

Supporting information for the Libraries consultation, summer 2025

Information
Library usage figures (in this document)
Library use infographic (in this document)
The LibrariesWest offer (in this document)
Meeting rooms and space for hire (in this document)
Partner organisations using libraries to deliver events and activities (in this document)
EIAs for each site (copy in folder)
Library profile documents (copy per site in folder)
Library users shown with mapping by postcode (copies in folder)
Digital library customers shown with mapping by postcode (copies in folder)
Overview slides explaining all of the options including financial summaries (essential reading at front of file)
Description of outreach offer (in this document)
Frequently asked questions (FAQs) (in folder)
Libraries equalities survey summary, spring 2025 (in folder)

Library usage figures

Library usage data, May 2024-Apr 2025

Library	Hours open per week (staffed)	Total hours open per week - staffed and self-service	Items issued and renewed (per annum)	Visits (per annum) including extended access	No. of library members who used the library within the last year (includes loans/renewals only)	Use of public computers (hrs per annum)	No. of printouts (per annum)	Total events hosted 24-25	No. of attendances recorded, (representing instances of participation rather than unique individuals)
Campus	67	67	46,697	71,088	2,388	3,002	14,156	28	
Clevedon	28.25	84	97,908	48,154	3,623	3,759	10,733	535	6,627
Congresbury Community Managed Library	9.5	9.5	5848	3694	333	54	79	n/a	
For All Healthy Living Centre	37.5	37.5	9,657	27,951	644	1,220	3,632	670	2,843
Nailsea Library	34.5	84	109,425	54,839	5,079	2,556	13,740	341	3,241
Pill	16.5	16.5	10,368	5,840	430	142	278	107	1,177
Portishead	33.5	84	113,660	60,742	4,558	2,815	14,360	765	7,635
Weston-super-Mare	49	46.5	82,905	109,116	5,361	14,999	54,616	595	5,039
Winscombe	17	84	20,655	8,929	973	148	830	33	73
Worle	26	55.7	37,374	21,316	1,373	1,043	4,259	296	2,345
Yatton	26	84	44,723	33,407	1,772	1,301	4,465	497	6,465
Mobile	17.25	17.25	29,492	4,463	782	N/A	N/A	135	

Please note that the figures for the Campus are based on the previous year due the footfall counter not working fully in 2024-25

Infographic with library usage

NORTH SOMERSET LIBRARIES 2025

READ, LEARN, CONNECT

12

libraries

411,858

visits

48,473

members

Part of the LibrariesWest consortium with
access to 145 libraries and 2.5 million items



- 128,701 adult and children's books
- 5,546 DVDs CDs and audiobooks
- 858,701 loans

Free access to 14,000 electronic items including
ebooks, eaudio books, and digital magazines

RESERVE AND RENEW LOANS ONLINE

- Mobile library stops at 28 smaller and more rural communities
- Home Library Services deliver books to 176 housebound or care home based individuals
- 36 Home Library service volunteers who have given 1,175 hours



- Free public computers and WiFi in all buildings
- North Somerset local studies collection at Weston library
- Computer help provided by IT buddies

- Libraries ran 883 sessions for early years, attended by 8,094 children
- Thriving volunteer programme: Volunteers have contributed 7,831 hours



www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries



NSomlibraries
@NSLibraries

The LibrariesWest offer



The LibrariesWest 'Offer' to potential new partner authorities

1. Background

LibrariesWest is a Partnership Consortium of 7 public library authorities in the South-West of England which was initially established in 1996. Over the years, it has achieved significant economic and service benefits in the operational areas of library systems provision & technical support and the acquisition & management of physical and electronic stock. In 2005, the original Foursite Consortium (Somerset, Bath & North-East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) was joined by Bristol City Council. Then in 2015, Dorset and Poole (subsequently Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole) joined LibrariesWest to give it the shape it has today.

Since 2019 Somerset has entered joint procurements with both Plymouth and Gloucestershire Library Authorities for e-materials and currently provides a joint platform with Plymouth for e-magazines & e-newspapers, and with Gloucestershire for e--books and e-audio books.

LibrariesWest is the longest established public library consortium in the UK and is recognised as a beacon of good practice. It continues to be a partnership of which Somerset is the lead Authority and is not an individual legal entity.

2. Facts & figures

- LibrariesWest serves a growing resident population of more than 2.5 million through a network of 162 static libraries (including community partnership libraries) and 3 mobile libraries
- The shared catalogue contains approximately 2.5 million items
- Around 9 million items are loaned from our libraries each year

3. Governance

Somerset Council is the lead authority and procures and manages supply contracts on behalf of the consortium. A contractual agreement is in place between Somerset and each of the partner authorities for the delivery of support services, in particular the Library Management System (LMS). The Consortium is managed by the LibrariesWest Board which meets around 4 times a year and comprises the Head of Service from each partner Authority. Each Authority has a vote in key decision-making processes. The Consortium aims to operate at a strategic level and is keen to realise further efficiencies by extending joint working arrangements.

4. Charging mechanism

As the lead authority, Somerset recovers the full cost of the joint services it supplies to the Consortium from the Partner Authorities, including itself. Economies of scale mean that the cost of providing joint services is less than the cost of individual Authorities providing the services, for instance, Somerset employs 2 FTE systems team to manage the Library Management System and associated services, and individual Authorities do not need to employ anyone to do this work.

Shared charges are calculated using a formula based on actual population size. Where actual costs per Authority can be identified, for example print to post services, parcels, delivery mileage and time, actual costs are charged.

5. Expansion

Somerset Libraries is interested in opening dialogue with any Authorities which might be interested in joining the Consortium. As outlined in point 1, we currently offer different ways of working together, short of full Consortium membership, to encourage wider collaboration, joint working and sharing of resources to save costs and improve customer service.

6. Benefits of membership

Each Authority is different and following an approach from a potential partner, key LibrariesWest staff would 'sit down' with a prospective partner and look at the different services which could potentially be of interest and evaluate how the potential benefits could be realised for both parties. Key benefits that we envisage new authorities would realise by joining the Consortium are outlined below:

Core membership

6.1 Efficiency savings because of the joint procurement and delivery of a shared Library Management System (LMS), including ongoing support costs and the support of a dedicated LMS IT technical team

6.2 Access to a shared catalogue and the stock of all partner authorities

6.3 Inter lending of all loanable materials, improving access for library members. LibrariesWest has a mechanism in place to compensate partner authorities for potential loss of income when inter lending chargeable materials and for any significant net lending of books.

6.4 Single library card for all members, which in practice means members can borrow, return, renew and reserve items using any library in the consortium

6.5 A recognisable brand, with a logo to reflect the shared offer

6.6 A shared public facing web presence (www.librarieswest.org.uk) and app to promote the services of LibrariesWest and allow customers to access services 24/7

6.7 The benefit of joining the longest established public library consortium in the UK, with a track record of excellence and experience, which is committed to customer service and innovation in service delivery.

6.8 Shared digital contracts, for e books, e audio books, e newspapers and e magazines, enabling Partner Authorities to share set up and hosting costs, procurement and legal fees, and offer an increased number and range of titles than may be affordable for a single authority.

Options beyond core membership

6.9 Efficiency savings because of the joint procurement, contract management, acquisition, processing and delivery of library materials (books etc.), including the support of a dedicated Bibliographic Services team

6.10 Added value services e.g. the planning and delivery of shared training and promotions, shared marketing initiatives, the ability to share best practice within the consortium and to share in joint bids for national funding.

6.11 Access to a shared facility for cross-authority communication, document sharing and management.

Stock management

6.12 Contract management for the supply of stock, and the setting up and management of supplier selection and standing orders.

6.13 The selection, ordering and cataloguing of all stock and dealing with invoices, using either the same LMS as the existing members or a different LMS.

6.14 Setting up and management of direct delivery of stock.

6.15 Handling of inter library loan requests.

6.16 Van delivery service. To facilitate the movement of stock across the Consortium area, a combination of LibrariesWest and Authority vehicles are currently used.

LMS Support

6.17 LMS technical support and helpdesk facility.

This includes a range of options from 'one-off' support on a consultancy basis e.g.

LMS implementation / upgrade to full support (i.e. LMS support and contract management).

7. Consultancy

LibrariesWest offers a consultancy service in 2 areas

7.1 Consortium working

We offer the benefit of almost 30 years' experience of operating as a public library consortium, including establishing and growing a consortium, legal compliance and selling the benefits to decision makers and customers.

7.2. Procurement

We offer the benefit of our experience of drafting a comprehensive tender document, writing an LMS specification and carrying out a joint procurement exercise with the benefits of our lessons learnt. We also offer the benefit of our experience in specifying for and procuring other library materials (e.g. AV, e books) as a consortium.

7.3. LMS 'one off' consultancy

Meeting rooms and space for hire

Site	Available for hire
Clevedon Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large self-contained meeting room, up to 24 people in theatre style; kitchenette and WC• Small meeting room

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexe available for longer-term hire, suitable for office use
Nailsea Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small meeting room
Portishead Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting room with kitchen for hire
Yatton Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake Worlock Room, up to 35 people theatre style • Large space upstairs for workshops, consultations etc. • Greta Lewis Room, ground floor, suitable for hire as office accommodation • Potential for hire of other spaces at this site

Hire of use of libraries by other organisations and services

Library	Colocated public services, organisations delivering services in library space	Total no of orgs
Campus	council information, energy efficiency, childrens centre	3
Clevedon	council information; NHS social prescriber; NHS talking therapies; Read Easy help; The Hive business advice; Recycling info; community connect; community learning; opportunity NS employment help	9
Congresbury Community Managed Library	n/a	
For All Healthy Living Centre	council information; Opp NS employment help; Read Easy; Grace project; Veg stop; children's centre	6
Nailsea Library	council information; Cllr surgeries; opp NS employment help; Read Easy	4
Pill	council information; childminders group; children's centre, Healthy Start	4
Portishead	Council information; NHS social prescriber; Town Council; recycling info; AS police; Read Easy; community response; opportunity NS employment help; Healthwatch; Cllr surgery; MP surgery; The Hive business advice	12
Weston-super-Mare	council customer services; archive service; careleavers ESOL support; children's centre; community learning; Read Easy, Weston College, Employability, Grace project	9
Winscombe	council information, Cllr surgery, rural village agent, Healthy Start	4
Worle	council information; Cllr surgery; Town councillor surgery; children's centre, midwives, family contact sessions, recycling, Read Easy	8
Yatton	council information; childminders group; recycling info; VANS; Read easy; CANS; Family contact sessions; Children's centre	8
Mobile	council information	

Outreach service offer

'Library outreach' describes a wide range of library activities, events and services which are delivered outside of library buildings, for example in community halls or other NSC sites. Activities may be delivered with partners and often by volunteers. Examples of existing library outreach activities include:

- [Home Delivery Service](#)

- [Care Homes Service](#)
- [Mobile Library Service](#) – see also the map in section 3.1
- Activities for pre-school aged children (story times and rhyme times) in community locations
- Delivery of the annual [Summer Reading Challenge](#) for primary school aged children, in community locations
- Group [reminiscence sessions](#) for older people and those living with Dementia
- Group shared reading sessions
- Digital skills sessions