

Collection Development Policy

The purposes of the public library service are to provide the individual and the community with access to information, ideas and experiences contained in books and other media.

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy has been developed to address the issues relating to collection development in and across the county libraries in light of the following considerations:

- The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 - "It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof, and for that purpose to employ such officers, to provide and maintain such buildings and equipment, and such books and other materials, and to do such other things, as may be requisite..."
- The mission for Cultural Services:

Provide access to information, ideas and experiences for leisure and learning
Promote opportunities for creativity and development
Preserve Dorset's unique resources

- Core Service business: To provide a range of services for residents and visitors on behalf of Dorset Library Services.
- The need to acknowledge, analyse and apply best value principles to collection development.
- Contribute to Dorset County Council's Corporate Plan - "Working Together for a Strong and Successful Dorset"
- The quality of our bookstock and audio visual materials are critical factors to our success in attracting library users and providing them with the service that they want. It is therefore vital that we choose stock wisely, look after it and ensure that it is used fully.

1.2 This policy is intended for Councillors, the public and staff. It is intended to provide a framework for collection management, training, planning and measuring performance and to assist in the effective and appropriate use of resources.

2. Policy: Aims and Objectives

2.1 Our aim is to provide the widest possible range and choice of stock within our resources to entertain, educate, inform and challenge. The policy is intended to inform decisions in all areas of collection management, whilst acknowledging special conditions relating to reference and information provision, children and young people's provision and income-generating hire services.

2.2 The Collection Development Policy and the accompanying Collection Standards explain how Dorset Library Service:

- Choose the books, audio visual, information and other materials that you find in your libraries, and the position on censorship
- How we circulate stock between libraries to ensure that even the smallest libraries provide the widest choice of reading
- How we maintain and promote those materials
- Why we decide to keep some items and discard others
- How we measure the performance of stock at all libraries

2.3 The objectives of this policy and accompanying standards are to provide specific, achievable and realistic targets for:

- Collection content
- Quality and condition of collection
- Access
- Format
- Levels of Service

3. Benefits

3.1 The benefits that will accrue from this policy and the accompanying standards include:

- A statement of what can be provided from our own resources and an identification of our position within the hierarchy of information providers
- Realistic expectations by users and staff of the nature and level of collections at a given library

- A guide to selection and exploitation of collections enabling staff to maximise use and to respond to perceived demand locally and across the service
- Consistency across the service in stock management and reader development
- A better understanding by users of both the strengths and limitations of the service
- Definition of benchmarks against which performance of the service can be assessed

4. Collection Content

4.1 A quality service cannot be provided simply by reacting to expressed demand. Therefore there will be a positive endeavour to build collections in order to satisfy both expressed and potential users. Material held and supplied is only restricted by law and the resources available. Within these, library collections should offer the greatest possible freedom of choice and reflect all points of view and cultural diversity. Materials should be accessible to all sections of the community and will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, social, political or religious views of the author.

4.2 Selection of stock will be done according to agreed criteria informed by professional knowledge, specialist sources and by information available on customer needs and existing collection profiles. Expertise is brought to bear on the selection of material for children and young adults; their special needs and requirements being reflected in service specific selection guidelines.

4.3 Out of print materials will be retained for Local Studies Collections and reserve collections.

4.4 The library service will provide some material in support of the National Curriculum in the form of information books or other similar material which can be used to help with homework enquiries.

4.5 Collections of audio-visual materials will be managed within the constraints of licence and holdback agreements which determine the availability of materials for library purchase and loan.

4.6 Digital sources represent the greatest growth area and these sources offer easily accessible, information and lifelong learning support in every library. The use of the Internet and digital sources will be exploited as far as possible.

5. Quality and Condition of Collections

5.1 Stock selection and collection management will be co-ordinated across all service points to ensure that resources are concentrated where most needed and that the depth, range and currency of the stock county-wide is maximised.

5.2 Collections should not contain inaccurate, out of date or otherwise misleading information.

5.3 Collection condition, including decisions on binding, repair and withdrawal will be continually assessed according to agreed practice (see Collection Standards).

5.4 All staff will be responsible for the daily monitoring of materials for repair as stock is returned to the library.

6. Access

6.1 Reader development offers choices for the library service to become socially inclusive by offering wider reading to all individuals, groups and communities. The collection will meet these expectations by providing a core of literary fiction, first novels, world literature in translation, multicultural writing, poetry and small press publishing.

6.2 Collections will be arranged, guided and presented in a way that encourages self help by users, shows material to its best advantage and is consistent with County Stock Standards. Collections will be largely on open access. Items which are no longer available but for which there is a small but persistent demand either locally and regionally will be held in the reserve collections, together with any item where the format or value of the material renders it inappropriate to be displayed on the open shelves.

6.3 It is not possible, practicable or cost-effective to provide all books and information that may be required by library users. Each library has a role as a gateway to the full range of resources available within the county library service, national and international library collections. This approach reduces unnecessary duplication, ensures clarity of expectation, enables coordinated collection management and improves value for money. The out of county inter-library loan network excludes audio visual material.

6.4 Reference material currently shelved separately will be rationalised and interfiled with non fiction stock. Reference provision will increasingly be provided by digital access.

6.5 Materials for children and young people will be held in clearly defined areas within all libraries. Children can borrow stock from the general library collection but the responsibility for young people's reading and Internet searching remains with the parent or guardian, as library staff are not held to serve *in loco parentis*.

6.6 Library staff have a legal duty to uphold the provisions of the Video Recording Act 1993 with regards to the hire of age-restricted DVDs and may refuse to allow any DVD to be hired by an individual without proof of age.

6.7 Provision will be made for those unable to read print and for home users to access materials in formats other than via the written word.

6.8 Wherever possible stock will be made available in a range of appropriate languages.

6.9 Access to the catalogue on the Internet will be available at all static service points and in order to maximize access to materials and information through Dorset's network of libraries, consideration will be given to formats as set out below in Section 7.

7. Format

7.1 Books are provided free of charge for loan or reference, as required by the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964). The performance of the collections will be reviewed against targets set down in the collection standards document. Breadth, depth of coverage, suitability, use and condition will be amongst the indicators used to judge efficiency.

7.2 In the areas of reference and information services, the concept of "stock" encompasses information in a variety of formats. Increasingly, the need for currency and accuracy demand the use of digital format as the primary and best source.

7.3 Audio visual loan collections, CDs, talking books and DVDs are complementary to other formats, including books; they increase the use of libraries and generate income. The effectiveness of each individual collection will be assessed by issues and by income generated in relation to investment, taking into account the access requirements of those who cannot use printed formats. As a result collections may not be available at all service points.

8. Levels of Service

8.1 Materials selected for each library will be relevant and appropriate to the needs of that library's customers and the community it serves. In order to make the most effective use of resources, however, not all libraries will provide all services or materials. The collection in any particular library will be based on an assessment of levels of use and its place in the hierarchy of county library provision.

8.2 It is not necessary or possible within the resources or space capacity available for all libraries to have the same level of coverage, in terms of breadth and depth.

8.3 Library staff will assist customers in finding information, books or other library materials.

8.4 Decisions on stock and withdrawal will be made in the context of the Collection Standards and financial regulations.

9. Concluding Remarks

9.1 This Collection Development Policy provides the framework for the Collection Standards.

9.2 This policy is not static and will be reviewed regularly to reflect and take account of changing needs and circumstances.

9.3 Dorset Library Service will be responsive to the comments, questions and suggestions of the community with regards to the Collection Development Policy and the Collection Standards.

Dorset Library Service Collection Development Policy 2006 (updated 2016).