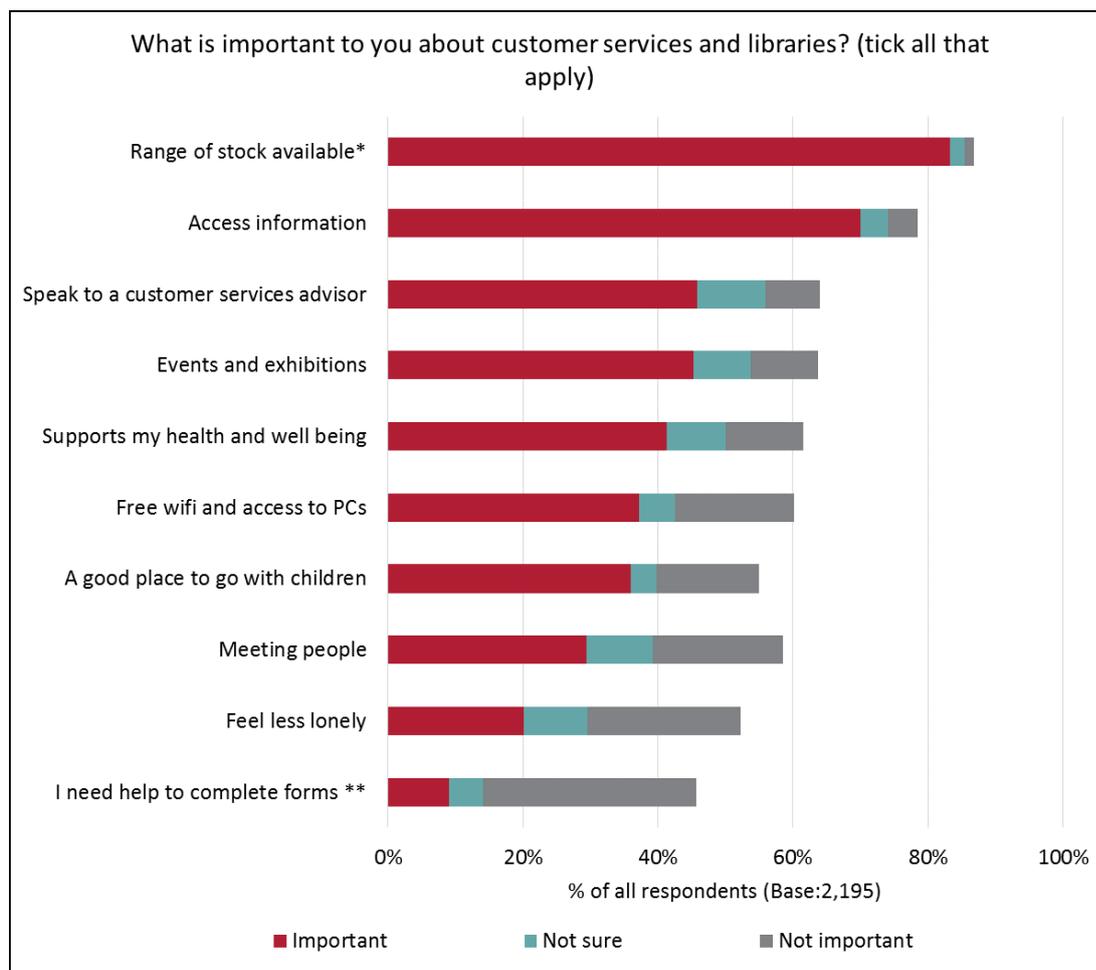
There were 292 comments made about other factors that are important as illustrated in the word cloud below, such as access to the library for all, research, newspapers, to speak to staff/librarians, peace and quiet.

Forms Leisure Centre Newspapers Sort Research
Peace and Quiet Local Difficult Community
Exhibitions Important Face to Face
Library Browse Books Art Access
Internet Service Phone Place Education Staff
Broad Street Access to Books Range of Stock Bus
Librarian

There are also a few differences in what respondents felt was important depending on how often they used the library. A larger proportion of users who use a library/customer service centre **very regularly** feel the following aspects are important compared to those attending less frequently:

- Access to information
- Speak to a customer services advisor
- Free Wi-Fi and access to computers
- Meeting people
- Feeling less lonely

Analysis of what is important to users of libraries and customer service centres by age of respondent showed that the range of stock available was the most important aspect for all age groups. However, there were some key differences for other services by age as follows:

- A good place to go with children is more important to the younger age groups (25-34 and 35-44)

- Speaking to a customer service advisor and needing help to complete forms is more important to younger age groups, particularly those aged 25 to 34.

- The proportion of users who felt free Wi-Fi and access to computers is important decreased with age, so less important to the elderly compared to the younger age groups.

- Supporting health and well-being is more important to the 25-34 year age group and the 45-64 year olds.

- Meeting people is important to the 25-34 years, 45-64 years and 80 years and over age groups.

For those respondents with a disability, long-term illness or health problem it was more important for them to access a library/customer service centre to support their health and well-being, speak to a customer service advisor and to feel less lonely.

Overall the range of stock available and accessing information was important to most users of all libraries and customer service centres. There are a few differences in importance ratings by respondents who use particular locations:

- Range of stock was important to all except those who use the Hereford Centre (customer services only here). Access to information was found to be more important to respondents who use the Hereford Centre.
- Free Wi-Fi and access to PCs more important to respondents who tend to use the Bromyard Centre. Also respondents who use Weobley library despite it not having computers, but they also used other locations.
- Speaking to a customer advisor more important to respondents who use the Hereford Centre and Bromyard Centre. Help to complete forms was also more important for these respondents.
- Meeting people was more important to respondents who use Leintwardine, Peterchurch and Weobley libraries.
- Feeing less lonely was more important for respondents who use Bromyard and Weobley
- A good place to go with children was considered to be important to respondents who use most locations with the exception of those who use Kington, Leintwardine, Hereford Centre and Weobley.
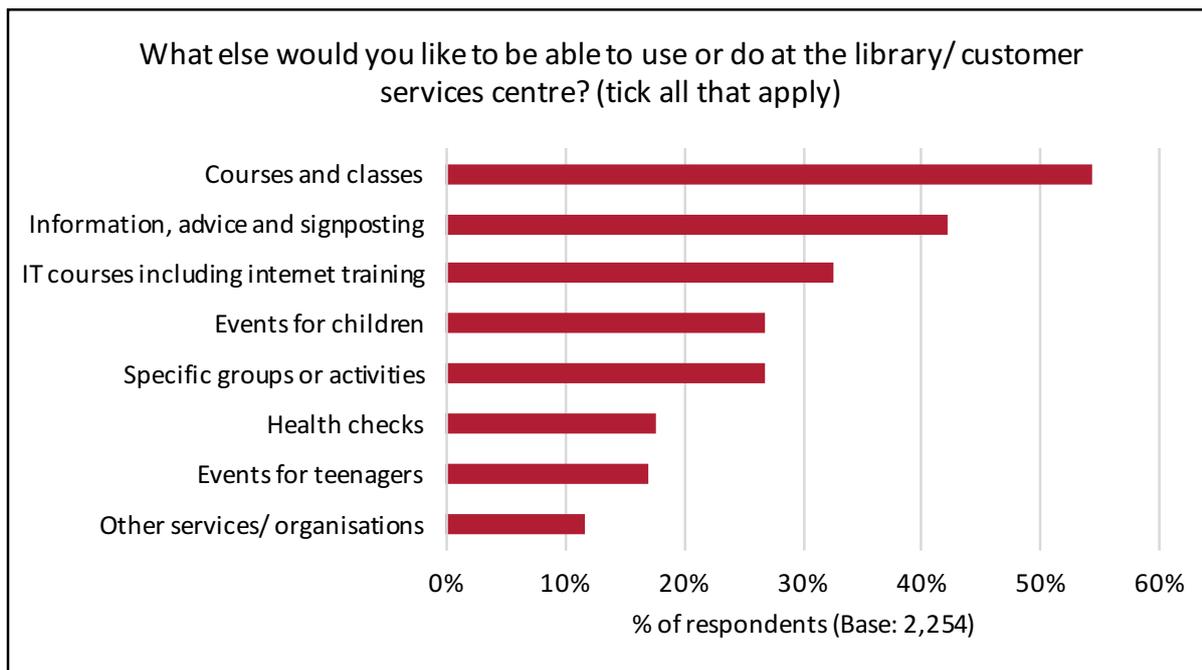
- Supporting health and well-being was important across all areas except for those who use Weobley, Kington and Colwall.
- Events and exhibitions were less important to those who use Kington, Colwall and Leintwardine.

3.1.2. Potential future use

What else would you like to be able to do here? (Q8)

54 per cent of respondents would like to do courses and classes at the library or customer service centre and 33 per cent would specifically like to do IT courses including internet training. 42 per cent would like get information and advice.

Q8. What else would you like to be able to use or do at the library/ customer services centre? (tick all that apply)	Number	Per cent
Courses and classes	1,226	54%
Information, advice and signposting	952	42%
IT courses including internet training	734	33%
Specific groups or activities	604	27%
Events for children	602	27%
Health checks	395	18%
Events for teenagers	381	17%
Other services/ organisations	311	12%
Please give further detail:	262	14%
Total individual respondents	1,803	80%
Not answered	451	
Base	2,254	

What else would you like to be able to use or do at the library/ customer services centre? (tick all that apply)

Category	%
Courses and classes	~54%
Information, advice and signposting	~42%
IT courses including internet training	~32%
Events for children	~27%
Specific groups or activities	~27%
Health checks	~17%
Events for teenagers	~16%
Other services/ organisations	~11%

% of respondents (Base: 2,254)

There were 311 comments giving further detail of other services/organisations respondents would like to use or do, as shown in the word cloud below:

Space Periodicals Exhibitions Happy Book Club
Evening Classes Talks Town Courses
Meeting Room Services Advice Book
Activities Library Author Groups CAB
Events Lectures Centre Bounce and Rhyme
Tourist Charge Coffee Writing Place Health

Accessing services in a different way (Q10)

51 per cent of respondents said they could find information online; 49 per cent said they are likely to borrow (from family or friends) or buy books from elsewhere (from charity shops or online) and 45 per cent said they are likely to phone the council if they couldn't come to a centre. 30 per cent said they would go somewhere else that

provides this service, such as another library or customer service centre. Using social media to contact Herefordshire Council had the highest proportion who said they were unlikely to use this.

Q10. If you couldn't access a library or customer service centre would you:	Likely	Unlikely	Don't know	Not applicable
Find information online e.g. waste collection day, planning information, bus timetables	51%	15%	5%	7%
Borrow or buy books from elsewhere	49%	29%	8%	2%
Phone the council	45%	21%	6%	6%
Visit somewhere else that provides this service	30%	29%	11%	7%
Message council services online using the "contact us" or "book an appointment" web pages	19%	32%	10%	11%
Use the council's website to make a payment or other transaction	17%	30%	7%	19%
Borrow online with the e-book & e-audio service	14%	43%	9%	9%
Use social media to contact the council	7%	46%	4%	13%

If you couldn't access a library or customer service centre would you:

% of all respondents (Base: 2,254)

Likely   Unlikely   Don't know   Not applicable
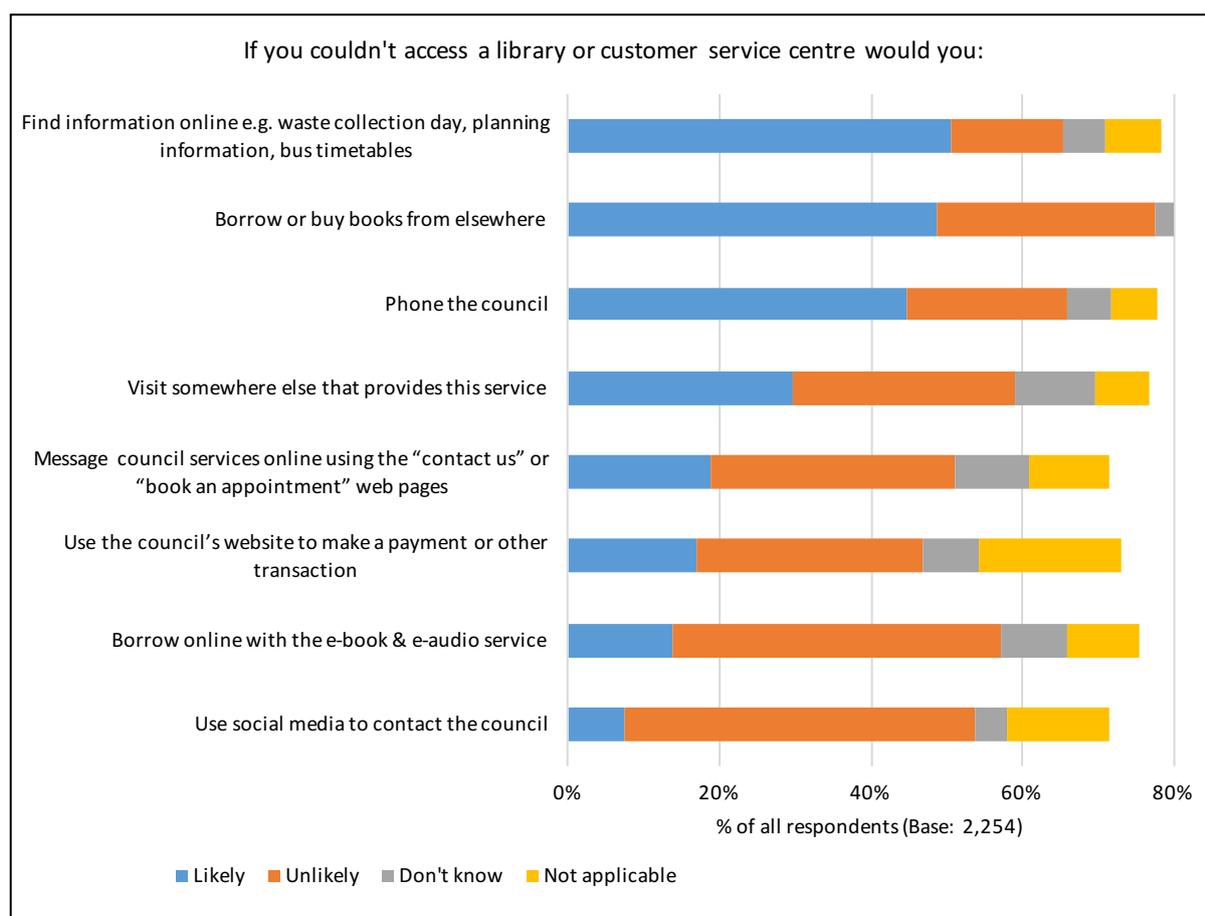
There were 263 comments for this question as shown in the word cloud below. Respondents said they would buy books from charity shops, many said it was important to still retain services for those who need to come in person to use the library, get help, for social contact or to use the internet and computers (no other place to access this free of charge).

Wifi Human Contact Social Unable Face to Face Resources Charity Shops Ledbury Buy Books Telephone Council Ludlow Library Books Transport Services Place Access Drive Hereford Unlikely Internet Alternative Community Poor Town Right Dept Research

Barriers to accessing services differently (Q11)

Of the barriers faced by people who responded to this question, 39 per cent said they need to speak to someone in person and 26 per cent said they are not confident that their information will be safe on-line (the top two barriers highlighted in the 2013 survey too). See the table below for other barriers faced in accessing services differently, with some differences since the 2013 survey such as lower proportions saying they do not have access to the internet due to cost or that they do not know how to use it.

Q11. What barriers would you face to accessing services differently? (tick all that apply)	Number	2016 %	2013 %
Need to speak to someone in person	877	39	27
I am not confident that my information will be safe on-line	586	26	23
Do not like using the 'phone to access services	430	19	2**
Problems with transport	378	14	14
Do not use the internet due to poor/slow service	306	12	10*
Do not have access to the internet due to cost	280	10	18
Do not know how to use the internet	237	10	14
Problems with mobility	224	8	8
Other (please specify)	173	17	not asked
Total responses	1,509	67	70
Not answered	745	33	30
Base	2,254		

*2013 survey wording was slightly different: 'do not use the internet due to poor coverage'
**2013 survey wording was slightly different: 'cannot use the 'phone'

There were 378 other comments for this question, shown in the word cloud below.
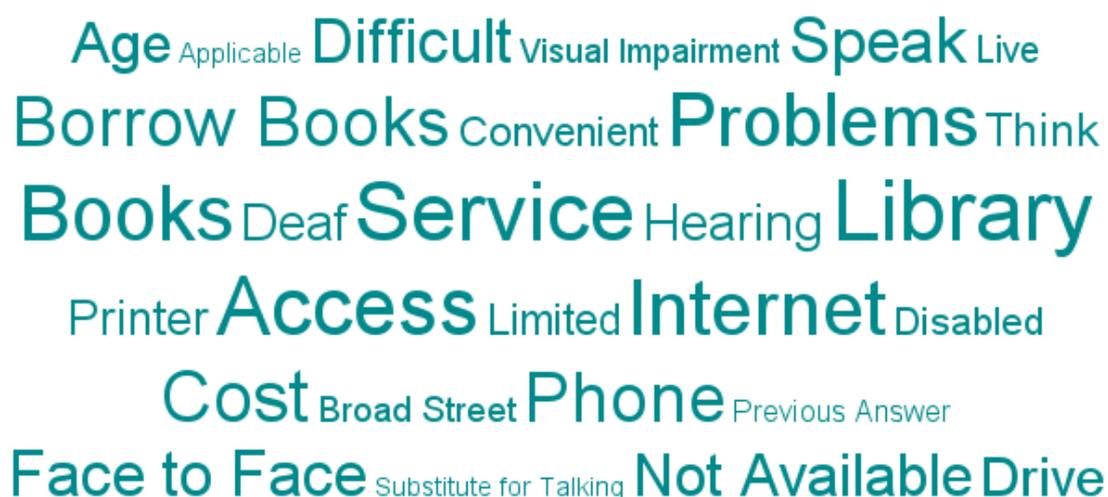
3.1.3. Impact

Q12. We want to ensure that, if anything changes in the future, this will be as fair as possible to everyone. How do you think any changes would impact on you?

There were 1,436 comments on this, the key themes of which are summarised here along with further details and examples of comments. Overall there were a number of key issues that respondents felt would have a negative impact on them or others. Most respondents were concerned about a library or customer services 'centre', as a physical building where they can actually go to and speak to other people. They saw it as a resource for the community and losing the 'local' aspect of libraries would cause a significant reduction in use and in turn, their quality of life. Respondents were particularly concerned about children and young people being able to broaden their horizons, develop a love for books and learn in general. It was also felt that this 'centre' was a valuable resource for older people who may have limited income, mobility or live on their own so benefit hugely from having that point of contact with other people (staff and other users), well as free access to books and information.

There were many respondents who felt there would be little or no impact on themselves personally, but felt others may be more adversely affected depending on their needs. For example, those who are less mobile or less affluent. There was also a significant proportion who felt unable to give an answer as to the impact of any changes as no details were given.

Further detail and some quotes from respondents to illustrate issues raised, are shown below.

Aspects of the libraries and customer services of most concern:
Most of the comments related to library services, rather than customer services; followed by face to face services, computer use or unspecified.

Reasons for concerns:
The most common issue raised were that residents needed access to books.

> *"Access to books should come under the human rights act! Everyone should have free access to books/ advice/education that precious libraries provide- it is a lifeline for so many people."*

> *"As long as you keep supplying books I can manage most other things".*

Access to a library for children was also a concern to residents, as they feel it is a valued resource to help develop children in Herefordshire.

"Any library closure will have a significant detrimental impact upon my children as this is where they access valuable learning resources."

"Children enjoy using the library and have done since they were small, good outing for them and selection of books/DVD's, use computer."

"Huge impact on reading and love of reading by children and young people. We want to improve their education this is hugely detrimental. It provides support to young mothers to help reduce stress at home."

The next highest concern was about closing of libraries, moving services or a reduction in the current service.

"The withdrawal of magazines has affected my use of the library. I understand it's as a result of cost cutting, but for me this has become a clear example - withdraw a part and the whole facility suffers and is used less."

"Changes which mean services move form Leominster would make it very difficult for me to access them. Buses are possible but infrequent."

"Closure of the community library would have a negative impact requiring me to drive to access a library. I would probably choose to buy books on line instead."

Followed by a need for libraries to be local.

"As I get older I will not want to have to struggle to get on a bus to go to elsewhere for all the resources which are currently available in Ledbury. One of the reasons my wife and I retired here was so that we would be able to walk to the centre of the town and have easy access to facilities and to be able to deal with people face to face."

"Work locally and would not have time to travel elsewhere to access services."

"I walk the short distance to the library, sit down and rest whilst reading the newspaper or a book and then walk home. The physical exercise with a recognised resting place is very important to me."

Needing or preferring to access services in person was also highlighted as a concern for respondents in terms of changes to services.

"I struggle with non-face to face conversations and like familiar places to have contact with council so going to library is ideal. I also struggle with going to unfamiliar places so closure of a centre would be really difficult for me."

"I think we/I benefit from personal interaction. There is a danger that too many services are losing face to face contact!"

"Talking to someone face to face is much more accountable and easier to understand and be understood"

Impact people felt the changes might have:

The most common response was simply that any change is likely to have a negative impact.

"Depends on the changes. Library closure would have a definite negative impact."

"Closure of my library would be a great loss to me and more importantly to the whole community."

Alongside this were comments from residents who felt that it would impact on their quality of life and that it currently serves as a lifeline to parts of the community.

"I would miss the library it is a lifeline for me as I am a carer for my husband"

"I would be lost and very lonely without my library book delivery. The staff understand how vulnerable I am and help me. They choose my books for me. They are a lifeline for me."

"Health/mobility issues, coupled with a low income, mean that if my local library (Kington) were to close, I would not have access to any library services. Also, increased charges may mean I would be unable to use some of the services. Reading, using the research library, and the local info boards are all very important to my quality of life and I would feel very despondent if I did not have access to them!"

"Don't know what I would've done without the help of the staff here - they've been fantastic at this crisis point in my life."

Another issue cited commonly was residents felt they were unable to afford to buy books especially if they were an avid reader or on fixed low incomes.

"Can't afford to buy books. Read up to 6 a week. Without the library life would be very depressing."

"As I am about to become a pensioner, I envisage having a limited income, and a freely available library service will be very important to me."

"Cost of purchasing books means I would read less."

"Access to free books is very important to my children's education. We read together a lot and I could not afford to buy these books so loss of this resource would impact on this important family activity greatly."

Residents also highlighted the negative impact that they or other at risk groups would miss out on social interaction if physical libraries weren't available.

"I would be very upset if the library was closed or open less often. It gives me reason to come out and meet people as I live alone. Also keeps me reading as I couldn't afford to buy books myself."

"As a readers group we benefit from the provision of books each month for our book club, a fee shared between us, if withdrawn the club could no longer function. The added benefits of social interaction as well as sharing views on the books would be lost and greatly missed."

"I would lose yet another opportunity for friendly human contact as I age. I would have to spend much more time in the frustrating situations of no response; phone connection hazards with number chains to get through to rech an appropriate service which then is unavailable for some reason; deprivation of the possibility of applying all 5 senses to communications and understanding a situation and a way forward. Sight, sound and touch all contribute greatly to the effectiveness and efficiency of communication."

There were also a number of residents who felt that losing the library and customer services would be a loss for the community, as they add character to towns and city.

"A good library is an essential characteristic of a vibrant community in a civilised society. We would consider moving to a different county if Herefordshire abandons its market towns' libraries."

"Any change to library services would greatly affect my access to knowledge & culture. (Don't forget that Herefordshire is bidding to be city/county of culture!) In my view the library is an essential service in a developed democracy/civilization. I cannot think of how I would be able to pursue my research on the county's history."

Q13. Please also tell us how we can ensure we support any particular needs (For example any of Government's "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex) on particular groups of people.

There were 660 comments made, about the types of characteristics that should be protected as well as measures that could be put in place to support them.

Protected characteristic:

Age was the single most common characteristic that respondents felt needed support, cited by nearly a quarter of the comments; particularly older people (15% of all comments) and children/young people (9% of all comments)

Disability was cited in nearly a fifth of comments, particularly those with mobility issues, sight and hearing.

Following that was the importance of having face to face support and the risk of social isolation if that service and support was not there, this was particularly in relation to elderly people.

Those who are disadvantaged or on a low income were considered also an 'at risk group' that would need to be considered.

How to support:

In terms of what should be done to protect these groups, the overwhelming single response from respondents specifically asking to "keep the libraries open".

Easy access was identified as a key aspect to support those with protected characteristics, this was largely about keeping libraries local for a rural county; as well as easy to parking and entry to the building.

The other suggestions were around the following topics:
- provide more classes/information
- making it more of a community resource/hub
- offer more services in one place
- making it a free service
- staff training
- maintain or extend opening hours

3.1.4. Charging for services

Introducing or increasing charges for some services (Q9)

Most people thought that charging for photocopying, printing, overdue items and room hire is acceptable (70 per cent of respondents or more). Just over half thought it was also acceptable to charge for activities/events for adults and 40 per cent for non-book items, although many thought talking books should not be charged for but DVDs should. Opinion on charging for reserving requested items was nearly equally split: a third of respondents thought it is not acceptable to charge for reserving requested items, a little higher than those who thought it is.

Q9. What is your view on introducing or increasing charges for some services? (by law we are not allowed to charge people to become a library member or when they borrow a book)	Acceptable	Not sure	Not acceptable	Total
Photocopying	77%	6%	4%	87%
Printing	74%	6%	4%	84%
Overdue items	71%	8%	5%	84%
Room hire	68%	9%	2%	79%
Activities/events for adults	54%	17%	6%	77%
Non book items (e.g. talking books, DVDs)	40%	19%	17%	76%
Reservation charge for requested items	32%	18%	31%	80%
Activities/events for children	28%	19%	24%	71%

Base = 2,254

What is your view on introducing or increasing charges for some services?
(by law we are not allowed to charge people to become a library member
or when they borrow a book)

Photocopying

Printing

Overdue items

Room hire

Activities/events for adults

Non book items (e.g. talking books, DVDs)

Reservation charge for requested items

Activities/events for children

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

% of respondents (Base: 2,254)

■ Acceptable   ■ Not sure   ■ Not acceptable

There were 158 other comments for this question, the main one being that respondents feel it is not acceptable to charge for talking books but acceptable to charge for DVDs (the answer option combined them).

Borrow Financial Reasonable Entertainment
Room Hire Answer Low Say Activities
Afford to Pay Items Meeting Services
Local Talking Books Profit Making
Library Internet Book Items Means Tested
Children Nominal Think Expensive Small Fee Twice
Reservation

3.1.5. Any other comments

There were 555 comments with the key themes described below including quotes from respondents.

Most of the comments were in support of keeping library and customer service centres as they are (310 comments). There were 43 comments describing the wider benefits of libraries as places of education, knowledge, equality and well-being; particularly face to face contact with others to avoid social isolation. Also the need to have a decent library in Hereford if the aim is to become a university city and City of Culture.

"Public libraries are vital for people who can't afford to pay for the resources they provide and for helping children to develop their reading skills. They are also an important local community social hub.   As the last citizens advice bureau in the country has now closed due to the cessation of council funding, there needs to be a customer services desk in every market town to provide the information, advice and support no longer available in person, elsewhere."

"Hereford needs a public library and a city museum. Worcester created the Hive, Hereford wants to get rid of one. If Hereford is to have a University and become a City of excellence, then a combined city and university library in the heart of Worcester City surely is a model Herefordshire should plan to adopt. "

There were 115 comments about the negative impact on particular groups, just over half being children and young people but also older people, unemployed, socially isolated, people on lower incomes, job-seekers, those with no internet or computer at home or limited means of transport.

Just over 100 suggestions to improve and/or keep centres open: introducing charges (such as membership fees for some), cafe/coffee facility, a centre in Hereford combining a library, museum, art/exhibition space, Citizen's Advice Bureau service, areas for private consultation, quiet areas along with dedicated places for children's activities, courses and activities. Some are illustrated by the quotes below:

"The ground floor space in Leominster Library could be repurposed to separate customer information services from library services. It is not ideal that people are disclosing personal and private information in a public place that can be heard by anyone, and nor is it ideal to be using a computer or microfilm reader within earshot of the information service. This would also facilitate access."

*"Ledbury Library needs more space for: -   *Quiet places for reference and reading areas for young adults doing homework to senior citizens reading a newspaper or magazine they cannot afford to buy, meeting friends - with at least a couple of easy chairs.   *Completely separate areas for story time and other activities for younger children.   *Room for an Advice Centre in which private conversations can take place with advice from energy use to housing and benefits. It could be the same room as the area for younger children - used at different times.   * Clubs could meet in the excellent Panelled room and pay a fee."*

"I enjoy libraries and I take my two small children but it is uncomfortable that the children's areas are right amongst the main reading sections of the library so I always feel that I am disturbing other people. I also don't feel that the children's section is very comfortable or well laid out, it would be helpful to have books sectioned according to child's reading ability e.g. read to your children, phonics, starting to ready by themselves these are all mixed in together so difficult to search through to find the right level. Could do with better toilet facilities at Hereford, more computers and also a café."

Just under 100 comments made about particular locations; libraries and centres in the county and examples of vibrant libraries/centres elsewhere (The Hive in Worcestershire, Ludlow, Winchester, Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire).

There were 50 comments about staff and volunteers with the majority positive with a few negatives. The importance of having qualified, professional librarians was mentioned but also volunteers to keep services going in smaller rural locations.

"Some staff are lovely- smiley, cheerful and endlessly helpful! BUT some are scowly, cross and very 'off putting'".

50 comments about improving existing services such as the range of books, the quality of DVDs, opening hours for working people and better promotion.

There were comments suggesting a better allocation of tax payer money than to cut libraries and customer service centres as demonstrated by this comment:

"Do please be careful when you cut. Keep hacking away at the tree and it no longer provides shade, supports next year's nests or produces the young acorns."

Finally, there were also some comments about the consultation itself; mostly negative: stop consulting and invest in libraries instead, visiting a library every three weeks shouldn't be categorised as infrequent use, more helpful to separate opinion about libraries and customer services; and some positive about the survey design.

3.1.6. Geographic analysis

Mode of travel (Q2)

Half drove themselves by car to the library or centre and just under half walked; both higher proportions than the 2013 survey found.

Q2. How did you get there? (tick all that apply)	Number	2016 %	2013 %
Car (drove myself)	1,131	50	41
Walked	1,072	48	44
Public transport (bus or train)	317	14	10
Car (lift from someone else)	180	8	8
Cycle or motorcycle	115	5	4
Community transport	9	0	1
Taxi	5	0	<1
Total responses	2,211	98	
Not answered	43	2	
Base	2,254		

Where people have travelled from (Q3)

The following maps show approximately where survey respondents live (using postcodes where given) and their mode of transport to the library/centre they use. They show an overall pattern of more respondents clustered in Hereford and the market towns as per the population density, with many walking rather than using cars compared to more rural areas.

North West Herefordshire
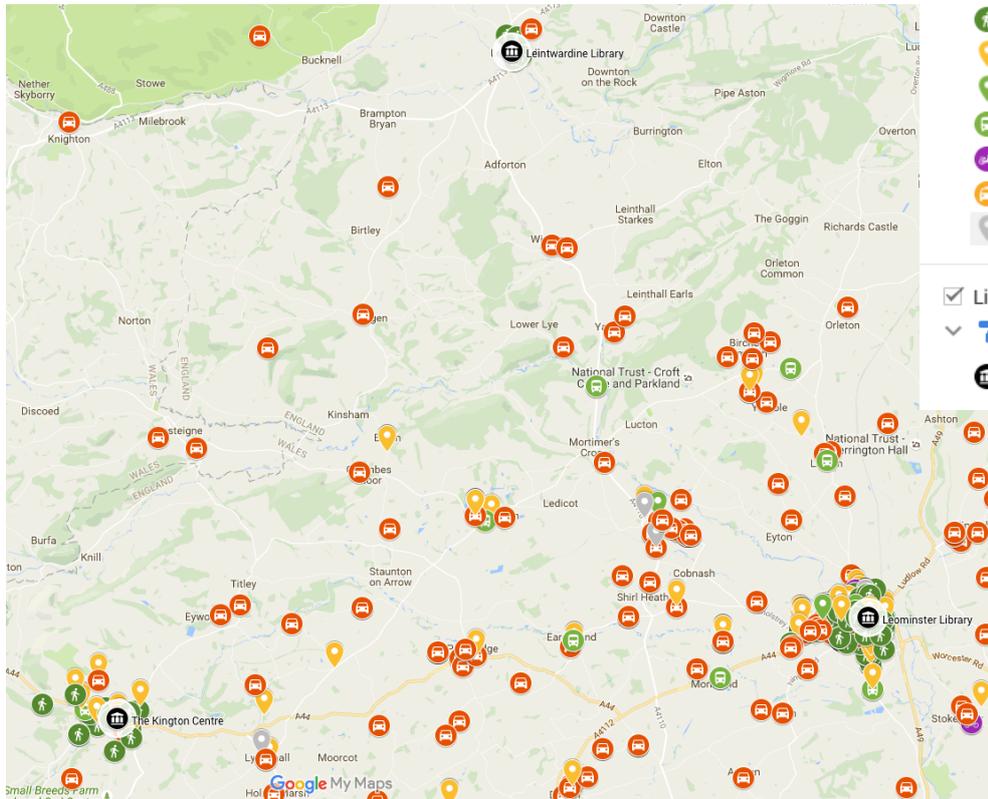
User survey respondents ⋮
- ∨ Styled by Transport_mode
  - 🔴 car (774)
  - 🟢 walked (652)
  - 🟡 several inc car (341)
  - 🟢 several exc car (88)
  - 🟢 public transport (80)
  - 🟣 cycle/motorbike (22)
  - 🟠 taxi/community transport (6)
  - ⚪ undeclared mode (27)

Library/Customer service centre ⋮
- ∨ Uniform style
  - 🏛 All items (12)

North East Herefordshire

Leominster

☑ User survey respondents ⋮

˅ ⌖ Styled by Transport_mode

🚗 car (774)
🚶 walked (652)
📍 several inc car (341)
📍 several exc car (88)
🚌 public transport (80)
🏍 cycle/motorbike (22)
🚕 taxi/community transport (6)
📍 undeclared mode (27)

☑ Library/Customer service centre ⋮

˅ ⌖ Uniform style

🏛 All items (12)
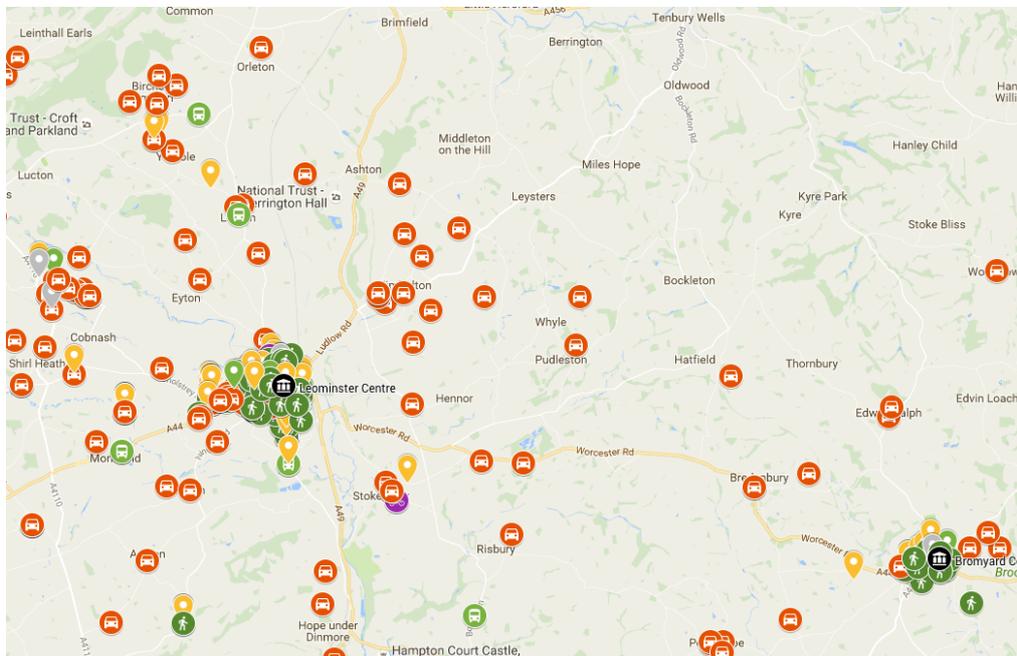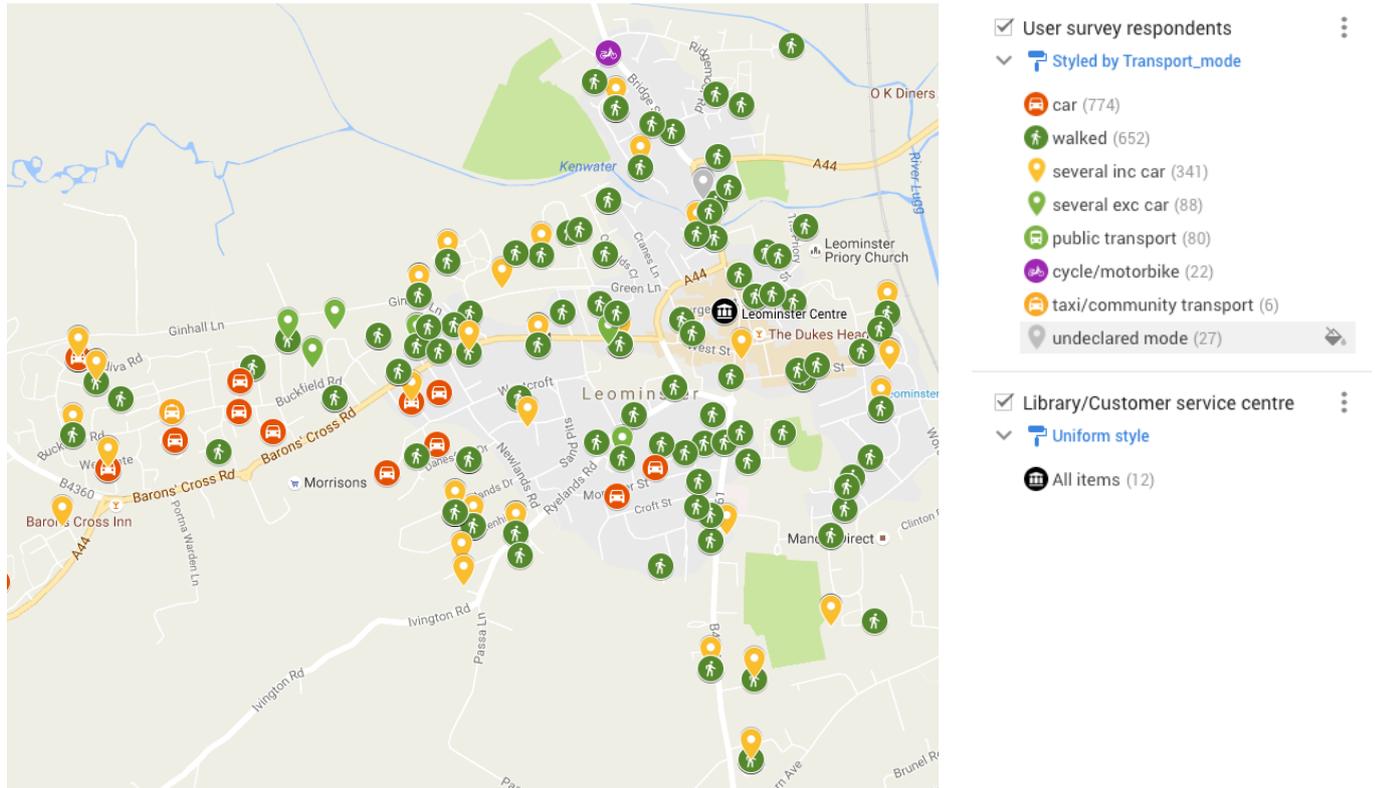
South West
Herefordshire
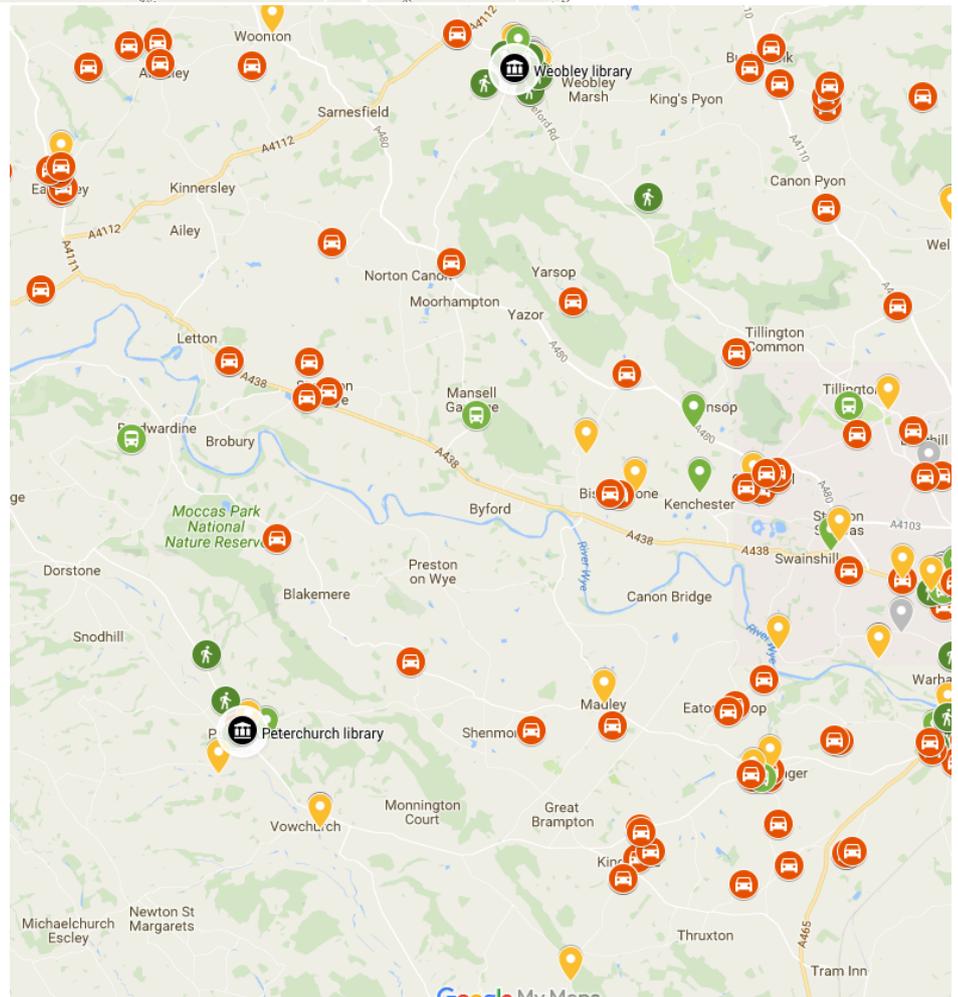
Hereford
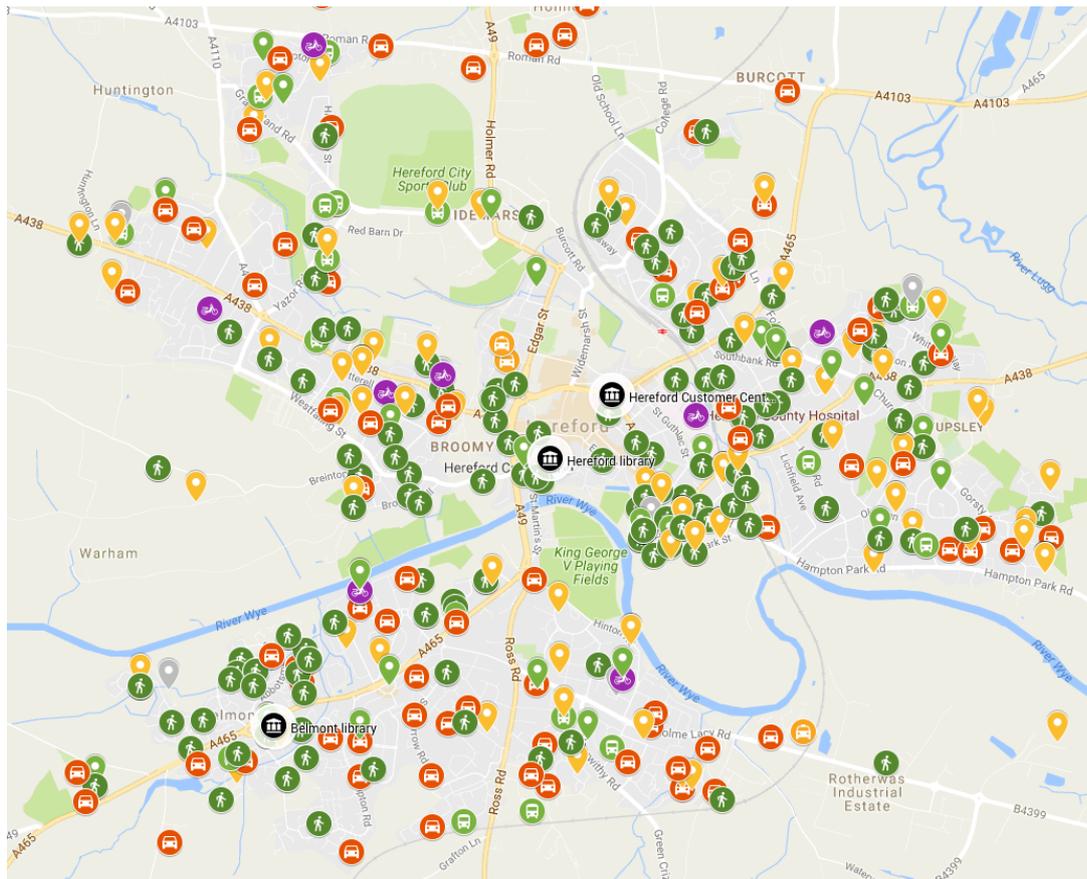
Ross-on-Wye:
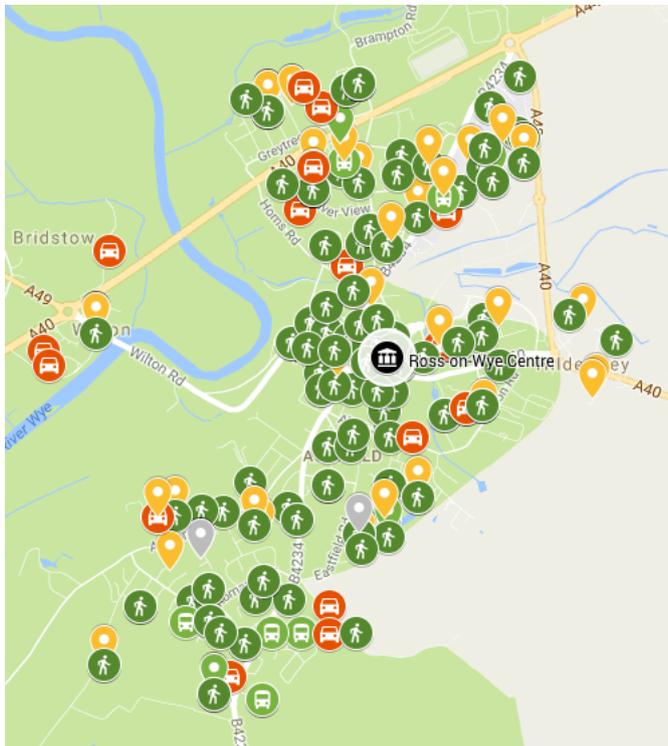
Ledbury:

South East Herefordshire

User survey respondents
Styled by Transport_mode
- car (774)
- walked (652)
- several inc car (341)
- several exc car (88)
- public transport (80)
- cycle/motorbike (22)
- taxi/community transport (6)
- undeclared mode (27)

Library/Customer service centre
Uniform style
- All items (12)
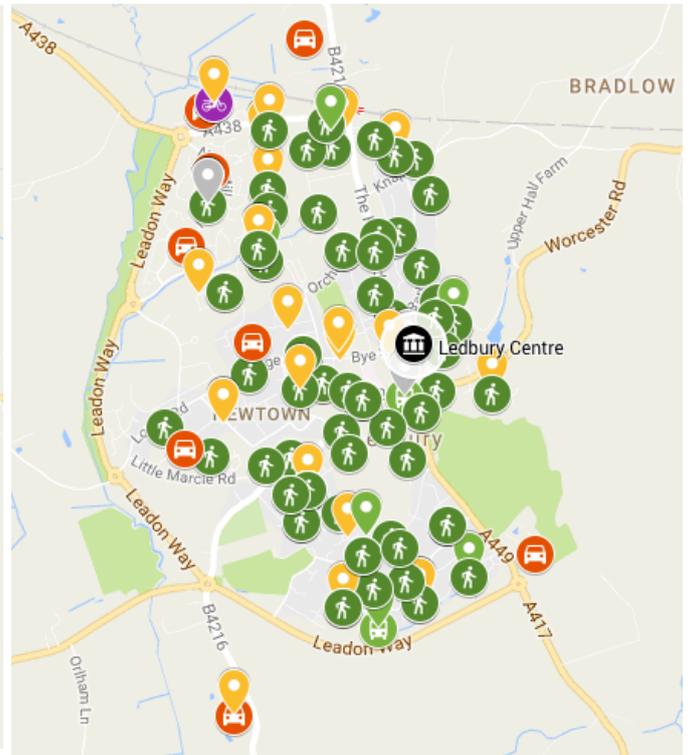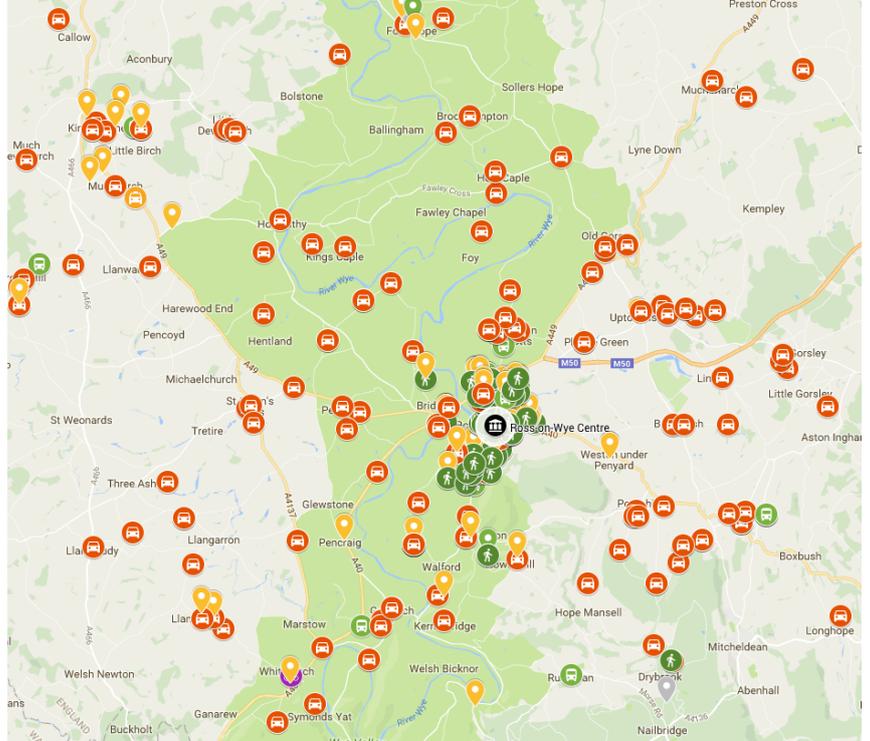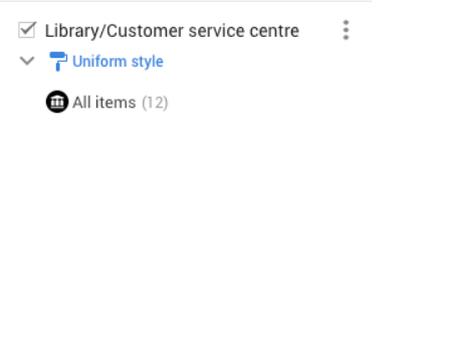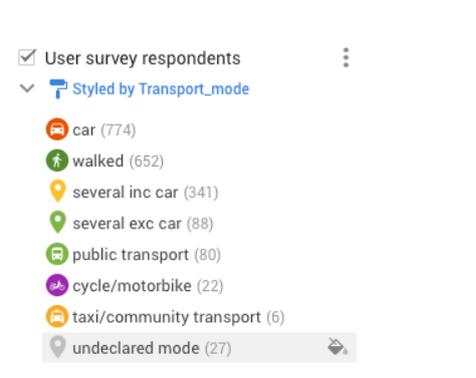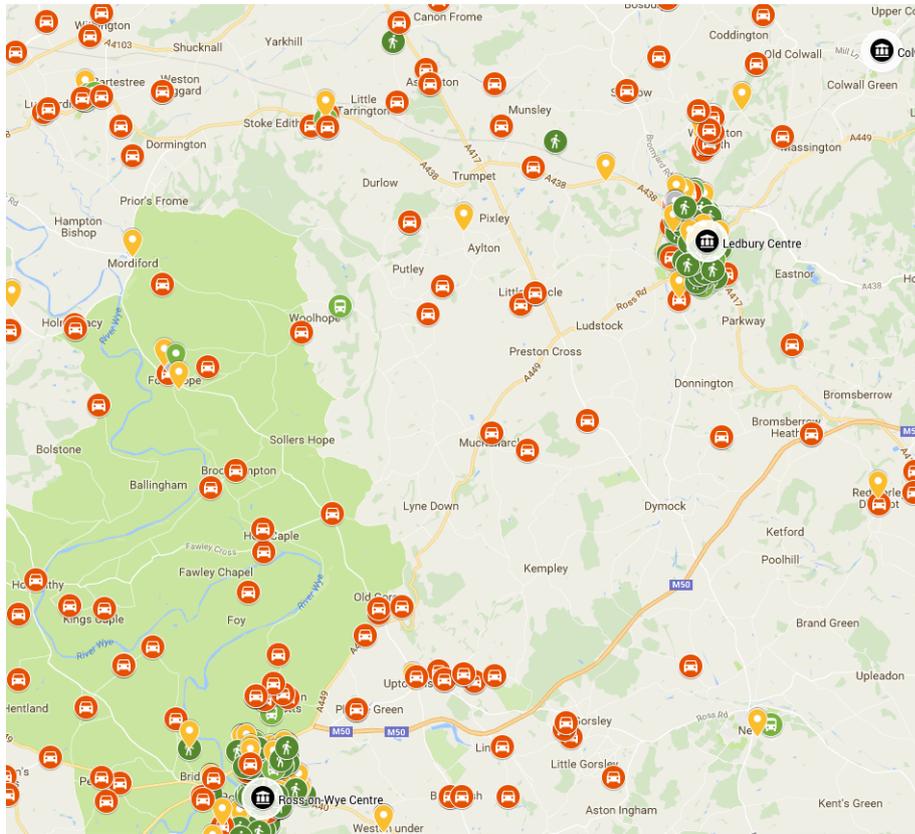
(maps done using GoogleMyMaps)

3.1.7. Demographics

Gender

62 per cent of the survey respondents are women, which is higher than the overall county population (51 per cent). However, women outnumber men at almost all ages over 40 in the county and the age profile of survey respondents is even older than the county's age profile (see below).

Age

User survey respondents aged 34 and under are under represented and respondents aged 55 to 74 are over represented. See below for population comparisons.

Age group	User survey	Herefordshire	Compared with the population
0-15	1%	17%	under-represented
16-24	1%	9%	under-represented
25-34	4%	11%	under-represented
35-44	9%	11%	same
45-54	10%	15%	slightly under-represented
55-64	18%	14%	over-represented
65-74	29%	13%	over-represented
75-80	9%	4%	over-represented
80+	8%	6%	same

Disability

20 per cent of the respondents to the user survey said they have a disability, long-term illness or health problem, similar to the 19 per cent of the population (2011 Census).

Ethnicity

95 per cent of the respondents to the question on ethnicity said they are 'White British', 3 per cent 'Other White' and 1 per cent 'Any other ethnic group'. This is very similar to the overall county population: 94 per cent 'White British', 4 per cent 'Other White' and 2 per cent 'Any other ethnic group' (2011 Census).

3.1.8 Observations from visits to libraries and customer services

'Mystery shopping' observations were made during the course of the consultation.

HEREFORD TOWN HALL TEMPORARY LIBRARY
- No Wi-Fi
- Very limited space
- No computers
- Only printers/photocopiers for staff not public
- Easy access ramp at rear of the building but not well signposted
- No obvious toilet

HEREFORD CENTRE (FRANKLIN HOUSE)
- No Wi-Fi
- Toilet available and advertised as such (one customer just came in to use the loo and shelter from the weather)
- Some very elderly people struggled with negotiating the ticket system and also to get out the automatic doors as they couldn't see how to open them. The sign on the large square metal 'button' as rubbed off.
- Several customers couldn't speak English (one person had a translator with them) and a staff member spoke one of the Eastern European languages

BELMONT LIBRARY
- Wi-Fi had been installed but not working
- Computers well used
- Small area therefore wasn't a big distinction within areas, e.g. children's section within other sections
- Toilet facilities within the community building

BROMYARD CENTRE
- Staff knew some of the locals really well as some come in every day.
- There seemed to be a good local network of older people looking out for each other, meeting in the library and then often going out to lunch together.
- Use of the vending machine to get refreshments and sit and chat at tables and chairs nearby, between the gym and the library.
- A couple of people seemed to struggle a bit with the automated library machine.

LEOMINSTER LIBRARY & CUSTOMER SERVICES
- Similar to Bromyard, the staff knew some of the locals well and there was a good relationship. The staff anticipate what some of the regular visitors to the customer service centre and library might need from which benefit might help, to negotiating the lift down to the entrance lobby.

KINGTON LIBRARY & CUSTOMER SERVICES
- Discussions at customer service centres not discreet.
- Customers and other members of staff even butt into conversations that customer service staff member is having with a customer.
- Automatic doors helpful for people struggling with getting into the building, but easy for children to exit (no exit button). The children's section is right next to the door.

ROSS LIBRARY & CUSTOMER SERVICES
- Discussions at customer service centres not discreet.
- Computers well used/full
- Very well laid out library with distinct areas for computer use, children's section
- Plenty of seating areas
- Good ramps within library
- Modern, light, friendly welcoming building

LEDBURY LIBRARY & CUSTOMER SERVICES
- Lovely building and attracted visitors to Ledbury (tourists) to view the Masters House
- Discussions at customer service centres not discreet.
- Computers well used/full

COLWALL LIBRARY

- Felt like a community building, next to park, marked by the clock tower, however no crossing facilities across the main road.
- Computers well used/full
- Accessible toilet
- Small space with sections right next to each other

3.2 NON-USER SURVEY OF LIBRARIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

3.2.1 Current patterns of non-use and accessing services

In line with other studies, most non-users are lapsed users with only 10 per cent of respondents to the non-user survey never having used a library or customer service centre before. For some, it was over 5 years ago (29 per cent) or 2 to 5 years ago (a quarter of respondents). 18 per cent had used a library or customer service centre about a year ago. The 'other' category included 8 people who had used the library recently (despite the survey being for non-users); several people who no longer use the library due to poor quality of service or since the Hereford library in Broad Street closed and some had moved recently to the county. (Please see Appendix 3 for the non-user questionnaire used)
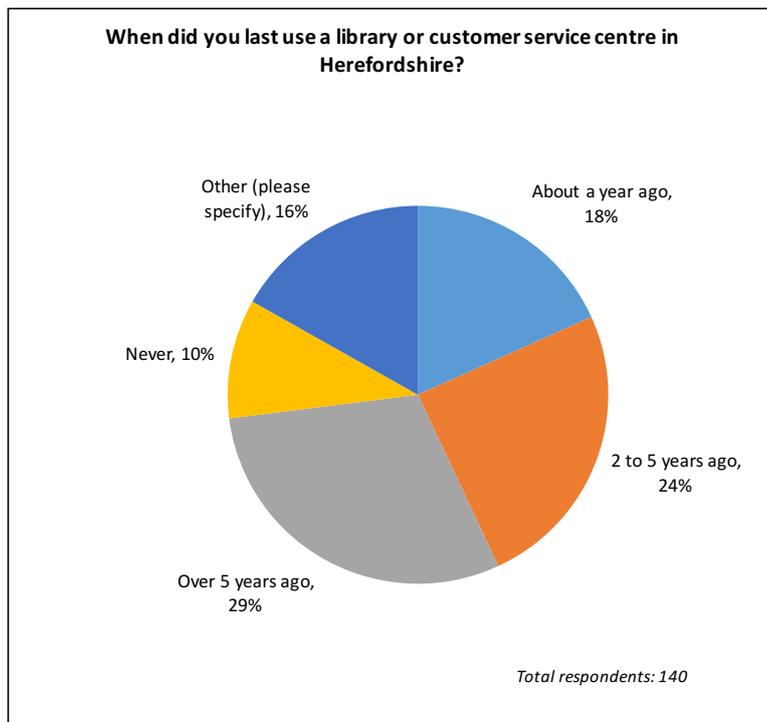
When did you last use a library or customer service centre in Herefordshire?

- Other (please specify), 16%
- About a year ago, 18%
- Never, 10%
- 2 to 5 years ago, 24%
- Over 5 years ago, 29%

Total respondents: 140

Most respondents accessed services elsewhere when needed, particularly for events/activities. Just over half of respondents do not need books for children and 44 per cent don't need to apply to the Council for anything. The Council's website was most frequently accessed by respondents to contact the Council or for information and advice.

See the following table for detail.

Q2. How do you access the following services? (% of respondents)	Access via the council's website	Access elsewhere	Don't use/need	Row total
Books for adults	1	63	26	91
Books for children	1	36	53	90
DVDs & CDs	1	59	30	90
Newspapers & magazines	1	62	27	91
Events/activities	9	64	16	91
Study/research	4	61	24	90
Pay a bill to the council	25	51	14	91
Apply to the council (blue badge, planning, benefits)	24	21	44	90
Contact the council	42	31	18	91
Access information and advice	35	41	11	89
Other	4	9	18	32
Other (please specify)	0	0	13	13
Total responses				95
Not answered				6
Base = 140 respondents				

Knowledge of services available (Q5)

Most respondents said they know about the availability of free computers and access to the internet but don't need to use it at the centre followed by events/exhibitions. There were lower levels of awareness about the Well-being and Information Service (WISH) followed by information and advice on healthy lifestyles. This is in line with other studies (see References ii.).

Q5. Do you know that you can do some of the following at a library and customer service centre?	Didn't know about it	I know about this but don't use it at the centre	Not applicable to me	Total of row
Use of computers with access to the internet	8	74	11	93
Activities for children	16	43	35	93
Books & reading groups	16	62	13	91
Use free Wifi	26	60	8	94
Events/Exhibitions	26	56	7	89
Advice & guidance on housing benefits/council tax	33	39	22	94
Training on use of the internet	33	41	19	94
Information & advice on healthy lifestyles	45	35	13	93
Access the Well-being Information Service (WISH)	48	24	21	92
Total respondents to this question				133
Not answered				7
Base				140

Do you know that you can do the following at a library and customer service centre?

% of all respondents (base = 140)

■ Didn't know about it   ■ I know about this but don't use it at the centre   ■ Not applicable to me
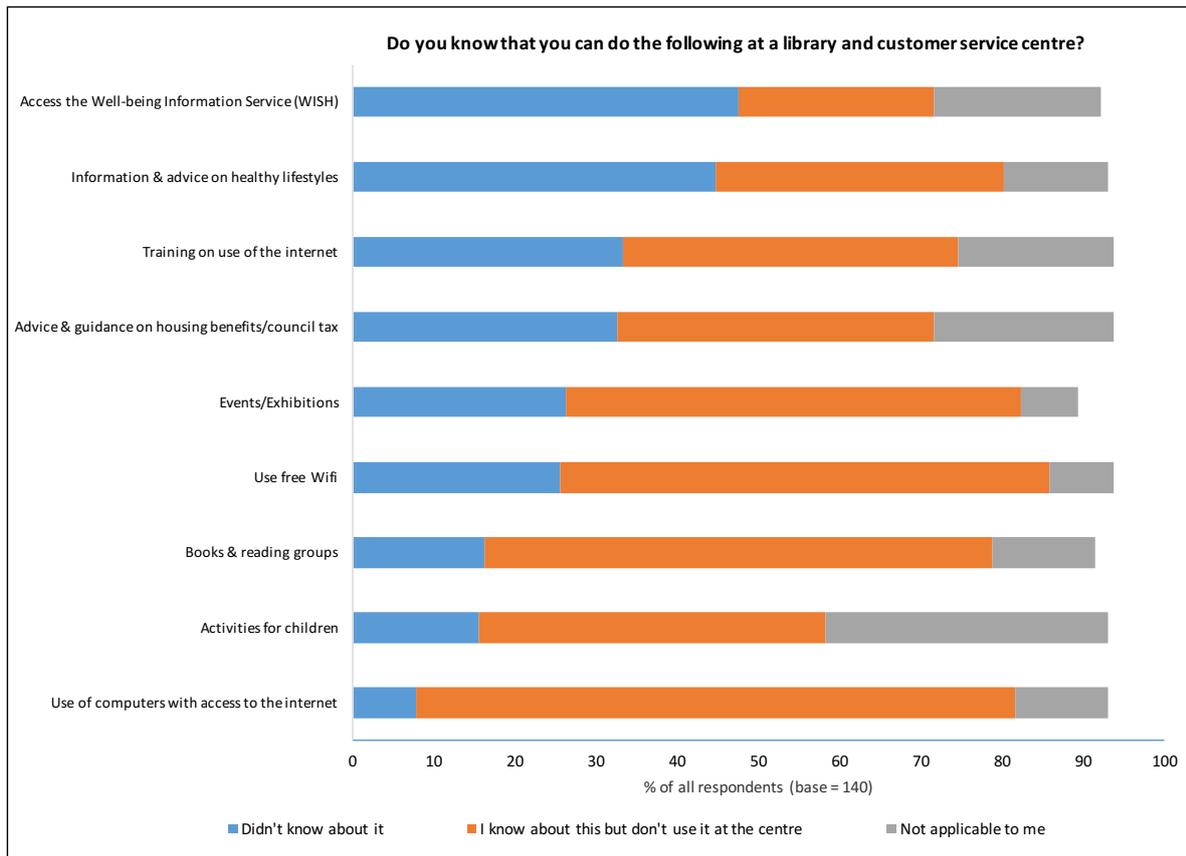
3.2.2 Potential for future use

What puts you off using a library or customer service centre? (Q3)
133 people responded to this question. About one in five comments were 'nothing'
or 'don't need/access services online'. Other reasons given were service constraints
such as queues, fines and range of books; opening hours or closed (Broad Street);
access to the location (parking or time constraints if working) and get books from
elsewhere (online or e-books). A handful of comments were about health or
disability related constraints to going to the library and also 'don't read much'.

What might encourage you to visit a library or customer service centre? (Q4)
129 people responded to this question. About one in five said 'nothing' as they
have no need to go to a library or customer service centre. However one in five
suggested a broader range of services from special services, exhibitions and events
to coffee shops and intergenerational activities such as a tool library. Longer
opening hours for working people or the library actually being open in Broad Street
was also frequently mentioned in the comments, as was access (such as parking),
children's activities and better advertising of what's on offer as a whole. Findings in
other studies were similar where non-users were interested in cafe facilities and
connectivity, e-books and magazines and archival and family history resources.

3.2.3 Impact of a reduced library and customer service

What impact might a reduced library and customer service have on you or anybody else (Q6)

Q6. What impact might a reduced library and customer service have (%)	Great impact	Little impact	No impact	Don't know	*Row count*
On you?	16	35	35	6	*132*
On anybody else?	57	13	9	13	*129*
Please specify 'Anybody else'					*104*
Total respondents to this question					**135**
Not answered					**6**
Base					**140**

35 per cent of respondents said there would be little impact if library and customer services were reduced and a further 35 per cent said there would be no impact. Only 16 per cent said it would have a great impact on them personally. However more than half said it would have a great impact on others and a further 13 per cent said it would have a little impact. The types of people specified were: families with children, those with no internet access at home, elderly, vulnerable, isolated, disabled, people on low incomes.

Type of impact on you or anybody else (Q7)

Just under a third of the impacts described were about access to books and information. Other impacts were geographical access to a centre and potential social isolation if a library or centre was removed; overall loss of service and contact with public services; help and support. People on low incomes, unemployed, without internet access and families with young children were all seen as being disproportionately affected. As described in the following direct quote:

"There would be a huge impact on myself, and many other people. As previously mentioned, it is so much more than 'just' a library-it is a safe space too. The services offered there are essential, and provide a lifeline for many people. For example, someone afraid to use the mental health group sessions that are now offered instead of counselling might benefit from taking out self-help books. Isolated parents get to socialise at the bounce and rhyme sessions, students with low income and/or difficult home environments have somewhere quiet to work, with stacks of information to hand...the list is endless. To cut this service would be to cut what little light there is left in some people's worlds. It's the

difference between a child having the space to work to get accepted at university and break free of a difficult background, or for someone crushed by loneliness, bereavement, post natal depression etc.to make a friend that might just save their life. It's where people learn, grow and develop, which is exactly what is needed in these dark times, please don't take it away. "

3.2.4 Demographics of respondents to the non-user surveys

There were 140 respondents to the non-user survey (62 online, 48 face to face interviews). A broad comparison with Herefordshire's demography is shown below but caution should be taken in placing any weight on this given the relatively small number of respondents compared to the population as a whole.

Age

Respondents aged 65 to 74 were somewhat over-represented and under 24 year olds were under represented, as shown in the table below.

Age group	non-user survey	Herefordshire*	Compared with the population
0-15	1%	17%	under-represented
16-24	6%	9%	slightly under-represented
25-34	10%	11%	same
35-44	14%	11%	slightly over-represented
45-54	19%	15%	slightly over-represented
55-64	19%	14%	slightly over-represented
65-74	26%	13%	over-represented
75-80	1%	4%	under-represented
80+	4%	6%	slightly under-represented

2014 Mid-year estimates, Office for National Statistics

Disability

15 per cent of the respondents to the non-user survey said they have a disability, long-term illness or health problem - a slight under representation compared to 19 per cent of the population (2011 Census).

Ethnicity

93 per cent of the respondents to the question on ethnicity said they are 'White British', 4 per cent 'Other White' and 3 per cent 'Any other ethnic group'. This is similar to the overall county population: 94 per cent 'White British', 4 per cent 'Other White' and 2 per cent 'Any other ethnic group' (2011 Census).

Postcode/geography

A map of where respondents to the non-user survey live approximately (based on their postcode) is shown below. They live in most parts of Herefordshire with the exception of the north east/Bromyard area. There were clusters in the Leominster, Hereford, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye areas as per the population distribution.
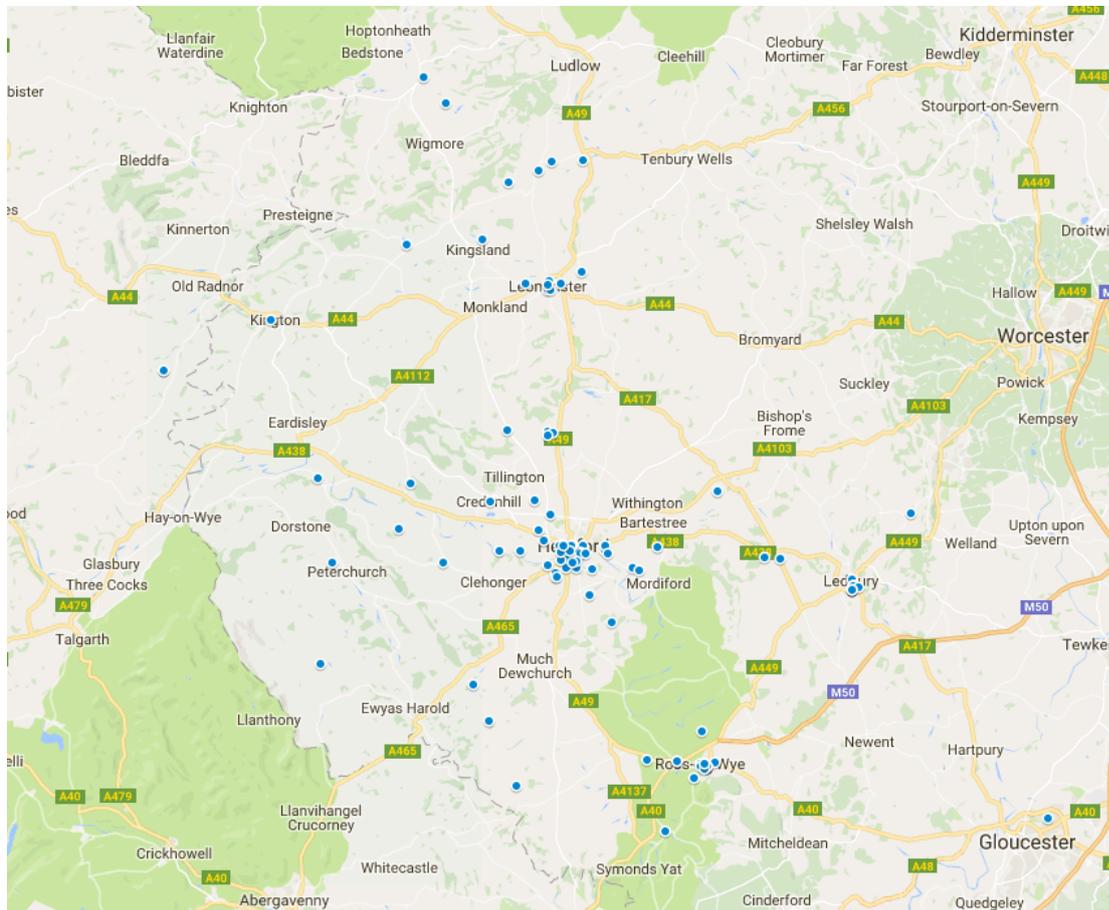
(produced using GoogleMyMaps)

3.3 NON-USER FOCUS GROUPS OF LIBRARIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

This research aimed to gather views from people who do not or no longer use a library or customer service centre in small focussed group discussions to understand why in more detail. To inform this a brief literature review was done (see references section) which identified that life circumstances can affect library usage. Common trigger points for people starting to use libraries again include taking up study, becoming unemployed, having children or retiring. Some research found that non-users were slightly more affluent, slightly more likely to be male and slightly younger than library users (Reference ii.). So for this research, small focussed group discussions were conducted with particular types of people, all in Hereford. They

were: young people (17 to 18 year olds, mainly young men); elderly (aged 80 and over); job-seekers aged 19 and over; women who run their own businesses.

3.3.1 Awareness of services available at libraries and customer service centres

Most people were aware of the library services available (books, DVDs, games, computer use, printing, research, children's activities) with some awareness that other Council services could be accessed too. No awareness of health and well-being services available.

3.3.2 Why they no longer use the library:

Mainly related to life stages and circumstances (similar to other studies):

- **Elderly people** used to use the libraries a lot and were all keen readers (including technical and computing books) but this has diminished with age. Some find it difficult 'settle with a book' and to read with poor eyesight. In addition to this, when they do get out they like to socialise, like at a coffee morning. [Views were gathered from Belmont community centre which is next door to the library].
- **Business women** no longer need to use the library as children are now grown-up. They go online for other services so just no longer need to use.
- **Young people** last went to the library when at school. Most of the participants no longer read books. One still does, before going to sleep at night, after playing video games. Another reads on holiday. One participant went to a 'war hammer' club at Leominster library some years ago and borrowed xBox games from there.

  However, there were also other reasons given that put people off using a library related to accessing services:

  - **Elderly people:** once they have read most of the large print books there isn't much change in stock so they run out of books to read. More difficult to get to the library in winter with limited mobility.
  - **Young people** are put off by the atmosphere of a library which is not welcoming. Awkward silence, boring and feel out of place as illustrated by this comment: *"get some looks when I go in like they're scared what I'll do"*.
  - **Jobseekers** said that the computers are often full so can't use them for job searches or writing CVs.

3.3.3 Where else do you go to access some of these services:

Most people go online to find information, shop or look for jobs. They do this from home or at places other than a library or customer service centre (friends house, cafe, Learning Box, Nova training centre, Wi-Fi hotspots). Some elderly people did not know how to use online services and do not wish to learn; some could access from home. They also said they are unlikely to use health and well-being services in a library setting. Young people also tended to ask friends, relatives or other trusted people for information and help, like at Nova or Herefordshire Housing.

3.3.4 What would encourage you to use a library or customer service centre?

- **Cafe/good coffee nearby** would encourage business women and job seekers to use (newspapers also mentioned by job seekers).
- **Awareness of opening hours** (business women)
- **More computers (**jobseekers)
- **Multi-use centres with dedicated space for children's activities** so noise doesn't disturb other library users. Different generations have different needs. This was mentioned by business women but young people said the only thing that might get them to use a centre was a games room e.g. to play pool.

3.3.5 Impact of reduced services

Nobody in the focus groups said they would be personally affected but thought that older people, those who don't have computers or internet at home and children would be adversely affected.

4. References

i.   Assessing the impact of changes to libraries and customer service centres, Herefordshire Council Research Team, 2013

ii. [Glasgow non- library user survey, 2015](#)

iii. [Libraries Task force](#), 2016

iv. Public libraries not dead yet, YouGov survey, 2015

v.   [What do the public want from libraries? A practitioners guide](#), Museum, Libraries & Archive service, 2010

5. Appendices

5.1 Key points from brief review of published research on non-users of libraries in the UK

5.2 User questionnaire

5.3 Non-user questionnaire

5.1 Key points from brief review of published research on non-users of libraries in the UK

Types of people

Non-user and user profiles were broadly similar, albeit non-users were: **slightly** more likely to be: affluent; male; and younger than library users.

What would encourage use

- Customer friendly service innovations welcome, in addition to library books.
- Having a 'coffee shop on site' is the most commonly cited change that people say would encourage them to use the library more often
- Simply extending opening hours and providing more activities for families and children. Whilst library users are content to visit libraries throughout the day, evening and weekend opening would better suit many non-users.
- Further, a significant proportion of lapsed library users would be enticed back by better online and digital services.
- Case studies show expanding into jobseeker services does work.
- User and non-user interests are similar, but suggest that some non-users are likely to be cash rich but time poor. Many are also likely to be in work and tech-savvy. Book borrowing is still important, as is IT provision. However, non-users are especially interested in e-books and magazines, café facilities and connectivity. Non-users also interested in archival and family history resources.

Why people don't use libraries

- It is common for people to dip in and out of library usage over their adult lives. In the MLAS survey, only 2% said they had never used a library. 2015 YouGov survey found that despite the fading presence of libraries on British streets, use remains strong: almost half the population (47%) have used a public library in the past 12 months. Only 1% have never been to a public library. Additionally, 51% of the UK population have a current library card (one that is not out of date), however only 42% of 18-24 year olds do compared to 62% of those over 60.
- More individuals in younger age groups use libraries, but older people use them more frequently.
- Common trigger points for starting to use libraries (again) include taking up study, becoming unemployed, having children or retiring.
- A childhood library user is more likely to become an adult library user. The majority of current users say that childhood usage was important in getting them 'hooked' on libraries, and most support the idea of getting children into libraries at a young age.
- Many non-users read and are feel positively towards libraries. However, they

may be working full time, and find it easy to 'forget about' them.

- Awareness of services can be low. Glasgow research found that many non-users were very aware of many aspects of available services, like IT, study space and archives. However, awareness was lower for all types of organised groups and learning activities. A fifth of non-users cited a lack of information as a reason for not using libraries

References

- Assessing the impact of changes to libraries and customer service centres, Herefordshire Council Research Team, 2013
- Glasgow non- library user survey, 2015
- Libraries Task force, 2016

- Public libraries not dead yet, YouGov survey, 2015
- What do the public want from libraries? A practitioners guide, Museum, Libraries & Archive service, 2010

Library & customer services USER survey

Do you use libraries or customer service centres in Herefordshire? Please tell us more...

We would like to hear your experience of using libraries and customer services across the county, as your views will be helpful in deciding the future running of the services. **The survey is open until 5th August 2016** for anyone who has used libraries and customer service centres in Herefordshire. Please complete one survey per person. **There is also a prize draw of a £50 shop voucher from a Herefordshire retailer of your choice (see last page for details).**

The information provided will be part of a report that will help Herefordshire Council's Cabinet make decisions on the future of the services. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential, and any results will not identify any individual. The results will be published in mid-October 2016 on the council website and available at each library and customer service centre.

1. Which location did you visit? (tick all that apply)

☐ Belmont Library   ☐ Ledbury Library & Customer Services (Master's House)

☐ Bromyard Centre   ☐ Leintwardine Library

☐ Colwall Library   ☐ Leominster Library & Customer Services

☐ Hereford Customer Services Centre (Franklin House)   ☐ Peterchurch Library

☐ Hereford Library (Broad Street or Town Hall)   ☐ Ross Library & Customer Services

☐ Kington Library & Customer Services   ☐ Weobley Library

2. How did you get there? (tick all that apply)

☐ Car (drove myself)   ☐ Public transport (bus or train)

☐ Car (lift from someone else)   ☐ Taxi

☐ Community transport   ☐ Walked

☐ Cycle or motorcycle

3. What is your post code? (to understand where you have travelled from)

☐

4. How often do you use any library / customer service centre?

○ Very regularly (2-3 times a week or more)   ○ Infrequently (once a month)

○ Regularly (once a week)   ○ Rarely (less than monthly)

5. Which days and times do you usually use a library / customer service centre? (please tick all that apply)

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	☐	☐	☐
Tuesday	☐	☐	☐
Wednesday	☐	☐	☐
Thursday	☐	☐	☐
Friday	☐	☐	☐
Saturday	☐	☐	☐

6. What do you generally use a library or customer service centre for? (please tick all that apply)

☐ Borrow, renew or return a book or other item

☐ Order a book

☐ Use the public access computers

☐ Use the Wifi

☐ Obtain information

☐ Pay a bill or access a council service (e.g. query on Council Tax, bus pass, blue badge, etc)

☐ Attend an event (e.g. bounce and rhyme, summer reading challenge, health event, workshop)

☐ Research

☐ Visit to Job Centre Plus (Ross only)

☐ Speak to an advisor (e.g. home point, planning, welfare, SSAFA)

☐ Other reason (please specify)

[   ]

7. What is important to you about customer services and libraries? (tick all that apply)

	Important	Not sure	Not important
Access information	○	○	○
Free wifi and access to PCs	○	○	○
Range of stock available (e.g. books, talking books, DVDs)	○	○	○
Speak to a customer services advisor	○	○	○
Meeting people	○	○	○
Feel less lonely	○	○	○
A good place to go with children	○	○	○
Supports my health and well being	○	○	○
I need help to complete forms (e.g. can't do online/ disability/ reading and writing difficulties/ English is a second language)	○	○	○
Events and exhibitions	○	○	○

Other reason (please specify)

8. What else would you like to be able to use or do at the library/ customer services centre? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Events for children
- ☐ Events for teenagers
- ☐ Health checks
- ☐ Courses and classes
- ☐ Information, advice and signposting
- ☐ IT courses including internet training
- ☐ Specific groups or activities
- ☐ Other services/ organisations
- ☐ Please give further detail:

9. What is your view on introducing or increasing charges for some services? (by law we are not allowed to charge people to become a library member or when they borrow a book)

	Acceptable	Not sure	Not acceptable
Photocopying	○	○	○
Printing	○	○	○
Reservation charge for requested items	○	○	○
Non book items (e.g. talking books, DVDs)	○	○	○
Room hire	○	○	○
Overdue items	○	○	○
Activities/events for adults	○	○	○
Activities/events for children	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

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10. If you couldn't access a library or customer service centre would you:

	Likely	Unlikely	Don't know	Not applicable
Borrow or buy books from elsewhere	○	○	○	○
Visit somewhere else that provides this service	○	○	○	○
Borrow online with the e-book & e-audio service	○	○	○	○
Use the council's website to make a payment or other transaction	○	○	○	○
Find information online e.g. waste collection day, planning information, bus timetables	○	○	○	○
Message council services online using the "contact us" or "book an appointment" web pages	○	○	○	○
Phone the council	○	○	○	○
Use social media to contact the council	○	○	○	○
Visit somewhere else that provides this service (e.g. Post Office, free wifi elsewhere)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

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11. What barriers would you face to accessing services differently? (tick all that apply)

☐ Do not have access to the internet due to cost

☐ Do not use the internet due to poor/slow service

☐ Do not know how to use the internet

☐ I am not confident that my information will be safe on-line

☐ Do not like using the 'phone to access services

☐ Need to speak to someone in person

☐ Problems with transport

☐ Problems with mobility

☐ Other (please specify)

12. We want to ensure that, if anything changes in the future, this will be as fair as possible to everyone. How do you think any changes would impact on you?

13. Please also tell us how we can ensure we support any particular needs *(For example any of Government's "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex)*

14. Any other comments or suggestions?

About you - to help us to understand how views may differ between people:

15. Are you

◯ Male   ◯ Female

16. How old are you?

◯ 0-15   ◯ 35-44   ◯ 65-74

◯ 16-24   ◯ 45-54   ◯ 75-80

◯ 25-34   ◯ 55-64   ◯ 80+

17. Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem?

◯ No

◯ Yes

If yes, please specify:

[   ]

18. How would you describe your ethnic group?

◯ White British

◯ Other White

◯ Any other ethnic group

Please specify:

[   ]

Library & customer services USER survey

Prize draw information

If you would like to be entered into a prize draw (£50 shop voucher of your choice), please enter your details below. Your personal details will be detached before your response is analysed.

Privacy Notice:

The information that you supply will be processed by Data Orchard CIC, who are independently analysing the results of this survey on behalf of Herefordshire Council, who, for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998, is the Data Controller. Any information you provide will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be used for the purposes of developing services by Herefordshire Council. Your information will not be shared with any other parties, but the combined results will be published without reference to any individual.

19. Would you like to enter the prize draw?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Library & customer services USER survey

Prize draw details

The information below will be separated before responses are analysed. This will help to ensure that your questionnaire responses remain confidential and anonymous. Completed questionnaires will be entered in a Prize Draw (£50 shop voucher of your choice).

20. To allow us to notify you if you win, you will need to provide your contact details where indicated below.

Name

Telephone number

e-mail address

Postal address (if required)

Name of local retailer preferred for voucher

21. If you are under 16, we will need your parent/guardian to complete the details below.

◯ Agree to accept the prize draw terms and conditions on behalf of your child?

Parent/guardian's full name:

Prize Draw Information

1. There will be a single prize of £50 voucher for a shop of your choice operating in Herefordshire.
2. The prize-draw will be based on the PRIZE DRAW PAGES that will have been detached from questionnaires to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of responses.
3. The winner of the prize-draw will be identified via the details provided above. If you do not provide details, it will be assumed that you do not wish to participate in the draw.
4. If your PRIZE DRAW PAGE is initially selected as the prize-draw's winning entry, in the unlikely event that we cannot subsequently identify you from the information you have provided on that Page, a replacement winner will be selected.
5. The winner of the prize-draw will be notified within 3 weeks of the closing date of the survey.
6. Herefordshire Council will retain these contact details for the purposes of helping to improve libraries and customer services.

22. Herefordshire Council may contact you with information regarding libraries and customer services.

◯ If you do not wish to receive information regarding these services, please tick here.

8

Non users of libraries and customer service centres in Herefordshire

Tell us why you don't use libraries or customer service centres in Herefordshire

We would like to hear why you don't use, or no longer use libraries and customer services across the county. Your views will be helpful in deciding the future running of these services. **The survey is open until 5th August 2016.** Please complete one form per person. **There is also a prize draw of £50 shop voucher from a Herefordshire retailer of your choice (see last page for details).**

The information provided will be part of a report that will help Herefordshire Council Cabinet make decisions on the future of the services. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential, and any results will not identify any individual. The results will be published in mid-October 2016 on the council website and available at each library and customer service centre.

1. When did you last use a library or customer service centre in Herefordshire?

○ About a year ago

○ 2 to 5 years ago

○ Over 5 years ago

○ Never

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

2. How do you access the following services?

	Access via the council's website	Access elsewhere	Don't use/need
Books for adults	○	○	○
Books for children	○	○	○
DVDs & CDs	○	○	○
Newspapers & magazines	○	○	○
Events/activities	○	○	○
Study/research	○	○	○
Pay a bill to the council	○	○	○
Apply to the council (blue badge, planning, benefits)	○	○	○
Contact the council	○	○	○
Access information and advice	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

3. What puts you off using a library or customer service centre?

[ ]

4. What might encourage you to visit a library or customer service centre?

[ ]

5. Do you know that you can do some of the following at a library and customer service centre?

	Didn't know about it	I know about this but don't use it at the centre	Not applicable to me
Use free Wifi	☐	☐	☐
Use of computers with access to the internet	☐	☐	☐
Training on use of the internet	☐	☐	☐
Activities for children	☐	☐	☐
Information & advice on healthy lifestyles	☐	☐	☐
Advice & guidance on housing benefits/council tax	☐	☐	☐
Access the Well-being Information Service (WISH)	☐	☐	☐
Books & reading groups	☐	☐	☐
Events/Exhibitions	☐	☐	☐

6. What impact might a reduced library and customer service have:

	Great impact	Little impact	No impact	Don't know
On you?	○	○	○	○
On anybody else?	○	○	○	○

Please specify 'Anybody else'

[ ]

7. If you said there would be an impact, what do you think it might be? (either on you or someone else)

[ ]

8. Are you

( ) 0-15   ( ) 35-44   ( ) 65-74

( ) 16-24   ( ) 45-54   ( ) 75-80

( ) 25-34   ( ) 55-64   ( ) 80+

9. Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem?

( ) No

( ) Yes

If yes, please specify:

[   ]

10. How would you describe your ethnic group?

( ) White British

( ) Other White

( ) Any other ethnic group

Please specify

[   ]

11. What's your postcode? (to understand travel times)

[   ]

Non users of libraries and customer service centres in Herefordshire

Prize draw

If you would like to be entered into a prize draw (£50 shop voucher of a Herfordshire retailer of your choice), please enter your details below. Your personal details will be separated before your response is analysed.

Privacy Notice:
The information that you supply will be processed by Data Orchard CIC, who are independently analysing the results of this survey on behalf of Herefordshire Council, who, for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998, is the Data Controller. Any information you provide will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be used for the purposes of developing services by Herefordshire Council. Your information will not be shared with any other parties, but the combined results will be published without reference to any individual.

12. Would you like to enter the prize draw?

◯ Yes

◯ No

Prize draw details

The information below will be separated before responses are analysed. This will help to ensure that your questionnaire responses remain confidential and anonymous. Completed questionnaires will be entered in a Prize Draw (£50 shop voucher of your choice).

13. To allow us to notify you if you win, you will need to provide your contact details where indicated below:

Name

[   ]

e-mail address

[   ]

Telephone number

[   ]

Postal address (optional)

[   ]

Name of local retailer preferred for voucher

[   ]

14. If under 16, please ask your parent or guardian's to complete the details below to accept the prize draw terms and conditions on your behalf:

◯ I agree to the terms and conditions of the prize draw on behalf of my child

Parent/guardian's full name:

[   ]

Prize Draw Information

1.   There will be a single prize of £50 voucher for a shop of your choice operating in Herefordshire.
2.   The prize-draw will be based on the PRIZE DRAW DETAILS that will have been separated from before analysis to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of responses.
3.   The winner of the prize-draw will be identified via the details provided above. If you do not provide details, it will be assumed that you do not wish to participate in the draw.
4.   If your PRIZE DRAW PAGE is initially selected as the prize-draw's winning entry, in the unlikely event that we cannot subsequently identify you from the information you have provided on that Page, a replacement winner will be selected.
5.   The winner of the prize-draw will be notified within 3 weeks of the closing date of the survey.
6.   Herefordshire Council will retain these contact details for the purposes of helping to improve libraries and customer services.

15. Herefordshire Council may contact you with information regarding libraries and customer services.

◯ If you do not wish to receive information regarding these services, please tick here