

— CROYDON LIBRARIES —  
**LIBRARY PLAN**  
INFORM • INVOLVE • INSPIRE  
2019 - 2028





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# Foreword: Councillor Oliver Lewis Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport



Croydon's libraries are devoted to the education, enjoyment and wellbeing of our communities.

Croydon is changing and so are our libraries. We need a modern, flexible, and efficient library service that can adapt to meet the needs of all our residents in line with the transformation of our ever-evolving borough.

This is an ambitious ten year plan, which sets out the vision for our libraries and introduces a transformational programme of work that will ensure Croydon's network of thirteen libraries are fit for the future and serve the changing needs of our communities, including the development of a flagship library within the Croydon Clocktower complex.

At the heart of any library is the written and spoken word. Successful libraries also play a vital role in promoting health and wellbeing, supporting people into work, increasing educational attainment, improving digital skills, bringing individuals and communities together and celebrating creativity and culture.

Our libraries already receive nearly 2 million visits a year. And half of these visits are for access to IT, events or other activities. This plan sets out how we will develop both the core library service and our library buildings as vibrant community and cultural hubs. In doing so we aim to:

- **Inform** communities with books and services that meet their needs;
- **Involve** our communities through volunteering opportunities
- **Inspire** people through the information and opportunities available to them
- increase the usage of our libraries and resources;
- attract more young people and those of working age, who traditionally, are less likely to use libraries;

Our libraries will be modern, welcoming spaces where people of all ages and backgrounds come to learn, read, work, meet people and get involved.

We will increase the number of physical and digital books and resources available.

We will provide a programme of events that encourages creativity and celebrates culture.

Our libraries will help residents find the information and support they require within their local community and will play an important role in the council's localities approach – connecting residents with relevant local services.

We will support education and pathways into employment by expanding our homework clubs, job clubs and digital zones, helping residents to engage with the changing working and learning environment.

Our libraries will cater for the digital age by providing modern IT and supporting the development of digital skills. We will use technology and mobile apps to give access to our libraries and the services outside of core hours.

We will develop and improve our volunteer programme and our partnerships with the voluntary and community sector to encourage more people of all ages to get involved and shape their local service.

Ultimately, we will achieve all this by working with our communities and partners across the borough. Our ambition is for libraries that inform, involve and inspire. I look forward to working with all of you to deliver this exciting and ambitious plan.

**Councillor Oliver Lewis**

*Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport*

# ► Key Statistics

## USAGE



visits to Croydon libraries each year



books borrowed each year



sessions using library computers

## YOUNG PEOPLE

**30%** of library users are under 16



**46%** of books are borrowed by under 16s

**Over 10,000** children visited libraries with their school class



## IMPROVING SKILLS



**Over 1,500** attendances at Work Clubs

**Over 100,000** visits by older people to one-to-one IT skills improvement sessions



## PARTICIPATION

**Over 100,000** visits to events and activities in libraries



**35,000** visits to under-5s Rhymetime sessions



## ► Our Vision

- **Inform** – connecting residents to information, activities and services that will benefit them
- **Involve** – a service that is shaped by residents and easily adapts to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve
- **Inspire** – creative library spaces that offer residents opportunities to have fun, learn and connect with others

*"At the heart of any library is the written and spoken word. Successful libraries also play a vital role in promoting health and wellbeing, supporting people into work, increasing educational attainment, improving digital skills, bringing individuals and communities together and celebrating creativity and culture".*

# Welcome to the Central Library

Learning  
Informing  
Interacting

Tri-Fold Presentation Board  
Triptico para presentaciones  
Panneau d'affichage à trois battants

48 in x 36 in = 12 ft<sup>2</sup>  
1.2 m x 91.4 cm = 1.1 m<sup>2</sup>

## BEES' SUPERHEROES

There are 20,000 native bee species in North America and 30,000 more in the rest of the world. However, the number of bees is declining rapidly. In the United States, the number of bees has declined by 90% since 1990. This is due to many factors including habitat loss, pesticides, and diseases.

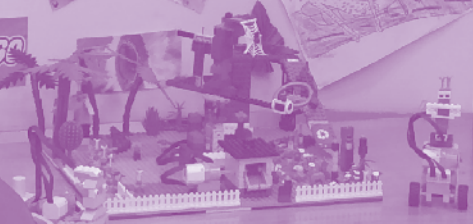
Beehive: a bees nest is constructed to protect the queen. The workers of the hive are responsible for feeding the queen and the young bees. The bees also collect nectar and pollen to make honey and beeswax.

Our Team:  
Aineya  
Abhi  
Kacper  
Koushuhn  
Krutvik

### Grasshopper

Grasshoppers are insects that belong to the order Orthoptera. They are known for their long hind legs, which they use to jump. There are over 7,000 species of grasshoppers in the world. They are found in all parts of the world, except Antarctica. Grasshoppers are important to the ecosystem because they eat plants and are eaten by other animals.

Our Animals:  
Grasshopper and Bee



Teen

## ► OUTCOME

# A LIBRARY SERVICE DESIGNED AROUND THE NEEDS OF OUR RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

## What does success look like?

- More residents are using their local library to **access information**, learn and **get involved**
- Local community groups are using their local library to **meet** and run activities and events
- More young people are using libraries to **study, socialise** and **get involved**
- Small local businesses are using libraries as local offices and **meeting** venues





## ► What we will do

- Increase our book fund and provide a rich variety of books tailored to the local community
- Join the London Library Consortium to give residents access to over 6 million books
- Expand our homework clubs, job clubs and Digital Zones
- Improve the way that library user data is captured, reported and used to enable services to be targeted more effectively to residents' needs and interests
- Develop our volunteering offer to enable residents to get more involved in the running of their local library
- Widen access to communities of greatest need
- Involve our communities in designing their local service
- Deliver a service that goes beyond the walls of the library buildings, providing outreach opportunities particularly for communities that are under-represented as library users

## ► OUTCOME

# CROYDON LIBRARIES AS THE 'FRONT DOOR' OF THE COUNCIL ENABLING SERVICES TO BE DELIVERED LOCALLY

## What does success look like?

- Libraries facilitate local **prevention** and **early intervention** activity
- Residents are accessing the **support** and services they need **closer** to where they live
- Residents are receiving **support** and **advice** on matters such as health, finances and families at their local library
- Residents are receiving help to **get on-line** and access other council services
- Residents are being **signposted** to the right services and receiving information locally
- Staff and partner organisations are meeting and “touching down” in libraries when working in localities



## ► What we will do

- Provide meeting space and private discussion space in our key libraries
- Install the technology needed to access other council services
- Utilise libraries as a key asset from which council services can be provided to residents in their local areas and also offer drop-down points for staff
- Establish partnerships with council, other local services and community groups to provide locality based solutions that focus on early intervention and prevention
- Train library staff, volunteers and partners working in libraries enabling them to connect local people to local information, activities and services
- Develop an evaluation framework for Croydon's libraries based on the seven outcomes defined by the national libraries taskforce

## ► OUTCOME

# LIBRARIES AT THE HEART OF CROYDON'S CULTURAL OFFER, CELEBRATING THE WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD IN PARTICULAR

## What does success look like?

- Residents of all ages and backgrounds are attending exhibitions, performances, events and activities in their local library and enjoying a range of **cultural experiences**
- Residents of all ages and backgrounds have expressed an interest in trying out a **skill** or **interest** as a result of an event they have attended



## ► What we will do

- Develop a comprehensive, integrated, cultural offer with libraries recognised as cultural venues
- Expand our programme of author readings and talks across our libraries
- Provide spaces where residents can experience a range of cultural activities and media
- Work with the Croydon Cultural Network to develop a programme of artists-in-residence and a programme of cultural events and activities that sit within a wider cultural calendar for Croydon

## ► OUTCOME

# MODERN, WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE LIBRARY FACILITIES AND BUILDINGS

## What does success look like?

- Residents are **accessing** library services from different locations at times that suit them
- More **young people** and **working age** residents are library members
- Lending of books and resources and usage of **online resources** has increased
- Library buildings are fully utilised during and outside of core hours



\*Technology solutions can allow access into unstaffed library buildings. Entry to the library is via a library card and pin, with CCTV aiding security; self-service machines and computers allow full usage of the library service. This system is currently used in 20% of UK library services.

## ► What we will do

- Provide attractive, accessible, modern, flexible multi-purpose spaces that are both professional and welcoming, with consistency of design across the borough.
- Deliver a flagship library in the Clocktower complex in central Croydon
- Install modern technology that meets the needs of an increasingly digital society and supports students, small businesses, and residents to get online
- Enable customers to access online services remotely through a library app on their mobile devices
- Use technology to extend the hours that the building can be accessed to outside of core library hours \*
- Provide cafes at our busiest libraries to provide facilities for customers, groups and small businesses

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