

Renewal and Transformation

The future delivery of public library services in Richmond upon Thames

Equalities Impact Assessment: Heathfield Library

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1. What service change is being proposed?

This Equality Impact Assessment relates to the proposed closure of Heathfield Library on 17 March 2011.

**Heathfield Library
Percy Road
Whitton TW2 6JL**

Heathfield Library is located on the junction of Percy Road and Hospital Bridge Road on the south-eastern boundary of the Heathfield ward. It is a part-time community library open for 21 hours each week.

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10.00 am to 1.00 pm; 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm
Wednesday	2.00 pm to 6.00 pm
Thursday	Closed
Friday	2.00 pm to 6.00 pm
Saturday	10.00 am to 1.00 pm; 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm
Sunday	Closed

There are 2,827 registered members at Heathfield Library of which 959 are considered to be active members because they have borrowed a book or other item within the last 12 months. Heathfield Library received 33,806 visits in 2009-10.

2. What is the rationale for this service change?

Heathfield Library will close on 17 March 2011 because the existing library site has been sold to the NHS Local Investment Finance Trust to enable the development of a new health centre for the Heathfield and Whitton areas. The decision to sell the library building and adjacent land was taken by the Council on 7 July 2008. The Council's initial proposal was to locate a temporary library building on the site of Heathfield Junior School in Powdermill Lane until such times as a permanent library building or location could be found. The Council now proposes not to continue with the development of this temporary library building for the following reasons:

- a. The temporary building is unaffordable given the challenging budget settlement the Council received as part of the government-led drive to cut public spending and reduce the national deficit. The Comprehensive Spending Review will result in an overall reduction of 27% in government grant to London local authorities. Services across the Council, including library services, are being reviewed to reduce revenue expenditure in order to meet this reduction in resources.

- b. Heathfield Library has the lowest level of use of any library in the borough. The existing patterns and levels of use of Heathfield Library are set out in the Needs Assessment for Heathfield Library.
- c. The Heathfield area can be served by Whitton Library which is within one mile of the existing Heathfield Library.

3. What data is available on the service and the potential impact of the service change on the six equality groups? What does a review of the data show?

RACE

Children and young people

Ethnic Group	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
White	63%	79%
Mixed	14%	10%
Asian	11%	6%
Black	11%	3%
Other	0%	2%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Children: Combined Report: 2010

Adults

Ethnic Group	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
White	89%	90%
Mixed	1%	2%
Asian	8%	5%
Black	2%	2%
Other	0%	1%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Adults: Combined Report: 2010

There is relatively high use of Heathfield Library by children and adults from Indian and other Asian backgrounds. This reflects the black and minority ethnic composition of the Heathfield ward where 10% of the resident population are from an Indian or other Asian background. There is no evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on children and adults from different ethnic backgrounds.

GENDER

Children and young people

Gender	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
Male	53%	57%
Female	47%	43%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Children: Combined Report: 2010

Adults

Ethnic Group	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
Male	32%	38%
Female	68%	62%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Adults: Combined Report: 2010

The majority of Heathfield Library users are female. This reflects the overall pattern of use of the library service in the borough where 62% of library users are female. There is no evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on males or females.

DISABILITY

Adults

Disability	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
None	77%	85%
Mobility	7%	5%
Hearing impairment	8%	4%
Visual impairment	8%	4%
Using hands and fingers	3%	2%
Learning disability	3%	1%
Mental health	5%	3%
Other	1%	1%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Adults: Combined Report: 2010. Information on library use by children and young people with disabilities is not available.

23% of library users at Heathfield Library consider themselves to have a disability. This is significantly higher than the borough average across all categories. The Heathfield area has the (joint) second highest percentage of residents in the borough with a disability. There is evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on children and adults with disabilities.

FAITH

Faith	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
No religion	23%	34%
Buddhist	0%	2%
Christian	66%	58%
Hindu	0%	2%
Jewish	0%	1%
Muslim	5%	2%
Sikh	4%	0%
Other	3%	1%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Adults: Combined Report: 2010. Information on library use by children and young people from different faith groups is not available.

There are higher numbers of library users from Christian, Muslim and Sikh faith communities at Heathfield Library than the borough averages; however, this is broadly representative of the faith communities in Heathfield. There is no evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on children and adults from different faith communities.

AGE

Age Group	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
0 - 5	7%	7%
5 - 10	23%	21%
11 - 15	9%	9%
16 - 24	3%	3%
25 - 44	23%	22%
45 - 64	17%	22%
65 - 74	10%	9%
75 +	8%	7%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Children and Adults: Combined Report: 2010

Children aged 0 to 11 and older people aged 65 and over make greater use of Heathfield Library than any other age groups. There is evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on children and other people compared to other age groups.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual Orientation	Percentage: Heathfield	Percentage: Borough
Heterosexual	99%	96%
Gay or Lesbian	0%	2%
Bisexual	0%	1%
Other	1%	1%

Source: Public Library User Survey: Adults: Combined Report: 2010

99% of library users at Heathfield Library are heterosexual. No library users at Heathfield Library consider themselves to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. There is no evidence to suggest that the closure of Heathfield Library will have a greater equalities impact on adults who are heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered.

4. Have any actions been identified which will improve the proposed service change or mitigate any negative impact? Please outline the action plan.

The Council expects to meet the library needs of residents in Heathfield by maintaining a full-time library in Whitton (Whitton Library, 141 Nelson Road, Whitton TW2 7BB). The Council intends to extend the opening hours of Whitton Library and make improvements to the internal layout and disabled access. Whitton Library is 0.7 miles from the existing Heathfield Library site and 1.6 miles from Mill Farm Crescent at the furthest end of the Heathfield ward.

In addition, the Council will create a Library Access Point in a community venue in the Heathfield area. This could be a community centre, church hall or other accessible community building. The Council will consult with the local community on the best location for the Library Access Point. In the longer term it may be possible to install a Library Access Point in the new health centre to be built on the existing library site. The Library Access Point will provide a range of popular books for adults and children including large-print and audio-books. It will also provide community information. The potential to include a public computer with access to the Internet will be explored. The Library Access Point will be open for between 12 and 18 hours per week.

In addition, the Council will mitigate the greater equalities impact identified on children, older people and people with disabilities by undertaking the following actions:

Equalities Impact	Action
CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide an enhanced collection of children's books at Heathfield Children's Centre in Powdermill Lane. Provide a range of library activities such as baby rhyme-times and story-times at the Children's Centre led by trained library officers. Timescale: April 2011. b. Improve the collections of books and other resources available at Heathfield Infant School and Heathfield Junior School. Provide additional support to the schools to promote reading and information literacy through a programme of regular library visits to the schools. Timescale: April 2011.
OLDER PEOPLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Continue to deliver the Home Library Service to older people who are unable to access a library building. This service delivers books to people in their own homes or in residential settings such as care homes.
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Continue to deliver the Home Library Service to older people who are unable to access a library building. This service delivers books to people in their own homes or in residential settings such as care homes. e. Make improvements to the physical layout and disabled access at Whitton Library to make services more accessible to people with disabilities. Timescale: September 2011.

5. How will the impact of the action taken be evaluated?

The longer-term impact of these actions will be evaluated through the Public Library User Survey (PLUS). More immediately, library users will be invited to provide feedback on the Library Access Point and the services delivered through the Children's Centre, schools and the Home Library Service. There will be full consultation on the disabled access improvements to Whitton Library. This will include consultation and evaluation with library users with disabilities and local groups representing people with disabilities.

6. Assessment carried out by:

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17 December 2010