

Library and Cultural Services Strategy 2020-2025

Introduction

The strategy for library and cultural services sets out Surrey County Council's (SCC) vision and approach to libraries and cultural services over the next five years. It seeks to deliver Surrey's priorities for the county as set out in Surrey 2030 and our Organisation Strategy. The strategy covers Surrey Arts, Surrey Libraries, Surrey Adult Learning and Surrey Heritage. We are proud of the range and quality of these services and we know they are used by hundreds of thousands of residents of all ages every year. The strategy seeks to ensure that the contribution these services make to learning and skills development; health and well-being of individuals and communities; prosperity; community cohesion and a sense of place are maximised whilst ensuring they are financially sustainable in the future.

The crux of our strategy is to reduce the net cost of these services whilst increasing impact. We will do this by working closer with communities in design and delivery and by exploiting digital technology to increase our reach and free up staff. It sets out our commitment to deliver a broad range of modern affordable services providing opportunities to read for learning and enjoyment; access accurate and quality information; engage in creative and cultural activities and informal and formal learning. Our services will assist in delivering outcomes for Surrey's 2030 vision in children's safety, all age learning to improve life chances and employability, improved health and well-being, business prosperity and community connectedness and inclusion.

Reflecting best practice advice from Government, this strategy is evidence-based and informed in particular by detailed analysis of demand, usage and need relating to library services. We know that patterns of use of these services have already changed and that customers are looking to use ours and other public services in different ways. We must also look beyond how libraries respond to demand reactively, and consider how they can make a greater contribution, proactively, to Surrey's corporate priorities. The strategy describes the challenges and drivers for change that we must take account of and seeks to understand demand and use of these services systematically and objectively. As well as responding to changing demand we need to ensure that our services are financially sustainable, responsive and accessible. Our new strategic objectives for libraries and cultural services set out the approach we will take to the difficult task of balancing these competing demands and factors.

We have for the first time, identified five strategic objectives to underpin the development of these services and ensure the link with Surrey 2030 and our Organisation strategy is core to how we work going forward. These reflect the five strategic principles endorsed by the consultation undertaken in late 2018 and early 2019. The objectives take account of the evidence gathered in the community profile and service use analyses. The objectives and proposed actions are set out in the table below.

Strategic Objective	We will:
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Strategic Objective	We will:
<p>1. We will increase opportunities for children, young people and adults to improve literacy levels and acquire skills and knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coordinated programme of service delivery in each locality to meet identified needs • Improve partnership working to provide relevant learning in most feasible locations. • Continue to offer proven activities and initiatives such as the Children’s Book Award, Cultural Education Partnership etc. • Work more closely with education partners to develop and target support for children with reading and literacy and family learning • Train and empower staff to deliver our programme and curate our resources • Use volunteers to add value by providing aspects of our service delivery/programme • Review and where necessary amend opening hours of our libraries to maximise the availability of resources and use
<p>2. We will deliver resources and activities in partnership with communities and other organisations to improve health and well-being of individuals and communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the success of rhyme times, reading clubs and code clubs to widen participation by running more activities and events • Work more closely with health providers to ensure our health and well-being activities add value and reach those with health and well-being needs • Offer opportunities to health providers to co-locate in our building where appropriate, or for us to co-locate in theirs • Design accommodation that enables communities to access spaces to deliver services to meet their health and well-being needs
<p>3. We will strengthen our partnership work with the public, voluntary, community and private sectors, including through the creation of shared spaces within a financially sustainable network of hubs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the new model for libraries co-locating with other services where appropriate • Develop a vibrant programme of events and activities in our libraries working with other cultural services and external partners • Consider our partnership and governance models to ensure long term sustainability • Improve commercial performance where possible, particularly in those services that benefit from fee income
<p>4. We will develop and promote new technologies to increase access and engagement with libraries and cultural services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and develop digital resources that can help inspire the use of the web, apps and new technologies to facilitate wider access including longer opening hours where appropriate • Provide more targeted learning opportunity to gain new digital skills delivered via volunteers, partners and staff in the right locations • Refine our digital catalogue and website to improve the way people access services • Provide digitally based activities to promote learning and enjoyment for young people

Strategic Objective	We will:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use digital technology to encourage communities to come together and participate in discussion
<p>5. We will increase opportunities for community-led services and enable local people to increasingly influence and deliver services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local people in a process of co-design to implement the new model of community led libraries • Work with individuals and communities to find ways to ensure they are more closely involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of what goes on in their local provision

This is what we plan to do over the next four years:

- increase community involvement in the design and delivery of our library and cultural services
- where possible co-locate other services in our libraries and library services in community settings
- further develop our library spaces as platforms for community participation and activity
- improve the financial performance of our services through increased commercialisation and alternative models of delivery
- strengthen the leadership of libraries and cultural services
- empower staff in our libraries and cultural and learning services to be agile and flexible to meet very local needs
- harness opportunities afforded by technology to enable longer opening hours and use of our libraries and cultural services buildings
- increase volunteer involvement in delivering the service and offer volunteers opportunities to gain skills, build confidence and share knowledge
- actively develop and promote a range of digital services to increase access, increase engagement and deliver efficiencies
- within the universal offer we will target services on those areas and groups identified as in need

Surrey Vision 2030

Over the spring and summer of 2018, we engaged with residents, communities and partners across our county to understand what Surrey should look like in 2030. Informed by these conversations we have created a community vision for Surrey.

By 2030 we want Surrey to be a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.

We want our county's economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on its location and natural assets, and where communities feel supported and people support each other.

Our ambitions for people are:

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident.
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in.
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing.
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place.
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.

Our ambitions for our place are:

- Residents live in clean, safe and green communities where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities
- Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer.
- Everyone has a place they can call home, with appropriate housing for all.
- Businesses in Surrey thrive.
- Well-connected communities, with effective infrastructure, that grow sustainably.

National context

In addition to making explicit how libraries and cultural services can be more closely aligned with the Surrey 2030 vision there are some external factors that are relevant to the future design and delivery of these services. 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021' sets out shared outcomes for library services and 'urges commissioners across the public sector to consider a 'library first' approach when planning services for their communities'. The seven outcomes are listed below and map to Surrey 2030 ambitions described above.

Libraries Deliver: Outcomes

- cultural and creative enrichment
- increased reading and literacy
- improved digital access and literacy
- helping everyone achieve their potential
- healthier and happier lives
- greater prosperity
- stronger, more resilient communities

The Arts Council of England (ACE) holds the national remit for supporting arts, libraries and museums through funding, advocacy, advice and support. ACE has five goals that link to both the Surrey 2030 vision and the libraries outcomes described. These are:

- to see excellence thriving and celebrated in arts, museums and libraries
- to reach more people, broaden the groups being reached and improve the quality of their experience
- to support resilience and sustainability- financial, environmental and digital
- to be sure the work draws on and reflects the full range of backgrounds and perspectives in society
- to ensure children and young people access excellence in libraries, arts and museums experiences

New models of service delivery

The council has a statutory duty, contained in Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 ‘to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desirous to make use thereof’. This is not the case with arts, heritage and adult learning. The archive service is statutory in part as SCC has a duty to make ‘proper provision’ for its own records and under FOI must provide information relating to its activities.

The financial climate in which councils have been operating over the last ten years where we have seen budget reductions has proved challenging in sustaining these services, notwithstanding the statutory duty regarding libraries and archives given the demands on council budgets overall. Councils have responded to this challenge in a variety of ways, in some cases libraries, arts, adult learning and heritage provision has been reduced and in other places there has been an increased focus on commercialisation; in almost all cases libraries, regardless of budget levels, library services are being expected to increase the outcomes they deliver per pound spent. Many councils are seeking to ensure services are financially sustainable by working in different ways with partners and looking at alternative forms of management or delivery. Examples include out-sourcing services as seen in Croydon, co-location and integration such as the Idea Stores in Tower Hamlets, spinning out services as Trusts or staff led mutuals, such as Suffolk Libraries and Hounslow Music Service for example.

Across the public sector involving the community in the design and delivery of services is increasing, both to reduce costs and increase impact. Nationally the library sector has seen an increase in Community Managed Libraries (CMLs) over the last ten years, with over 400 delivering library services across the country. In Surrey we have 10 Community Partnered Libraries and our Library Direct Service to housebound residents is delivered by volunteers. We have some examples of sharing our space with other agencies, e.g. Citizens Advice in Caterham Valley and Sunbury, Merstham Community Trust in Merstham and in the future a Maternity Hub and Children’s Centre services in Woking Library. We have also recently entered into a partnership with a newly formed charity, NewSPAL to take-on the delivery of the Performing Arts Library.

Community involvement in arts and heritage organisations has always been considerable, with governance and delivery of many arts and heritage organisations supported and run by volunteers. In Surrey we have 43 museums run by borough, districts and charitable bodies. Although most have a least one professional member of staff, many of them operate with volunteer support. Surrey Heritage works with the Surrey Museums Partnership to provide volunteers with training and capacity building.

Our research for this strategy has demonstrated that across the full breadth and range of public services closer partnership working, co-location and sharing of spaces and community involvement in designing and delivering services are key to innovation and sustainability.

Our services

Surrey has a rich pattern of library and cultural services across the county, some are run by the council with some run by partners supported by the council in its leadership role. Data from the Active Lives survey tells us 37.3% of Surrey residents have used a library in the last year, this is slightly higher than the national average of 35% whilst attendance at an arts

event/museum is 64%, this is higher than the national average of 48% (although this varies between boroughs and districts).

Surrey Adult and Community Learning (SAL)

Working from seven centres and hundreds of community venues in North and South West Surrey SAL delivers a wide range of learning opportunities for adults 19+ so they can improve and learn new skills and improve their employability and life chances. Family Learning is delivered across the whole county. SAL is funded by the Education and skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and income from learners. The learning ranges from GCSE Maths and English and English as a Second Language (ESOL) through a large programme of 'leisure based' learning opportunities. Many councils no longer offer such a wide range of 'leisure based' courses but in Surrey we have high levels of resident take-up of these courses which generate significant fee income for the council.

Surrey Arts

Delivers and facilitates opportunities for people of all ages to participate in high quality arts activities. The service is the lead organisation for the Arts Council funded Surrey Music Hub (a network of music organisations and schools working together to have a strategic oversight on provision and provide more musical opportunities to a wider range of young people in Surrey, both in schools and in the wider community.) Surrey Arts generates significant income in fees but there remains much scope for expanding income streams and broadening the range of services. This in turn will enable the service to reduce its reliance on SCC funding and develop a more financial resilient model as has been possible in a small number of music hubs across the country.

In addition to the music service, Surrey Arts creates projects with partners across the county to increase and widen participation and engagement in the arts, including performances, visual arts, drama and dance with many supported by external funding. The service leads Arts Partnership Surrey, a strategic alliance of nine Surrey councils working together to develop arts-led projects that meet council priorities. Surrey Arts supports Surrey Hills Arts in partnership with Surrey Hills AONB, a programme celebrating the importance of our natural environment through arts commissions

supports DAiSY (Disability Arts in Surrey) to increase access and inclusion for artists with disabilities and Surrey Artists' Open Studios, a large scale annual programme, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2020. The programme attracts 20,000 visitors per year and currently has a membership of around 400 artists. In addition Culture Box Surrey, our partnership with Surrey schools, enables children and young people to access the arts in education settings.

Surrey Heritage

Surrey Heritage based at Surrey History Centre, Woking, provides a high-quality archives and records service for the people of Surrey and others throughout the county and worldwide with an interest in Surrey's past. Housed in the Surrey History Centre, the nationally accredited archive and local studies service holds County Council records since 1889 and documentary evidence for Surrey's history extending back to the 12th century. The information held is crucial for the Council's commitment to democratic accountability and its obligations under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection law. The archive team, in addition to generating income from

commercial contracts also undertake community and research projects. Learning and outreach services seek to make the archives accessible to a wide range of audiences. In addition, the service supports museums and voluntary sector services in heritage through the Surrey Museums Partnership.

Surrey Libraries hold a unique place in communities providing universal access to all with the potential to reach a wider audience through its programme of activities including reading, digital, learning, health and wellbeing and culture. Across 52 locations, the library service offers an extensive and comprehensive book collection. We cater for all reading tastes and age groups providing multiple copies of the most popular titles to meet demand.

Surrey Libraries have a strong digital offer including eBooks, e-newspapers and e-audio, access to computers, free Wi-Fi and mobile apps. The online library and request and renewal services are available 24/7. Increasingly the service's digital offer within physical libraries is centred on social experiences and learning, with a focus on children, supporting entrepreneurship, and older people. It is about being proactive and responsive to how people learn, discover and engage through technology. We have set up clubs, events and activities including a makerspace, Code Clubs, film space, maker days and a women's digital club that have extended our reach to new users with sessions regularly selling out and having a waiting list.

For those who lack digital skills libraries provide face-to-face support and assisted digital access e.g. SCC Digital Buddies help people setting up online profiles or access for DWP's Find A Job.

For children, libraries support learning through resources and activities and by providing a safe learning-focused space for homework and private study. In addition, activities such as rhymetimes, Summer Reading Challenge, Bookstart, Chatterbooks, Code Clubs, and Duke of Edinburgh opportunities have been shown to contribute to young people's reading skills, development, and confidence.

Surrey Registration Service

Surrey Registration Service delivers the statutory functions of the local authority in accordance with the Registration Service Act 1953. This includes the registration of 19,000 births, 11,500 deaths, 8,000 notices of marriage & civil partnership and 2,500 citizenship ceremonies annually. Registrations are provided at 6 service points located strategically around the county.

In addition, 3,500 ceremonial services are provided at Register Offices and commercial wedding venues across the county each year, ensuring the service is not just cost neutral but also a net income contributor and plays a key role in the Surrey Vision 2030 to support local business. As well as performing an important role in residents' key life events, the service also ensures the integrity of registration information which supports the public protection and counterfraud initiative both locally and nationally.

SCC cultural services contribute to a rich cultural offer in the county which is home to 43 independent and voluntary run museums, Local History Groups and a myriad of arts organisations ranging from Arts Council funded National Portfolio Organisations including Farnham Maltings, The Watts Gallery, Matthew Bourne's New Adventures and Stopgap Dance Company, to local arts organisations such as Delight and DAiSY who work with young people and people with disabilities respectively. The county is

home to 100s of artists, creative businesses and some excellent higher level learning opportunities in the creative industries including the University of the Creative Arts. This strategy will also ensure that SCC maximises the links we make with the wider learning and cultural sector and improve our partnership working to harness their contribution to the Surrey 2030 vision of no one left behind.

Method and process used to produce this strategy

Understanding trends - needs and use

We have used a range of data and information to help us inform our proposals including:

- a. library usage and operating costs and associated benchmarking
- b. demographic information about Surrey, its communities and future growth
- c. where libraries are, the patterns of use by library and cultural services customers, and the populations they serve
- d. the profile of communities in each library catchment area (number of older people, children, along with skill levels and levels of ill-health)
- e. contribution libraries make to Surrey's corporate vision, strategy and priorities and how this can be increased.
- f. needs of people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act.
- g. engagement with Boroughs and District officers, staff, Community Partner Libraries, Friends of Libraries, Surrey Arts Partnership and Surrey Museums Partnership

Underpinning analysis

We commissioned Shared Intelligence, to assist us in preparing two documents to shape our analysis:

1. **A Community Profile Analysis** looking at the distribution of different demographics and levels of socio-economic need in Surrey and how that maps across the county. This is attached as Appendix 1.
2. **A Library Service Data Analysis** which examines patterns of library use in Surrey and makes comparisons with other services and national trends. This is attached as Appendix 2.

Our **community profile** analysis identifies the following population segments and areas of social need where libraries and cultural services can make a strong contribution to the Surrey Vision 2030:

1. children and young people
2. older adults (aged 75+)
3. working age hardship among adults relating to low skills
4. Health and wellbeing indicators including mental health

The total population of Surrey is 1.2m. Currently around 260,000 residents are aged under 18 and a similar proportion are over 65. Both groups are set to grow in the next 5 years and

the largest age-cohort growth will be among those aged 85+. Whilst many people living in the county are relatively well off there are many residents who do experience hardship and several geographic pockets spread throughout the county where need is acute. There are also some forms of need which are not geographically based including mental ill health (including child and adolescent mental health) and affects all ages, often relating to children and families, isolation, frailty and old age, digital exclusion and low skills.

Service Analysis

We undertook an analysis of services to enable us to understand how we are currently performing. User data tells us that in libraries and there is a pattern of falling usage amongst the adult population, with fewer regular users borrowing more books, while usage amongst children is growing; on-line use of these services is also increasing. In adult and community learning we have seen an increase in enrolments and qualifications achieved over the last five years. In Surrey Arts learners with the music service under 21 have decreased but adult learners have increased.

Currently we have 52 libraries, an on-line library service, Library Direct our service to housebound readers and we deliver library services in four prisons. Our libraries are categorised as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Current library categories

Band of Library	Description	Number
Group A	Main town libraries	10
Group B	Town libraries	18
Group C	Community libraries	14
Community Partnered Libraries (CPLs)	Run by volunteers with support from the Community-led Services team	10
Total		52

Nationally and in Surrey visits to libraries and book borrowing has seen a downward trend over the last ten years. Notwithstanding this, we know our libraries are well used and our plans to modernise the service set out in this strategy aim to halt this decline and generate greater impact through the adoption of our new strategic objectives for libraries and cultural services. In 2017/18 we issued 5.15 million books – this is one of the highest figures for lending per capita nationally (and the highest among Surrey’s statistical neighbours). However, in the same period we recorded 3.24 million visits over the same period, which is one of the lower per capita figures when compared nationally. Our assessment is that whilst our issues are falling our focus on buying a wide range of books and our use of modern signage and in library promotions has meant that we are still performing well in this area when compared to other authorities. Our challenge is to increase the number of visitors to our libraries and to reach more individuals for whom libraries can make the greatest difference.

We also have data from the national 'Active Lives' survey which shows that across Surrey 37.3% of the adult population say they have used a library within the last year. This compares to a national average of 35% (30% for men and 40% for women) who say they use libraries. In Surrey, although many older adults also use libraries, service use among children and young people is disproportionately high compared to their share of the overall population. Surrey's own library lending data shows that loans of junior items currently account for 44% of all lending whereas under 18s account for only 25% of the Surrey population. Since introduction of renewal online in 2005 and subsequently eBooks and E-audio in 2010, e Library issues renewals have grown significantly to 1.4 million in 2018/19; in addition e products (e books, e newspapers e magazines, e comics, e audio and music streaming amounted to 369,432 downloads in 2018/19.

Nationally library issues and visits have fallen by 38% and 28% respectively over the last 10 years. In Surrey visits have fallen by 44.16% with library issues falling at a slower rate, over the last ten years our issues have fallen by 10.33% (data source CIPFA).

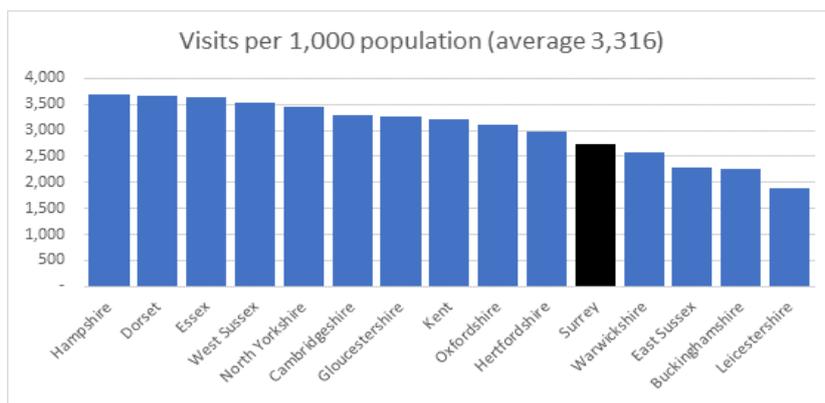
Whilst the pattern nationally has been one of declining visits over the last ten years the rate of decline is not consistent across services. For long-term trend analysis one of the most useful sources is a study (using historical CIPFA data) commissioned by Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 2018 of long-term patterns mainly in the period 2006-07 to 2016-17¹. The long-term trends study looks at the ten-year national trend in library visits and finds that while the national pattern for the past 10 years (shown in the table below) has been falling visits overall "...the overall trends mask variations among individual library services."

The top fifth of councils increased their visits year on year for much of the decade. The study concluded that falling visits is not inevitable and that where councils have increased visits and their reach there has been evidence of 'forward-thinking leadership alongside the political support and purchasing flexibility needed to innovate to respond to structural change'.

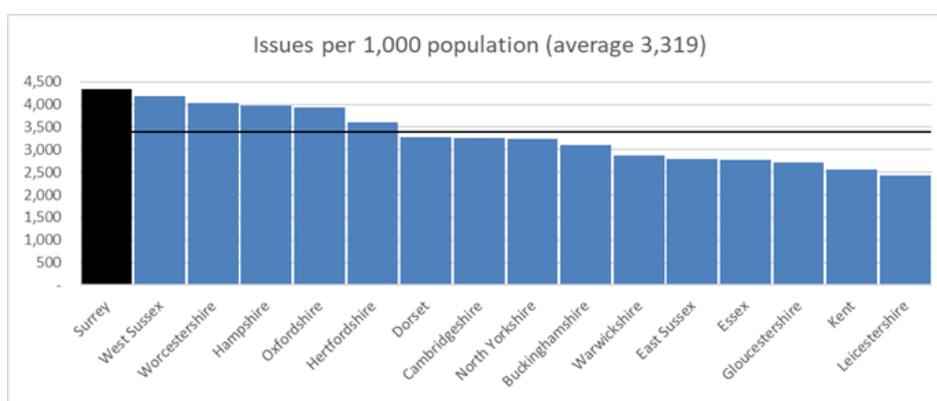
Surrey's visits per 1,000 population at 2,735 are below the average of our statistical neighbours (3,316 per 1000 population).

¹ "[CIPFA Statistics and the Future of England's Libraries](#)" by Joan O'Bryan was produced for the Libraries Taskforce and DCMS

Visits per 1,000 population comparison with statistical neighbours



Issues per 1,000 population comparison with our statistical neighbours

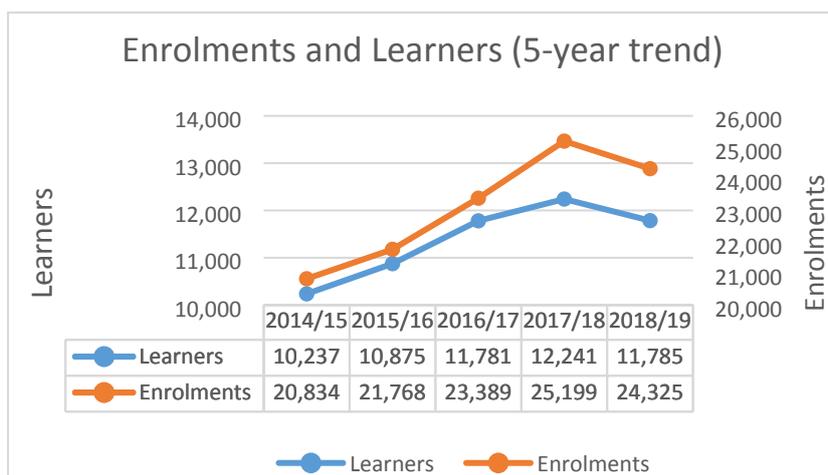


At 4,342 issues per 1,000 population our libraries perform well when compared with our statistical neighbours (3,319 issues per 1,000 population).

Whilst visits and book borrowing show a decrease, attendance at events and activities in libraries has been increasing. This reflects the national and international picture where activity and event programmes are growing in popularity. Audiences of all ages are taking part, learning skills and enjoying social activity in a safe and trusted setting. From rhymetime for under 5s, to adult reading and health and well-being sessions we are seeing increasing customer demand and take-up. Our Junior Digital Clubs are fully booked with waiting lists, we support over 300 reading groups and 6000 rhymetime and storytime events a year attract 1200 people a week. Other activities growing in popularity include ‘maker days’ and fun palace events where individuals and groups build practical and creative skills.

Surrey Adult Learning has seen a 28.4% growth in learners over 5 years and a 25.9% growth in enrolments over the last five years.

Over the last three years ESOL achievement rates have increased by 5.8%, English GCSEs by 8.7% and Maths GCSEs by 15.7%.



Surrey History Centre has experienced a decline in physical visits to the search room from 19,850 in 14/15 to 17,588 in 19/20 (11.4% decrease). Online access to the heritage collection has increased significantly from 5,382,202 downloaded pages in 14/15 to 8,148,566 in 19/20 (51.4% increase). Events delivered by the team to increase access to heritage in the Woking premises but also in other settings have reduced in number from 65,553 in 14/15 to 54,739 in 19/20 (16.5% decrease except for 16/17 when visitor numbers to exhibitions peaked at 91,029). Days contributed by volunteers has risen from 1605 in 2015/16 to 2278 in 19/20.

Surrey Arts music service trends over the last five years are set out in the table below.

Column1	Number of pupils learning with the service for past 5 years < age 19	Numbers of pupils in ensembles for past 5 years? (< age 21)	Number of adult learners for past 5 years?	adult ensemble members	Total lessons	Total ensembles
2018-19	5769	1115	132	112	5901	1227
2017-18	6204	1137	136	104	6340	1241
2016-17	6375	1100	126	105	6501	1205
2015-16	6631	1129	106	82	6737	1211
2014-15	6855	1105	109	76	6964	1181

Library and cultural services budget

The gross budget for the library service in 2017/18 is £15,439,356. When we compare Surrey libraries financial performance with our statistical neighbours the cost of our service is high. Using published CIPFA data we can see that Surrey libraries cost per head is £12.04 compared to the average of £9.79 when compared to all English counties and £10.93 for our statistical neighbours.

2019/20 budget

Service	£000s
Libraries	7,724
Surrey Arts	262
Heritage	954
Adult & Community Learning	(964)
Business support	169
Registration	(780)
Training	17
	7,382

The model for libraries

We assessed each static library branch based on its community profile and use and then applied some subjective judgements guided by the characteristics of each location. These have been informed by alignments with local borough plans such as regeneration initiatives and town centre improvements. We have also investigated the suitability of each current library location and its cost to the county and taken on board the knowledge and information provided by stakeholders such as staff, and volunteers.

The new model for libraries is informed by

- the learning from increased engagement of communities in designing and delivering services;
- the community profiles of each location
- patterns of library use;
- innovation in services that have led to improvements in use and relevance of libraries;
- opportunities to work more closely with partners including Boroughs and Districts, health and other council services; and
- the necessity to deliver a financially sustainable service in the long term and the objective to bring our costs closer to the national average

The new model introduces three categories of library service, enabling, encouraging and supporting greater levels of community ownership and leadership over time. Community-led library provision is already successful in the County and we are seeking places to grow that style of provision so local people are more directly driving the provision in their neighbourhoods.

The new model proposes that there will be three ‘categories’ of library in the future:

Library Plus	Library	Community led library
<p>Those flagship libraries where we co-locate and where possible, integrate our services with others – our public, voluntary and community sector partners, private sector initiatives and potentially new and emerging enterprises.</p> <p>These places will be vibrant, exciting and future-thinking spaces which encourage learning, knowledge and skill sharing and represent places that are safe, encouraging. They will provide opportunities to access a fuller range of services, not just those of the county council, but those which are relevant to local people.</p> <p>The service will include the core library services but will potentially be enhanced by additional functions or services, such as facilities for microenterprises, access to technology like 3D printers and ‘maker spaces’ or specific, tailored provision for young people.</p>	<p>Meeting local need and delivering our wider outcomes in neighbourhoods, libraries will still offer the core services, but may operate out of different settings, in partnership with other services and the community while maintaining access through the application of technology to enable open access.</p>	<p>Meeting the very local need supporting people to help themselves in their local neighbourhood, these small libraries will be led and run by the community, with the library service enabling this through the provision of support, help and encouragement. By putting local people in charge, the local community can tailor more precisely what happens with these services and in the spaces that they operate from.</p>

Library and Cultural Services Strategy 2020 – 2025: Appendix 1

1 Library service: community profile analysis

Headline analysis: While many people living in Surrey are relatively well-off and face no significant hardship, there are many who do experience hardship and several geographic pockets where need is acute.

The context for this community profile analysis is pressure on Surrey library service to operate within a reduced net budget, maximise the contribution to strategic goals, and to evolve the service in line with the wider direction of change in public libraries elsewhere. It is inevitable the service will have to become more targeted and the conclusion of this analysis is that any targeting should be based upon the following quantifiable factors:

- concentrations of children and young people
- concentrations of older adults (aged 75+)
- social need relating to health, wellbeing, and long-term conditions
- social need among working age adults relating to low skills

It may also be desirable to consider the less tangible need, expressed in Surrey's strategic ambition as "Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need...". This could be quantified by using data on the local stock of community facilities, or community groups, or public perception data about local community life.

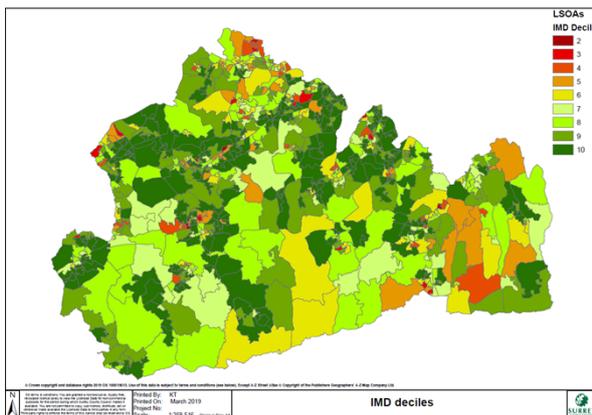
Introduction

- 1.1 Government advice to local authorities when undertaking strategic planning of their public library services is to ensure decisions are evidence-based and informed in particular by data which shows the level of **need** locally. One of the most important indicators of local need for library services are the levels of **socioeconomic need**. Conversely, levels of library visits and borrowing – although they are good indicators of **demand** - cannot be used as effective proxies for level of *need*.

- 1.2 The most commonly used measure of socioeconomic need is the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation² (IMD), delineated at Lower Super Output Area level³ (LSOA). The IMD ranks every LSOA in England from those with the highest to lowest levels of social need. The maps in this section were produced in collaboration with Surrey's insight team using a combination of IMD data and locally collected data. Our methods are based on those we have used elsewhere, and which have been incorporated in the Government's strategic planning toolkit for library services which also advises that need should be assessed using relevant socioeconomic data.

Overall socioeconomic situation in Surrey

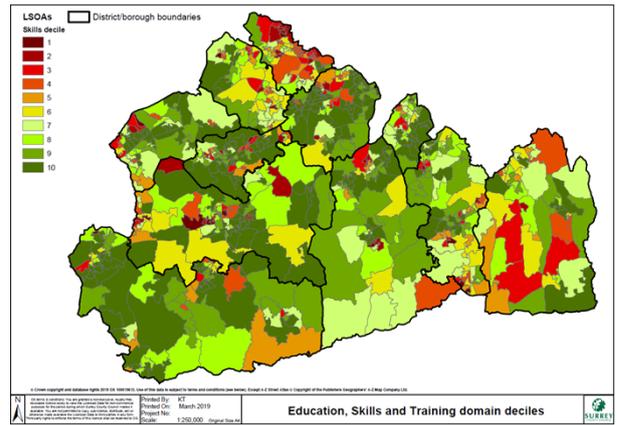
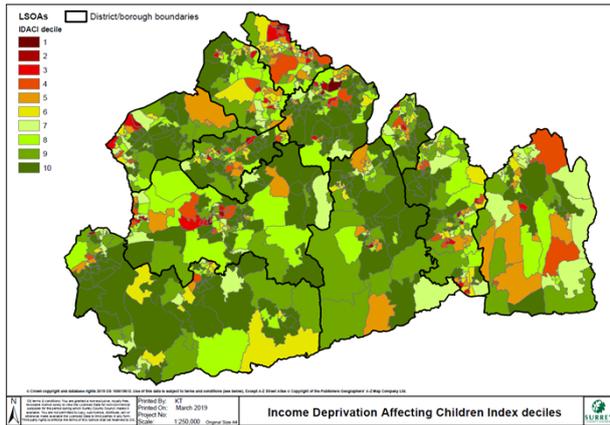
- 1.3 The total population of Surrey is 1.2m. Currently around 260,000 of Surrey residents are aged under 18 and a similar proportion are over 65. Both groups are set to grow in the next 5 years and the largest age-cohort growth will be among those aged 85+. In terms of overall need, while the majority of Surrey's LSOAs have low social need, there are a significant number of LSOAs falling into the top 30% nationally for social need. As the map below shows, there is no simple north/south or east/west split rather, there is a patchwork. This patchwork is also replicated at individual town and conurbation level. The green/amber/red colour-scale relates to the position of each LSOA in the England-wide rankings (i.e. areas shaded as IMD Decile 2, are in the 20% most in need nationally).



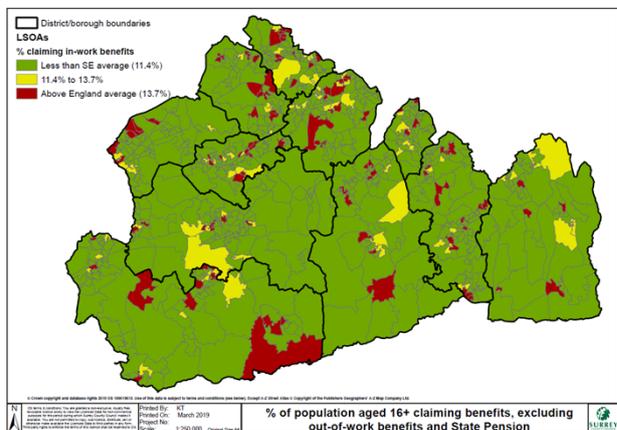
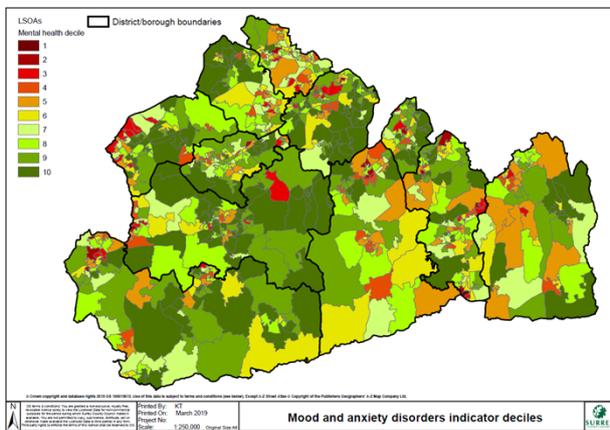
- 1.4 The maps below show “sub-domains” of IMD relevant for; **IMD for children** (left), and **IMD for skills and training** (right). Amber/red areas have above average need when compared nationally.

² **The Index of Multiple Deprivation** (IMD) is England's official measure of 'deprivation' meaning level of hardship faced by people in seven 'domains'; income, employment, skills, health, crime, housing, and local environment. Various statistics are combined to produce IMD scores for each domain, and then all the domains are combined to produce an overall IMD score. High scoring areas are where residents face the greatest hardship, and low scoring areas are where residents face little or no hardship.

³ **Lower Super Output Areas** (LSOAs) are a standardised system for comparing populations in different communities. LSOAs always cover around 1500 residents which means that in towns and cities LSOAs are geographically smaller whereas in rural areas they are larger because the population is more spread out.

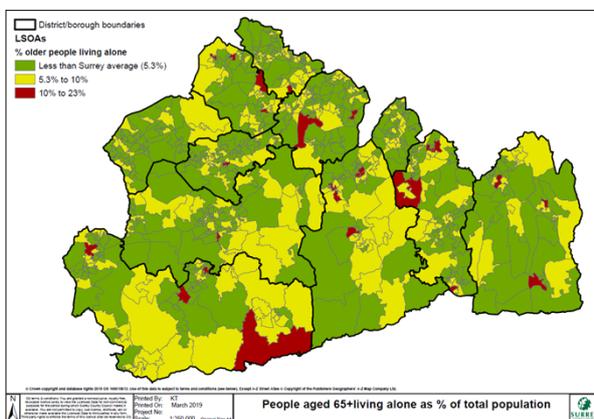


1.5 The next two maps are based on individual data-sets within IMD relevant to library need. These show **mental health conditions** (left), and **claim-rate of working-age in-work benefits** (right).

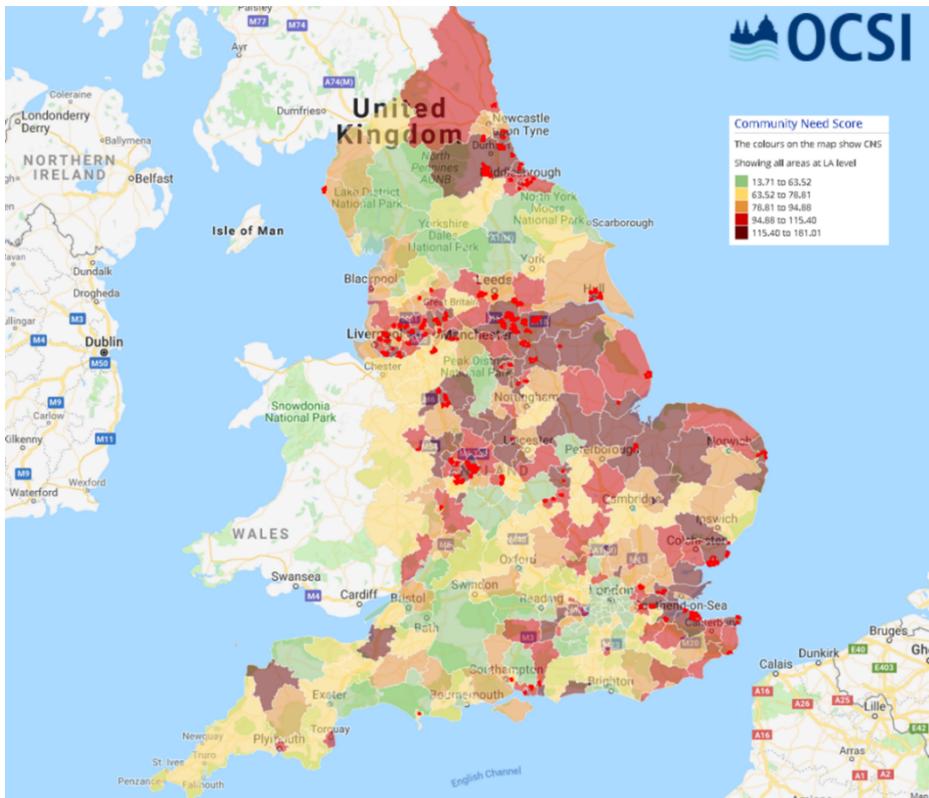


1.6 These further illustrate a patchwork of need spread across every district and borough. Furthermore, while many hotspots of need are in towns and conurbations, these also illustrate how several rural areas in the south and east of the county also contain hotspots.

1.7 In terms of vulnerable older people (using the dataset for over 65s living alone) the pattern is again one of a patchwork of hotspots. In this map colour coding shows green for areas below the Surrey average, and red for areas above the national average.



- 1.8 Finally, a new experimental dataset has been developed nationally by the Oxford Centre for Social Inclusion (OCSI) to create a new national map (pictured below) of “left behind areas”. This uses data on the number of community buildings and assets, levels of funding for public and charitable services, and levels of community participation.



- 1.9 Although OCSI’s new data is still at an experimental stage, it has attracted significant interest from Government policymakers interested in “left-behind” areas. Interestingly the initial OSCI mapping also shows areas of north Surrey (specifically Surrey Heath, Runnymede, and Spelthorne) as having moderate to high levels of community need. In this case “need” refers to areas lacking in community buildings, with lower levels of community participation, and with lower levels of funding for public and charitable organisations.

Housing development and growth

- 1.10 The Surrey Infrastructure Study (2017) anticipates significant housebuilding across the county between now and 2030. These new and enlarged communities will require additional infrastructure and will also generate additional economic activity. The detail of housing growth is being planned at Borough and District level through individual Local Plan processes and the county-wide picture will only emerge in piecemeal as Local Plans are agreed (the map below is based on the position as of summer 2017). What is clear however, is there will be significant population growth throughout the county over the coming decade, in excess of 10%. Some of the largest new communities are likely to be; in the west of the county between Runnymede, Dorking, and Ash; north of Gatwick between Redhill and Horley; and around Godstone and Oxted in the east. In addition, there are several very large developments and new communities being planned by neighbouring boroughs both in

outer London (including Hillingdon/Heathrow, Hounslow, and Croydon) as well as significant plans around Horsham and Aldershot close to the Surrey boundary.

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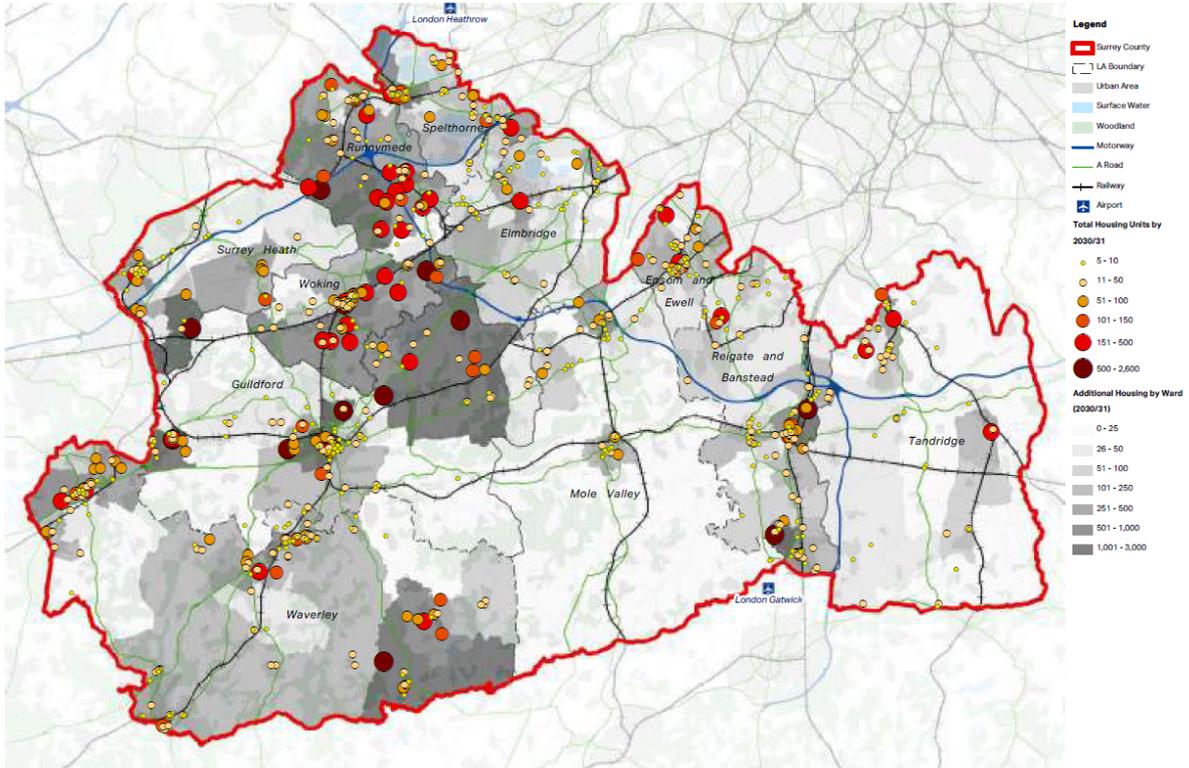


FIGURE 3.19 - MAJOR HOUSING SITES AND GROWTH BY WARD IN SURREY TO 2031

* This is based on the most up to date information at the time of publication and could be subject to change, subject to review of planning policy documents
Source: Local Authority data provided for Infrastructure Study

Detailed needs relating to Surrey CC’s “ambitions for people”

- 1.11 The following sections draw on headline data already presented, combined with more detailed data relating to specific socioeconomic needs. The most common data sources for this section are Surrey’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment⁴ (JSNA) and the council’s draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy. We have also used data from Surrey Uncovered, a needs assessment produced by the county-wide charity Community Foundation for Surrey, in collaboration with the county council.
- 1.12 These sections were developed following a strategy-mapping process. This consisted of mapping each individual element of Surrey’s current public library offer against Surrey’s five strategic objectives (which Surrey refer to as their “ambitions for people”). The “ambitions for people” are:
- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident
 - Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life
 - Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives and makes good choices about their wellbeing
 - Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place
 - Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life

Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident

How do libraries meet this need?

Libraries provide learning opportunities and resources for children and families. They are used by a wide cross-section of residents but for those on low incomes libraries may be the only source of **free and open access** support outside of full-time education. Rhymetimes, Summer Reading Challenge, Bookstart, Chatterbooks and Code Clubs, and Duke of Edinburgh opportunities have been shown to contribute to young people’s reading skills, development, and confidence.

Surrey’s nationally recognised Children’s Book Award has been shown to develop children’s confidence, ability to work together, presentation skills, and instil reading habits. SCC libraries work with families experiencing domestic abuse supports vulnerable children through Rhymetimes held in refuges and SCC-run homes for looked after children, and through the SCC Virtual School for looked-after children.

Library resources can be accessed during weekends, evenings, and outside normal work and school hours when families and learners may need them most.

Libraries also provide access to free broadband and Wi-Fi.

⁴ Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) are produced by local authorities in partnership with the NHS to assess the current and future needs of the communities. All local authorities must produce a JSNA and used its findings to inform decision-making about local service provision.

- 1.13 Children and teenagers aged 0-19 account for around 287,000 of Surrey's 1.2million residents. As of 2017 one in ten children (10%) were living in poverty across the county, often in towns but in rural areas too and often in areas not generally thought of as "deprived". In 17 areas of the county the level of children living in poverty is 30%. Most of these children are in working households [Source: Surrey Uncovered 2017]. The children of Surrey's 21,200 lone parents are also likely to live in a low-income home [Source: JSNA]
- 1.14 For school age children we know that around 11,200 Surrey children qualify for Free School Meals, and 24,000 are eligible for Pupil Premium payments – both being indicators of need. We also know that coming from a disadvantaged household significantly increases the chances of a Surrey child failing to achieve the standard expected of them (in reading, writing, and maths or "RWM") at Key Stage 2 (age 11), compared to children not from disadvantaged households. [Source: JSNA] Linked to this it is also projected that the proportion of people living in overcrowded homes is set to increase by 5% over the next decade, which in turn will make it harder for children in those homes to find space to study and do their homework. [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019]
- 1.15 School-readiness among under 5s is defined as having achieved a good level of development at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (i.e. the start of formal primary education). In Surrey overall, 73% of children have good school-readiness, but this falls to 51% for children from low income households (defined as those eligible for Free School Meals) [Source: JSNA]. School-readiness is closely linked to the health literacy of families and their understanding of health information. There is also a recognised lack of capacity to identify those pre-school age children most at risk of arriving at school with low levels of readiness, this includes reaching children from low income households. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.16 Poor school-readiness is in turn linked to poorer future educational attainment and longer-term employment prospects and puts a significant additional strain on schools and teachers in terms of teaching and supporting children's personal care.
- 1.17 There are also issues around online safety for children, an area where Surrey recognises there is under-provision. Just under one in three Surrey children (29%) when asked at Year 6 (10 and 11-year olds) said they had seen images or videos which they thought were for adults-only. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.18 Indicated needs:
- Activities and resources which support increased school readiness for pre-school children and their parents especially for low income households including children with low-paid working parents.
 - Opportunities to strengthen reading (for pleasure and for study), writing and maths attainment among school-age children, especially those from lower income households.
 - Activities to support family learning around academic learning (reading, writing and maths), as well as life skills such as health literacy - especially for families with multiple challenges or needs.
 - Support to build digital literacy and promote safe and positive behaviour online among children and young people.
 - Opportunities to access resources and support outside of regular school and work hours (e.g. weekends and evenings).

Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life

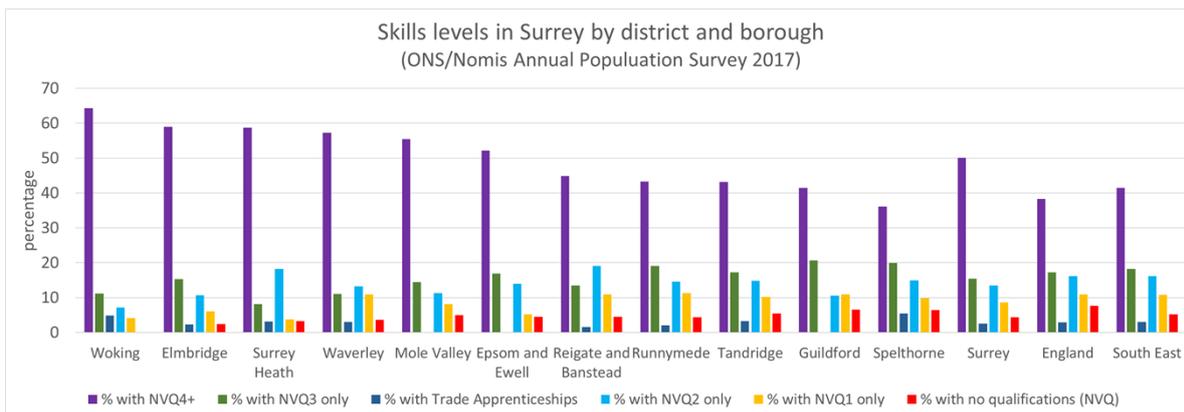
How do libraries meet this need?

Libraries are informal centres of learning where all ages can build skills and knowledge which contributes to well-being, builds personal networks, and can support their career and earnings potential. One of the ways they do this is by providing free internet access via PCs and WiFi. This overcomes a critical barrier for those who lack access to a PC of their own, or who cannot afford broadband or mobile data. For those who lack digital *skills* libraries provide face-to-face support and assisted digital access e.g., help setting up online profiles for DWP's Find A Job, or structured digital skills courses. SCC Digital Buddies enable people to access Universal Credit services.

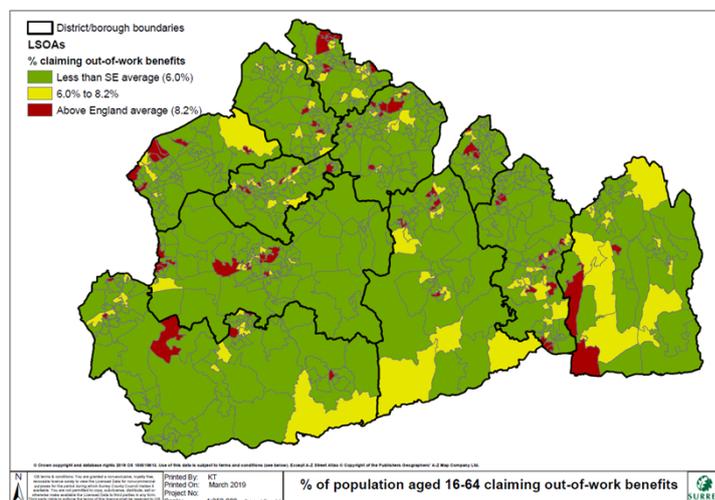
For children libraries support learning through resources and activities (Code Clubs, school visits, crafts), and by providing a safe learning-focused space for homework and private study.

For adults' they provide access to resources for job searching, distance learning, free access to academic journals, as well as author talks, practical sessions and language courses. For those starting up new businesses libraries provide essential resources such as access to professional and academic publications, space to work and hold meetings, and the benefits of co-working space.

- 1.19 The skills and employment landscape is changing rapidly as the UK, and the Southeast in particular, becomes a high-skills economy with many basic job roles moved off-shore, or automated. One recent figure which captures this perfectly is that while currently around 10% of jobs in the Southeast are open to those with no formal qualifications, this is set to plummet to just 1% by 2024. In other words, in less than a decade it will become almost impossible for someone with no formal skills to find employment in Southeast England. The situation for those with low-level skills is not much better. [Source: Shared Intelligence research into SE skills for SEEC, 2018]
- 1.20 In line with the general picture of social need, the data on skills shows enormous variation across the county. Generally, Surrey residents have good skills levels with 50.1% educated to NVQ4 or above (meaning some form of Higher Education) compared to 41.4% across the Southeast and 38.3% for England. At District and Borough level however, there are wide variations as the chart below illustrates. For example, while 64.3% of the population of Woking have achieved NVQ4+ only 36.1% of the population of Spelthorne are educated to that level - a gap of 28.2 percentage points.
- 1.21 Looking just at those individuals with low skills levels, around one in eight (13.5%) Surrey residents have progressed no further than NVQ2 in their education – a much smaller proportion than the Southeast or England average. But in Surrey Heath and Reigate and Banstead the percentage who have not progressed beyond NVQ2 (18.2% and 19.1% respectively) is not only higher than the Southeast average, but the national average also. In three other districts (Tandridge, Guildford, and Spelthorne) the proportion with no qualifications at all is higher than the Southeast average.



1.22 In terms of employment there is a similar picture as before. Most areas of the county have low unemployment, yet in every district and borough are communities with levels of employment above both the Southeast average and the England average also – as illustrated in the map below.



1.23 As we have already seen, levels of *in-work* benefit claimants (indicating low income), follow a similar pattern.

1.24 Although there is good mainstream provision for adult learning in Surrey, it is recognised that there is less adult learning provision (including community-based provision) for those with specific needs in particular people with mental illness or learning disabilities. There is also less provision for family learning, especially for families on low incomes. [Source: JSNA]

1.25 Indicated needs:

- Support for adults with no formal qualifications and/or low skills to learn basic skills including basic digital skills, and to increase their skill levels.
- Support geared around job search (e.g. basic online skills and CV or application writing), in areas with higher levels of low skills and/or unemployment.
- Adult learning opportunities for people with specific needs such as learning disabilities, or mental illness.

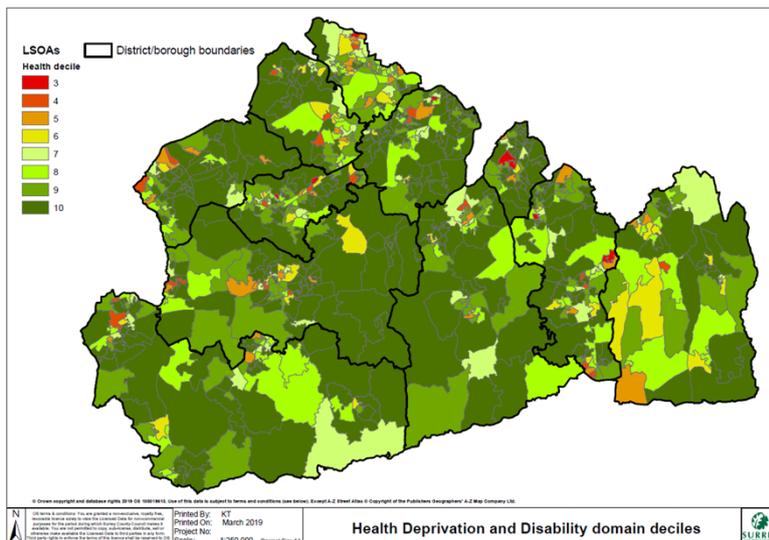
Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives and makes good choices about their wellbeing

How do libraries meet this need?

Library use has been shown to have a range of health and social benefits including socialisation and respite for carers and new parents, improved health literacy through health drop-ins, and reduced loneliness and isolation especially for older people living alone. These benefits can be experienced by ordinary users and volunteer alike. SCC libraries are also adapting libraries to make them more welcoming for children on the autistic spectrum or with dyslexia.

Libraries also enable individuals to explore self-help options to manage their own health by accessing “social prescribing” types of support provided through libraries including; Reading Well Books on Prescription, rhyme times for maternal mental health, therapeutic reading groups, and “Shelf Help” for teenagers with mental health needs.

- 1.26 Around 30% of the population in Surrey are living with a long-term health condition, the most common being hypertension, diabetes, and asthma. Around 12% are living with two long term conditions (also known as “multi-morbidity”). Multimorbidity is linked both to socioeconomic deprivation and age and among the over 65s, around 90,000 people suffer multimorbidity. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.27 Sensory impairment is also common and set to increase as people live longer. By 2030, it is estimated that 171,000 people in Surrey will have hearing loss and 20,000 over 75s will have some form of sight loss. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.28 As before, the pattern for health and disability across Surrey is one of hotspots in every borough and district, set against a backdrop of generally good health in comparison to the rest of the England.



- 1.29 Besides physical health there are estimated to be 148,000 individuals with common depression and anxiety disorders in Surrey. As we have already shown, Surrey has several clusters or hotspots of poor mental health spread across the county, often overlapping with other indicators of need such as low skills and low income. [Source: JSNA]

- 1.30 Although estimates vary, current literature indicates that in the UK around one in five women, during pregnancy or in the first year after the birth of their baby, experiences some form of mental health problem. There are around the 13,000 maternities in Surrey each year, but the county has no specialist maternal mental health service, and this has often been identified as a gap in provision which needs to be addressed as a priority. [JSNA] As of 2019 there is also significantly reduced provision from the Children's Centre network especially in terms of the frequency and location of drop-in activities.
- 1.31 In Surrey as in many parts of the country, formal support for mental health is increasingly stretched and some forms of support are very limited indeed (e.g. for maternal mental health). Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (known as CAMHS) in terms of hours and availability is also recognised as limited. [Source: JSNA].
- 1.32 Indicated needs:
- Information and support relating to common long-term conditions especially heart-health, diabetes (and associated diet), and respiratory conditions.
 - Free access to fiction and non-fiction books for pleasure or study reading.
 - Support and information for people with sensory impairment including assistive technology for sight and hearing loss such as text-to-speech and speech-to-text.
 - Supportive group activities for mothers with babies focused both on child and family health and maternal mental health.
 - Health and wellbeing support for teens and young adults.
 - Access to health literacy information, and self-help support such as Books on Prescription, or therapeutic reading groups.

Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place

How do libraries meet this need?

Libraries are a vital resource for older adults. The Reading Well Books On Prescription programme provides quality-assured book selections and enables library services to work with health providers. The reminiscence collection is seen as invaluable for supporting people with dementia and other forms of memory loss; the Library Direct service ensures that people unable to get to a library can still get the books they need via volunteer delivery; and targeted “reading groups”, such as Beyond Words aimed at adults with learning difficulties.

Other condition-specific support includes “hearing champions” and text-to speech technology.

Libraries also provide face-to-face signposting to other services including the NHS, Police, and other parts of the council – helping avoid misdirected queries, and sometimes reducing the need for further contact. Face to face support in a trusted setting is particularly useful for those who are frail or vulnerable, as well as for their carers.

- 1.33 As described at the start of this needs analysis, Surrey is on the cusp of a major increase in the number of people aged over 65 which will be accompanied by increasing numbers with long term conditions and multimorbidities related to ageing. Data for over 65s living alone also shows hotspots where the proportion of lone over-65s is higher than the national average. SCC recognise that the increase in demand for local services this will produce cannot be met through existing service models. Instead new approaches will be needed which promote self-management, independence, and the use of community assets and resources. [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019]
- 1.34 Not only will the 85+ cohort see the largest growth, but the number of *carers* aged 85+ will also increase (up 31% by 2023). [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019]
- 1.35 Many of those aged 85+ display signs of frailty and this is also set to increase in the coming years, rising by around 30% by 2030 compared to 22,000 today. [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019] Identifying those with frailty has been recognised as a challenge for agencies to identify. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.36 The number of residents living with dementia is also set to increase and this comes on top of the fact that Surrey already has above-average levels of dementia-related hospitalisations – in part due to Surrey having higher life expectancy. All this brings added urgency to the need for more prevention and early intervention. [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019]
- 1.37 We also know that generally more people in very old age are choosing to continue living in their community rather than moving to a care home and it is likely more people with dementia will be living at home in the coming years often cared for by a spouse [Source: Surrey Uncovered 2013]
- 1.38 There are 21,800 adults with learning disabilities in Surrey, and this cohort face many challenges in terms of life outcomes and achieving their full potential. For example, the employment rate for adults with learning disabilities has also decreased by 35% since 2011. [Source: Draft SCC health and wellbeing strategy 2019]

1.39 It is also the case that the life expectancy and average age of this cohort is increasing with many now aged over 65. The County Councils Network have recently estimated that nationally, the annual costs of supporting adults with learning disabilities will rise by 38% by 2025 (equivalent to £2bn of extra costs nationally).

1.40 Indicated needs:

- Support for people with dementia and their carers such as activity groups, carer-respite and resources which support reminiscence activities.
- Activities which help older adults remain active and independent by promoting self-management and the use of community assets and resources.
- Activities which enable older adults living alone to retain local social connections and networks and remain active in their communities.
- Support, resources, and activities for adults with learning disabilities including those which support independence, better outcomes and enable them to achieve their full potential

Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life

How do libraries meet this need?

For many people libraries are one of the first places they go when they arrive in an area to live or visit, using them to find out about local groups, activities, information and services. Libraries are places where people have the opportunity to engage through groups, activities, or simply by coming to a public social space.

Libraries also function as engagement hubs where local groups meet and display or promote their activities in settings which are neutral, non-commercial, and without faith or political affiliation. This supports the formation of social capital and helps combat social isolation.

Libraries provide specialist resources to those who might otherwise be excluded, for example people with sight or hearing loss, learning disabilities, or a long-term illness.

ESOL story times and socials allow migrant communities to build support networks.

Volunteering opportunities such as Digital Buddies, bookshop, Summer Reading Scheme, events, and Makerspace, allow people to develop skills and confidence and “give something back”.

- 1.41 Libraries are a valuable resource especially for families who face extra pressures. For example, Surrey has an estimated 14,000 young carers and over 30,000 older carers. [Source: Surrey Uncovered 2017]. Family carers are often on low incomes and need access to free or low-cost resources both for the person they are caring for, and for their own use. Another group who need extra support are lone parents, 21,000 of whom live in Surrey, also often on low incomes.
- 1.42 The families of the 2,500 serving Forces personnel based in Surrey, also face specific challenges. It has been well documented that military families (including veteran families) face many additional hurdles and are often at a disadvantage in accessing services such as school admissions, housing, banking and personal finance, and job-seeking support. [Source: Forces In Mind Trust]
- 1.43 The proportion of Surrey residents born outside the UK increased from 10% in 2001 to 14% a decade later in 2011 and in some parts of Surrey (notably Woking) the proportion is much higher. Libraries can support those born outside the UK to learn English, integrate, and find materials which support dual-language family learning.
- 1.44 The benefits of arts and cultural activities for community cohesion and for supporting vulnerable groups has been recognised in Surrey’s JSNA, which recommends filling gaps in provision around; arts and cultural activities for black and Asian communities, youth offenders, and children and young people outside mainstream education. [Source: JSNA]
- 1.45 Indicated needs:
- Resources and activities which bring together different cultures, span language barriers, and enable people to integrate.

- Basic information about the local community, events, contacts for local organisations.
- Good quality, trusted and welcoming physical spaces from which community or arts and cultural organisations can run activities or put on events.

Conclusions

1.46 While many people living in Surrey are relatively well-off and face no significant hardship, there are also many people who experience some level of hardship or need and there are several geographic pockets where this is acute. There are also some forms of need which have no strong geographic pattern for example maternal mental ill-health, and child and adolescent mental health. We can see from the data that need in Surrey affects people of all ages and often relates to factors affecting children and families, mental health, isolation, in-work benefits claimancy, frailty and old age, digital exclusion, and low skills.

1.47 The context for this needs analysis is pressure on the library service to operate within a reduced net budget and to evolve the service in line with the wider direction of change in public library services elsewhere. Even with greater sharing of assets, costs and resources between the library service and other local services (or additional earned income) it is inevitable the library service will have to become more focused. From the evidence in this analysis we conclude that a focus on all life stages, taking account of the evidence of need, alongside our understanding of the types of need which the library service best able to address is required. With that in mind the conclusion of this needs analysis is that where resource constraints require library services to be targeted, this should be on the basis of localities with the greatest concentrations of:

- children and young people
- older adults (aged 75+)
- social need relating to health, wellbeing, and long-term conditions
- social need among working age adults relating to low skills

1.48 Quantifiable data is readily available to identify all three of these factors.

In addition, libraries also meet a less tangible need, expressed in Surrey's strategic ambition that "Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life". Identifying where this need exists geographically is not straightforward but could be measured for instance by considering the availability of (or lack of) community support infrastructure such as local community facilities, the strength of local community groups, or public perception data about how welcoming their community is.

Library and Cultural Services Strategy 2020 – 2025: Appendix 2

Library service: analysis of use

Headline analysis: Our analysis paints a mixed picture of a service under-exploited in terms of overall scale and potential impact and which misses many of those who stand to benefit most. Yet the service continues to be used by more than 440,000 residents.

Although overall visits and book-lending have fallen significantly, borrowing of children’s books has risen in absolute terms – up one third over the past decade, bucking local and national trends in use. Children now account for 44% of all book lending despite accounting for only 25% of the Surrey population. Surrey has fewer library branches per head than other similar authorities and is not over-provided, but it spends more per resident. The fact that those areas having the highest library use are those with the lowest levels of social need suggests Surrey’s higher spend per capita is not translating into a greater contribution to Surrey’s social needs. The notable exception to this is Merstham where high use and high need appear aligned.

This analysis highlights two linked challenges. Meeting these will ensure the service contributes fully to Surrey’s strategic goals and balances the universal offer with a clear focus on need – which is effective at any given level of budget. Those challenges are (1) the need to fully exploit library use, which remains significant, to reach more of those with the greatest social need and (2) to re-calibrate the service offer based on learning from the trend-bucking growth in children’s borrowing, the example of Merstham library, and best practice in other impact-focused library services.

Introduction

- 1.49 This paper looks at patterns in library use in Surrey, makes comparisons with other services and national trends and draws out issues relevant to the strategic review of Surrey libraries.
- 1.50 Later in this paper we look at geographic patterns of library use based on data taken from the library service’s user records (known as the Library Management System or LMS). Although this provides a detailed picture of user demographics and enables us to build heat-maps showing the geographic distribution of users, LMS data cannot show total individual users. This is because LMS data relies on individuals having their library cards scanned or “blipped” when they borrow a lending item. LMS data does not capture instances when individuals participate in activities such as rhyme times, visiting to read without borrowing, studying, or using a computer or WiFi. Together these account for a significant proportion of overall use. An alternative dataset, total visits, while accounting to all forms of use is limited in other ways. It is gathered from entry-counters positioned at the entrances to libraries but this too is unable to show how many *individuals* are using libraries; for example 100,000

“entry-counts” could just as easily be 100,000 individuals visiting once, or 10,000 individuals visiting 10 times.

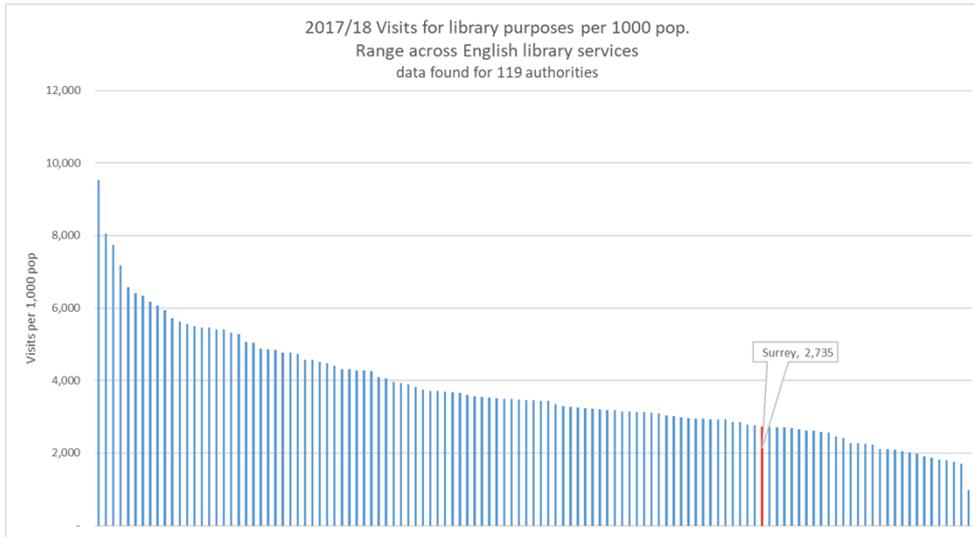
- 1.51 To arrive at a reliable figure of unique users we must look to at data from Active Lives, a Government-commissioned national annual survey. It provides reliable data down to Borough/District level for all those aged 16+. 2017 Active Lives data shows that in Surrey the percentage of 16+ residents who say they used a public library in the past 12 months ranges from 44.5% in Epsom and Ewell to 32% in both Guildford and Surrey Heath. Across Surrey the average is 37.3% which equates to 442,000 residents. The Surrey average of 37.3% compares to a national average of 35% (30% for men and 40% for women) who say they use libraries. Active Lives data also shows that nationally the age-group most likely to say they use libraries are 16-24 year olds (41.5%), followed by 35-44 year olds (40.1%), followed by 65-74 year olds (37.7%).

Local Authority	Used a public library service in past 12 months	Local Authority	Used a public library service in past 12 months
Elmbridge	42.9%	Spelthorne	34.7%
Epsom and Ewell	44.5%	Surrey Heath	32.0%
Guildford	32.0%	Tandridge	33.7%
Mole Valley	38.4%	Waverley	39.2%
Reigate and Banstead	39.4%	Woking	40.2%
Runnymede	33.3%	Average for Surrey CC	37.3%

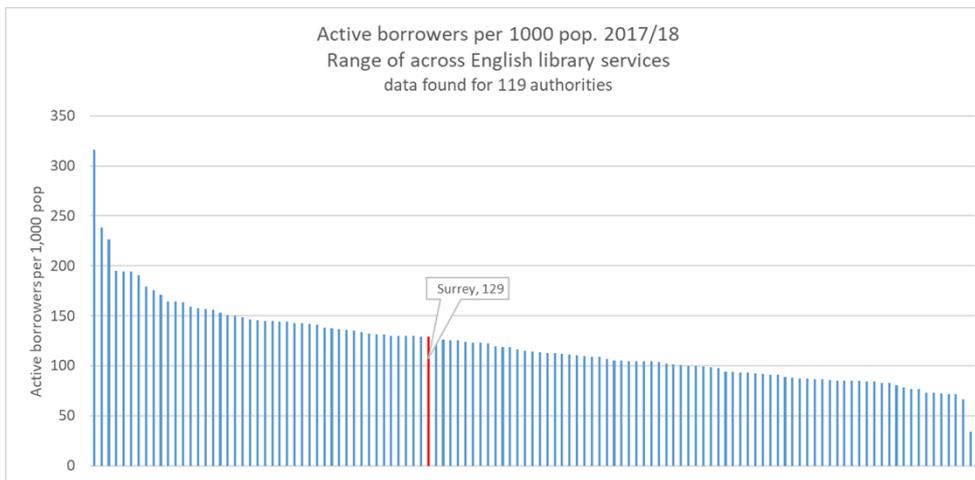
Active Lives Survey (DCMS 2017)

- 1.52 We can also build a comparative picture of library use using national library data gathered by CIPFA⁵ which gathered from local authorities’ LMS data (i.e. based on entry-counter data). This shows Surrey towards the bottom of the range for total visits when compared nationally. Notably, while Active Lives showed Surrey above average for residents using a library in the past 12 months, CIPFA 2017/18 visit data shows Surrey some way below the national average for total annual visits (Surrey achieved 2,735 visits per 1,000 pop. compared to the national average of 3,750). One possible explanation for this is that CIPFA relies on entry-counter data. It is possible that even though a greater proportion of individuals have used a Surrey library than in other places, if each of those individuals has visited less often than in other places – there will be fewer visits in total.

⁵ The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) is a national organisation which gathers and publishes data about local government including library services. CIPFA library statistics are published annually and are the main source of comparative data about public libraries.



- 1.53 We can also use CIPFA data to look at the number of active borrowers per head of population. This shows Surrey in the upper half nationally (Surrey achieved 129 active borrowers per 1,000 pop. compared to the national average of 121). This is based on the number on individuals who have borrowed an item in the past 12 months. It does not account for those who have used a library in some other way (e.g., to take part in an activity, or use a computer).



- 1.54 CIPFA data also allows us to look at “statistical neighbours”⁶, in other words other library authorities with similar characteristics; in Surrey’s case these are counties with similar characteristics. When looking at visits and active borrowers only among statistical

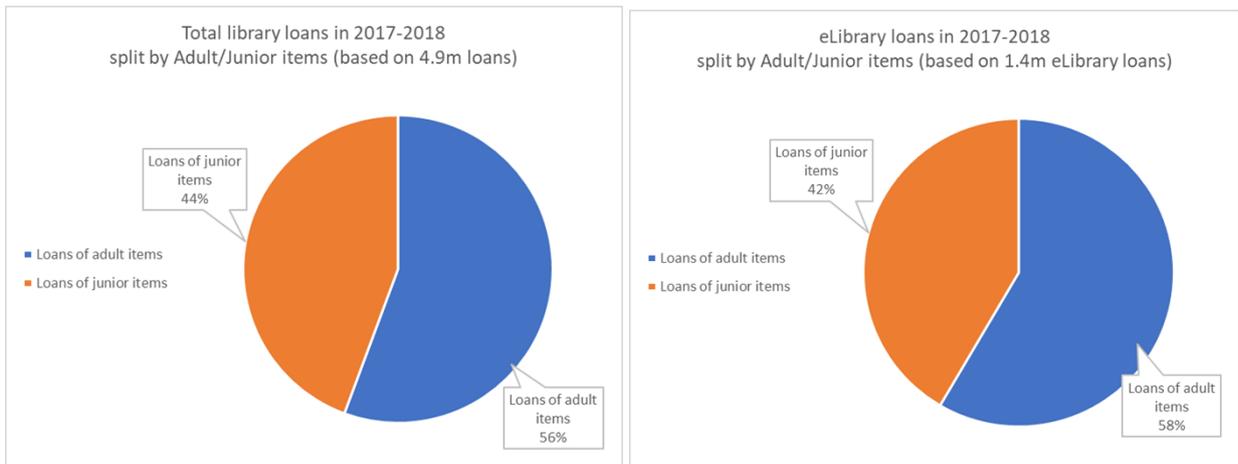
⁶ Surrey’s statistical neighbours are; Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire, Hampshire, W Sussex, Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Essex, Warwickshire, Kent, N Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Dorset, Worcestershire, E Sussex

neighbours for 2017/18, the pattern is similar to the full national comparison; Surrey (black bar) is below average on visits but above average on borrowers.

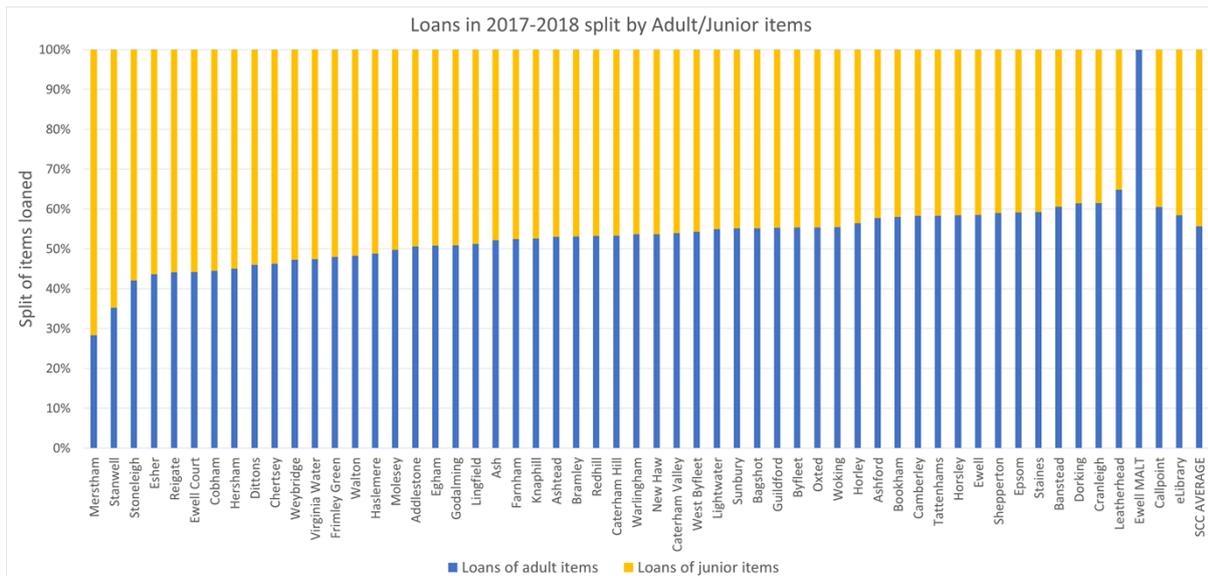


Junior versus adult lending

- 1.55 Nationally, libraries are used most by young adults (16-24), as well as by parents with young children especially pre-school age children.
- 1.56 In Surrey, although many older adults also use libraries, service reach among children and young people is disproportionately high compared to their share of the overall population. We can see this clearly in terms of the balance of lending of adult stock compared to junior stock (using data from Surrey’s own LMS). Under 18s in Surrey account for 25% of the population but library loans of junior stock (i.e. books kept in the junior sections, and which are predominantly borrowed for use by children) account for 44% of all physical loans and 42% of all eLibrary loans.



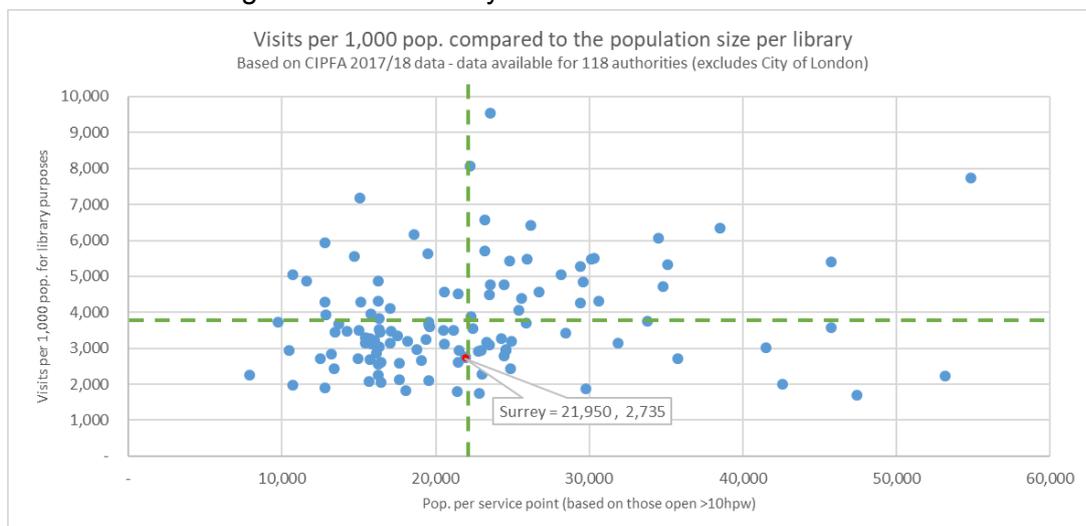
- 1.57 However, beneath the headline figures for the split between Junior and Adult lending lies significant variation by branch, as shown by the chart below.



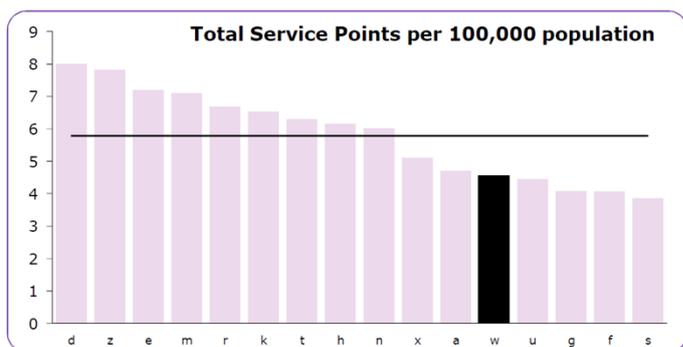
What is interesting is those libraries with the highest levels of junior lending (left side of the chart) tend to be smaller libraries. None of the main town libraries are among the 12 with the highest junior lending; three are “Community Partnership” libraries (Stoneleigh, Ewell Court, and Virginia Water), five are “C” libraries (Merstham, Stanwell, Cobham, Hersham and Chertsey), and four are “B” libraries (Esher, Reigate, Dittons and Weybridge). Conversely the 12 with the highest levels of adult lending (right side of the chart) include 4 of Surrey’s 10 main town libraries (Dorking, Staines, Epsom, and Camberley). One explanation for this may simply be that for a variety of reasons children tend to travel less far to visit a library, whereas adults are able to or choose to travel further e.g. to benefit from a greater range of services. (Nb. the branch labelled “Ewell MALT” which shows no junior loans is a collection of performing arts scripts and music scores).

Population per library branch

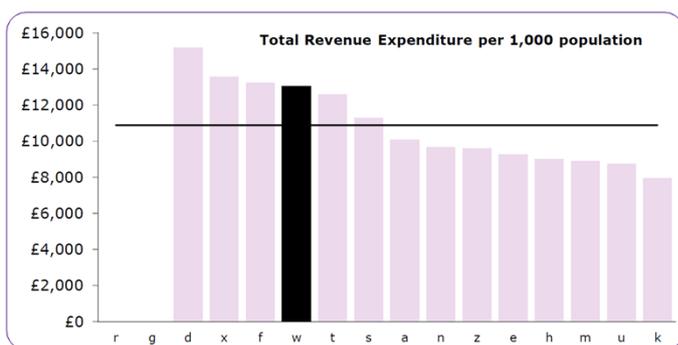
- 1.58 Looking at population per service point (i.e. total Surrey population divided by number of branches) Surrey has 21,950 residents per branch, which is fractionally below the national average of 22,164 (based on 2017/18 CIPFA data). When plotted against visits per capita in the scatter chart below we can also see that Surrey (at 2,735 visits per 1000 pop.) is below the national average as noted already.



- 1.59 In other words the number of libraries per Surrey resident is almost exactly equal to the national average, but Surrey residents are making fewer visits than in other places.
- 1.60 If we compare Surrey only to its statistical neighbours (again from CIPFA) this shows Surrey has slightly fewer branches per capita in 2017/18 than the average among similar counties (although it must be noted that several of those statistical neighbours are mid-way through reviewing their overall network and provision).

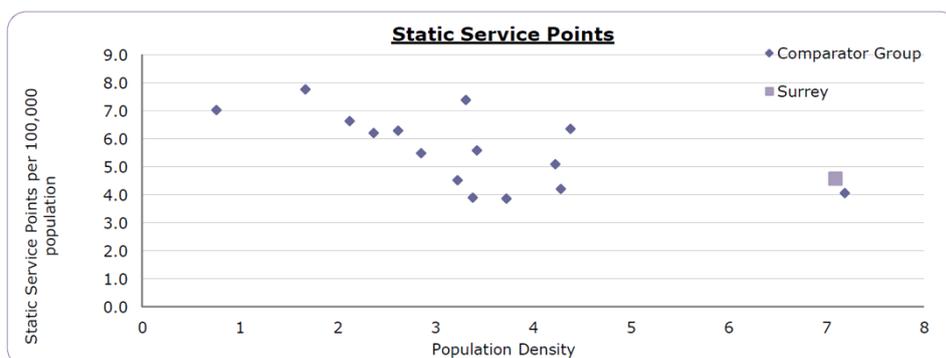


- 1.61 However, Surrey also spends slightly more per capita than its statistical neighbours.



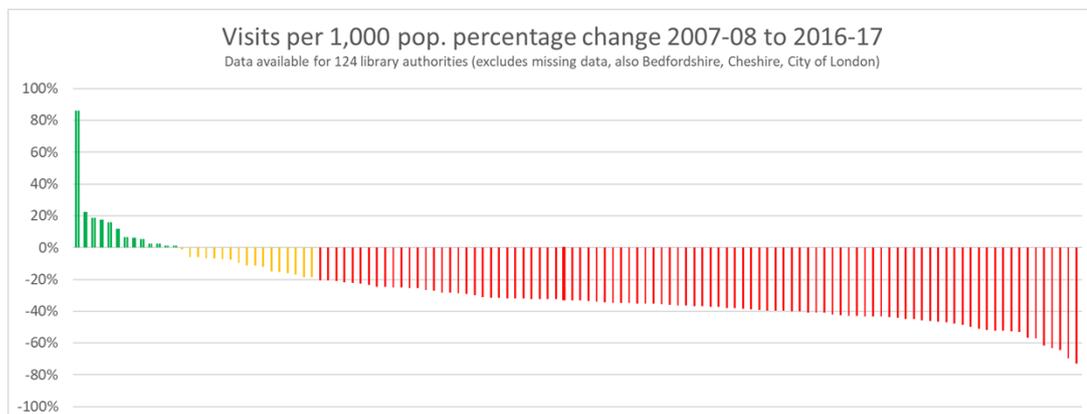
- 1.62 Finally, CIPFA provide comparisons of service points per capita against population density. This shows that Surrey has a much higher population density than all but one of its statistical neighbours, the majority of whom are more rural with more dispersed populations. However, Surrey has an almost identical number of branches per capita as its closest comparator authority.

Authority	Median
Population Density	7.1 3.3



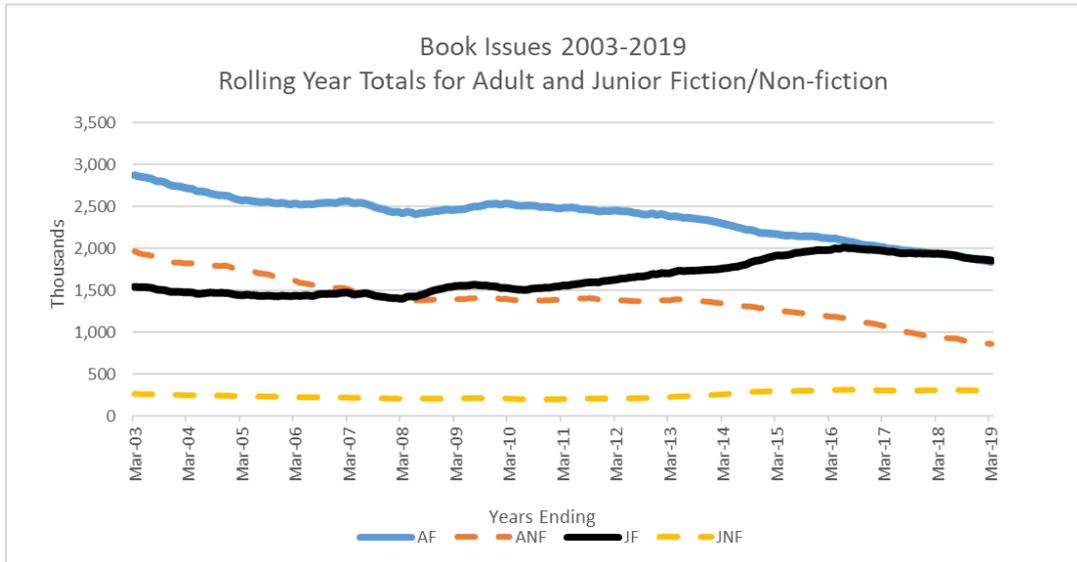
Long term trends in library use

- 1.63 There is much discussion nationally about changing patterns in library use and the overall fall in use. Surrey follows the national pattern with visits and borrowing having fallen over the past decade. Nationally the fall in visits is often attributed to wider societal and technological trends, coupled with spending reductions. However, the true picture is more complicated, and while many library services have indeed seen dramatic falls in use, some have increased visits. The chart below shows changes in visit numbers across 124 library services between 2008 and 2017. Most have seen falls of between 15 and 40%, but thirteen have achieved visit growth, while a few seem to have capitulated entirely. Coupled with recent research by DCMS into factors influencing library visits⁷, and examples of increases in library use in other developed nations, this points to a more complex picture. A more helpful analysis is that library use is growing in places where they are used to tackle major challenges such as skills, digital literacy, and loneliness, while in places which lack either leadership or sufficient focus on place-based priorities libraries are under-exploited and consequently under-utilised.



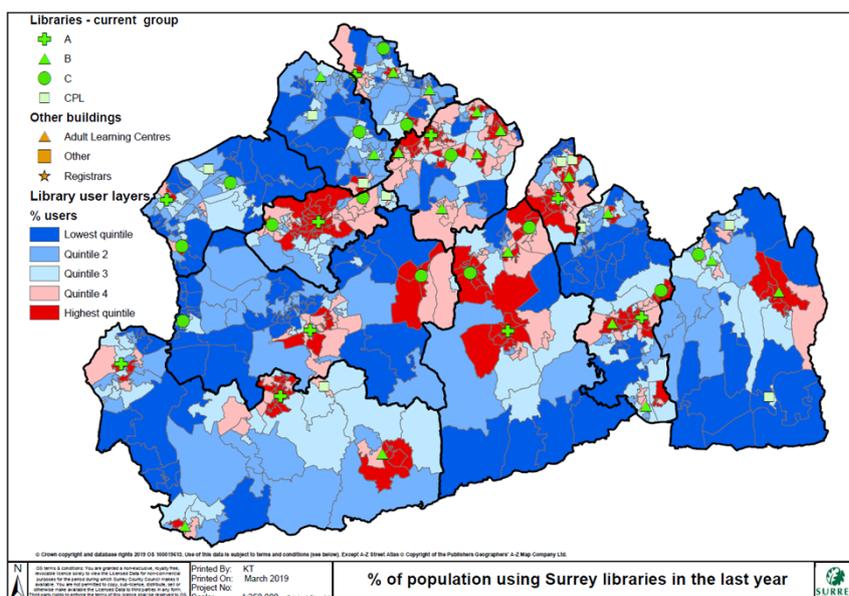
- 1.64 In Surrey, there is another important detail which risks being overlooked beneath the overall decline in use. That is the significant increase in issues of children's fiction over the past decade from around 1.5m in 2008 to around 2million in 2018, at the same time as adult fiction issues have fallen. This increase has come despite the stock of junior fiction remaining far smaller than adult fiction.

⁷ [Research by DCMS based on statistical correlations using CIPFA data](#) found the most likely drivers of changes in library use (both increases and decreases) were more likely to factors internal to individual services, such as leadership and strategy, than external factors such as technology or social change. Furthermore the research found that levels of funding had less influence than other factors.

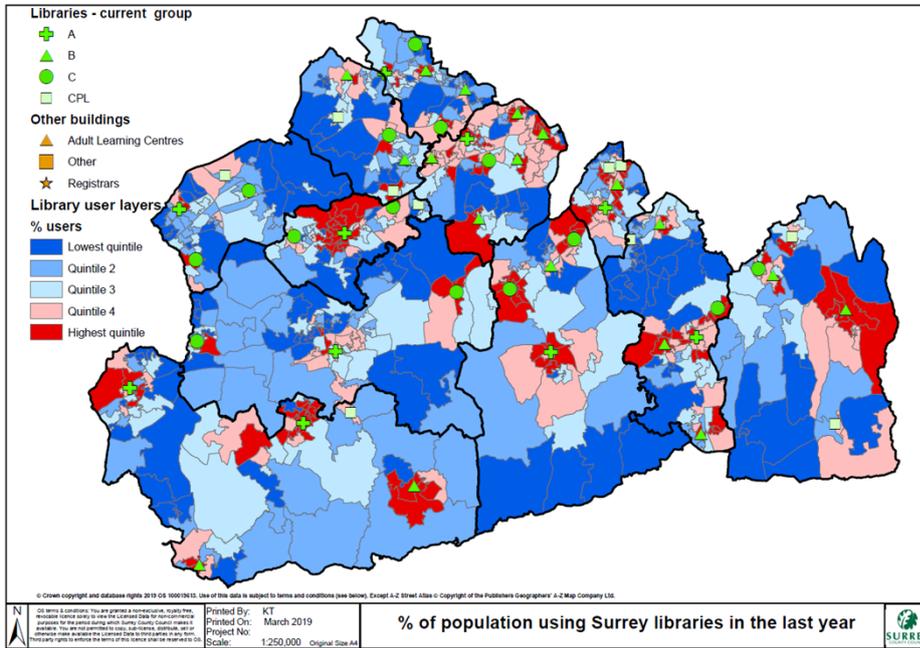


Geographic patterns of library use

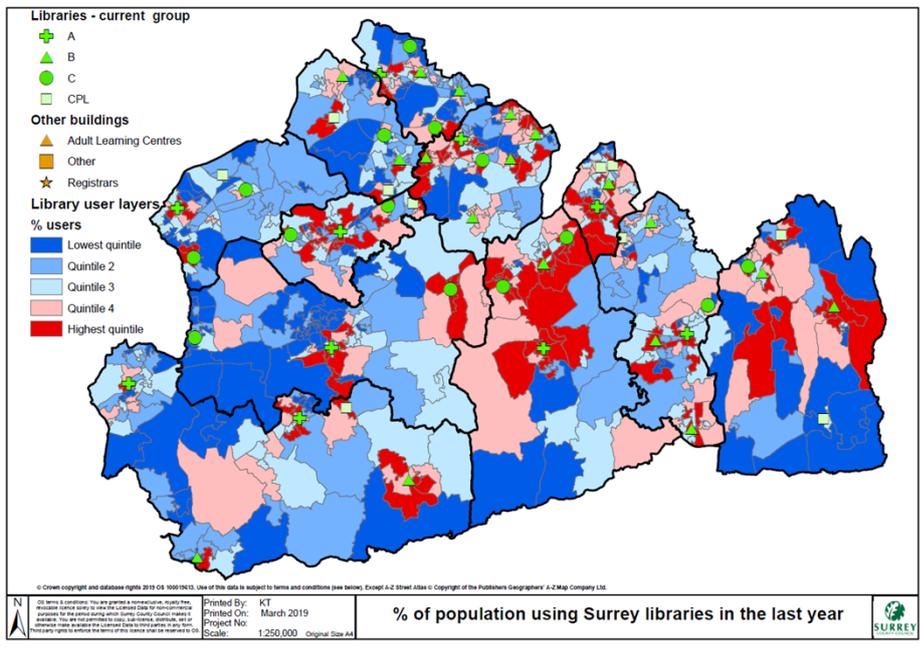
- 1.65 Library borrowing by all users (again “borrowing” does not account for those who visit but do not “blip” their library card) shows hotspots around libraries as you would expect, but also that there is significant variation across the county with some libraries generating more heat (i.e. higher percentages of borrowers per capita) than others. The heatmap for “all user” data shows cooler areas in the north and southeast of the county.
- 1.66 This map also highlights the contrast in population density across Surrey between the south which is generally rural and lower density, and the north which is generally built up and higher density. This means that while library branches in the south of the county serve similar-sized populations to the north, they are further apart and those populations must travel further to reach the nearest branch.



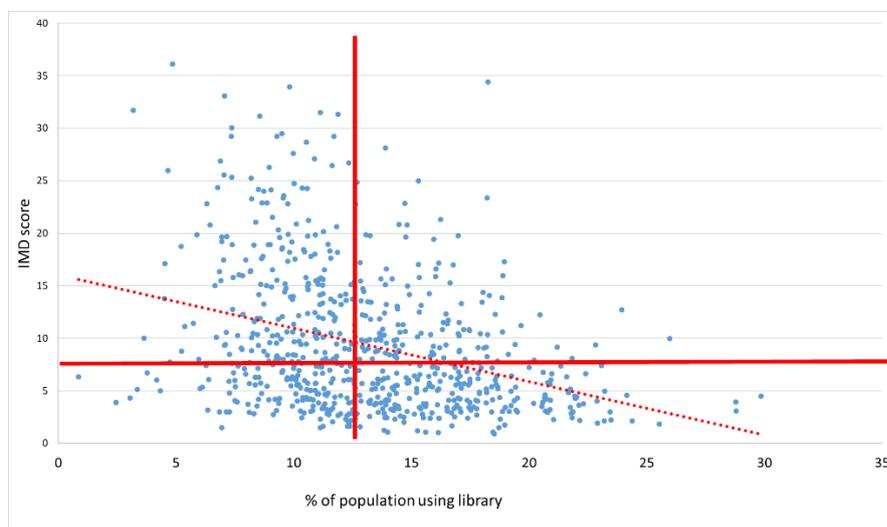
1.67 The picture for library borrowing by 0-18s is a similar overall but focused on different geographies (here the north, far southeast, and far southwest of the county look warmer than in the all-user map). This may reflect the different make-up of towns and communities, or stock selection, or the approach and skills of staff.



1.68 The pattern of over 75 borrowing is a similar patchwork, again with geographic differences.



- 1.69 We have also compared the IMD scores and library use for each individual geographic unit of the county, i.e. individual neighbourhoods and communities (these are known as LSOAs). This shows an inverse trend with weak correlation – in that better off areas (having lower IMD scores) tend to be those where a greater proportion use libraries. It is not clear-cut and there is a very wide field of scatter, but it is a trend nonetheless.



- 1.70 This also misses out those who visit a library but without blipping their card (e.g. to attend an activity or study) and it may be that those in less well-off areas use libraries more for other kinds of activities besides book-lending. Nevertheless, it illustrates a wide variation in levels of use from less than 10% of pop. to 20%+ and this cannot be explained solely by distance from a library – we have already seen there are both hot and cold spots right next to libraries.
- 1.71 Finally, it is interesting to note an outlier in the top right of the scatter (i.e. high level of need/IMD and high use) which turns out to be the area around Merstham library. There may be an interesting approach here which is important in terms of the future service model.

Conclusions

- 1.72 The overall picture of library use and library users in Surrey is mixed, and points to a service which is under-exploited in terms of overall scale and potential impact. It could even be said to be missing those individuals who stand to benefit most. The library service continues to have significant reach, 37% of the population (equivalent to 442,000 residents) say they have used a library in the past year. However, overall visits have fallen over the past decade and visits per capita are low when compared nationally.
- 1.73 Children account for 44% of all book lending despite making up only 25% of the population. Borrowing of children's books has also risen by a third over the past decade, bucking the trend of declining use, and an exact mirror image of adult lending.
- 1.74 While Surrey has slightly fewer branches per head than other similar authorities, per head spending on libraries is slightly higher. Although the number of book borrowers is higher than average, those who do borrow from libraries do not tend to live in areas of the highest

social need. In other words Surrey is not over-provided in terms of branches per capita, but it does spend more per resident, and the question we cannot fully answer is – does that higher per capita spend deliver a greater contribution to Surrey’s overall priorities compared with other authorities?

- 1.75 In terms of what this means for a new library strategy, this analysis highlights two linked challenges. The first is the need to fully exploit library use which remains significant in scale (440,000 residents) in order to reach more of those who stand to benefit most – i.e. those with the greatest social need. One measure of this would be to say that the areas with the highest levels of social need, should become the areas with the highest library use.

The second linked challenge is to learn from a) the trend-bucking growth in children’s borrowing and b) explore the Merstham example where high use and high social need appear to have been aligned. Understanding these examples will likely provide lessons about the service offer as a whole which if applied - at any given level of budget and irrespective of the level of spending reductions required - will mean the service is more fully exploited and a bigger contributor to Surrey’s strategic goals