



**Dorset
Council**

Action Plan

Library Strategy v1.2



Library Strategy 2023-2033

Libraries affect the people of Dorset throughout their entire lives, from rhymetime for toddlers to digital literacy lessons for the elderly. The new strategy has been formed following extensive public consultation including a diverse range of workshops and over 12,500 survey responses from Dorset residents, partners, employees, Councillors and businesses. We also carried out a detailed analysis of community need across Dorset.

The new strategy seeks to provide Dorset communities with a library service that is modern, sustainable and accessible. **36 actions** set out how we will work towards achieving our aims in the short term (2023 to 2026), medium term (2026 to 2029) and longer term.

The action plan is split into our 3 strategic themes: **Inspire, Connect, Enable**, with their 19 strategic aims. The plan links the actions to the five goals of the [Dorset Council Plan](#). Milestones have been identified that can be used to measure progress and keep the new library strategy on course to meet the needs of the people of Dorset.





Action Plan: Library Strategy 2023-2033

Inspire

Enriching lives through universal access to information, knowledge, learning literacy and culture. Inspiring and supporting people, learning, businesses, and the response to climate change

Strategic Aims

1.1	Literacy	Support language, literacy and reading for pleasure for everyone through lifelong learning; acquiring knowledge; developing skills and pursuing personal goals
1.2	Culture	Host and deliver events & activities to inspire cultural connection and new experiences
1.3	Digital	Support people to develop digital skills, removing digital barriers and building confidence
1.4	Local Businesses	Support an innovative and thriving Micro and Small Medium Enterprise business network
1.5	Climate	Inspire, inform and facilitate climate and ecologically positive actions and decisions

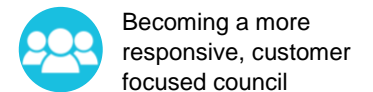
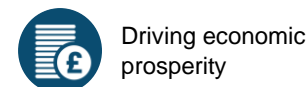
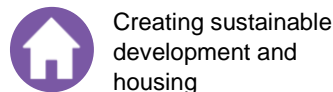
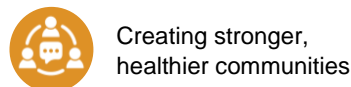
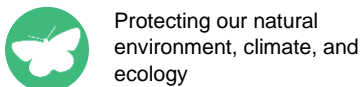


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ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Host and promote partners and events that improve literacy and STEM education in Dorset	1.1 Literacy 	Skills and Learning, Dorset Careers Hub, Dorset Digital Skills Partnership, DC Children's Services		Library Service has a programme of events to promote and support and inspire STEM such as maths, chemistry and coding days
Collaborate with Dorset's speech and language service to support early years language and literacy programmes	1.1 Literacy 	DC Children's Services, NHS Speech and Language Service		Library Service form part of Dorset's Speech and Language communication pathway; NHS Speech and Language events are hosted at libraries
Ensure library collections meet customer needs	1.1 Literacy 	LibrariesWest DC Equalities Reference Group		Introduce and maximise evidence-based stock management to improve stock purchasing by Autumn 2023; Refresh collection development policy and collection standards policy by Winter 2024












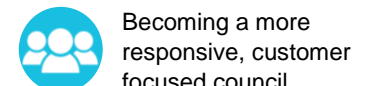
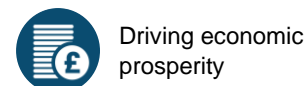
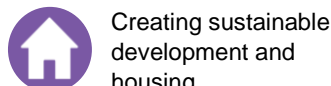
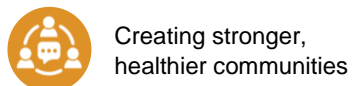
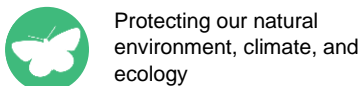


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ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Contribute to the Dorset Cultural Strategy through employing artists, creating activities and pursuing cultural funding opportunities from partners, such as the Arts Council	1.2 Culture 	Arts Development Company	 	Be an active member of the Cultural Officers Group led by Arts Development Company by Summer 2023; identify and explore opportunities for joint funding applications to the Arts Council by Autumn 2024
Upgrade to full fibre internet connection at all library sites	1.3 Digital 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Digital Place	 	Connect all DC statutory libraries to full fibre by end of Winter 2024 (to be confirmed)
Improve digital provision at libraries with computers, tablets, Digital Champions support and events	1.3 Digital 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Digital Skills and Adoption, Skills and Learning	  	Train all library staff as embedded digital champions by end of 2023, explore potential to expand iPad lending project in 2024-25, offer Wi-Fi printing at libraries by Spring 2025
Ensure public access computer provision continues to meet customer needs	1.3 Digital 	DC Digital Place	 	Plan upgrade to Windows 11 operating system for public access computers by Winter 2024



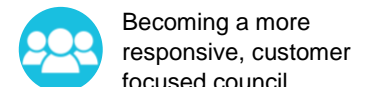
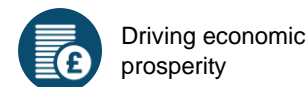
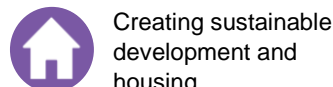
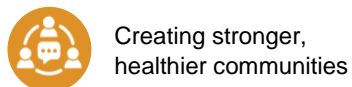
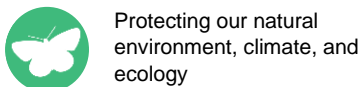


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ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Support local business networks with events, and exploring opportunities under The British Library Business and Intellectual Property (IP) Centres	1.4 Local Businesses 	DC Economic Growth, Dorset LEP, DWP, Chambers of Commerce, Jobcentre Plus		Develop a business event plan with local partners by Spring 2025; Carry out a feasibility study for B&IP centres at largest libraries by Spring 2026
Support and facilitate partners that promote climate and ecology positive actions	1.5 Climate 	DC Climate and Ecological Sustainability, DC Waste Services, Dorset Sustainability Hub		Host climate partners at libraries by Winter 2024 providing advice and support on topics such as energy efficiencies and grants
Provide outreach for Dorset Council's Waste Services	1.5 Climate 	DC Waste Services DC Organisational Development		Facilitate customer collection of new containers from local libraries via customer access points; provide information and signposting on recycling practices and reducing waste by Winter 2023; provide training for all library staff as part of workforce development plan by Spring 2025





Action Plan: Library Strategy 2023-2033

Connect

To connect with and meet the needs of our communities by linking people together with each other and with services from libraries, Dorset Council and partners










Strategic Aims

2.1	Outreach	Residents and partners are aware of everything the library service has to offer
2.2	Community Needs	Our service is designed to meet customer needs and supports community connection
2.3	Library Network	Local libraries thrive as part of a co-ordinated network of libraries including Dorset’s Community Managed Libraries
2.4	Accessibility	Our open and inclusive service will ensure access is barrier free
2.5	Council’s Front Door	Libraries are at the heart of delivering council services to communities, acting as the council’s front door.

Action Plan: Library Strategy 2023-2033

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ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Develop a marketing strategy which enables the effective promotion of library services to current and potential customers and partners and seeks to increase active usage	2.1 Outreach 	DC Communications, DC Web Team	 	Develop marketing action plan by Spring 2024 to include a re-vamp of library service webpages; develop a promotional campaign linked to the launch of the new operating model and opening hours from April 2024
Work with Dorset History Centre (DHC) to support confident signposting from library workforce to DHC, to promote collections and joint service offer	2.1 Outreach 	Dorset History Centre (DHC)	 	Reciprocal communications and promotion of services and events where appropriate by Winter 2024; familiarisation and training on role of DHC and the provision of local and family history resources included within workforce development plan by Summer 2024; offer to community led library volunteers to visit DHC (annually) for service familiarisation
Co-create a calendar of events with communities and partners	2.2 Communities 	DC Communications, DC Web Team	 	Align library calendar of events with the annual Dorset Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness calendar from Spring 2024

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ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Work with refugee resettlement programmes, welcoming refugees and asylum seekers into their community and providing relevant resources in their language	2.2 Communities 	DC Communities and Partnerships, DC Refugee Resettlement Service	  	Take part in Refugee Resettlement events to deliver outreach of library activities from Summer 2023; promote materials in native language to meet the needs of refugee communities by Summer 2023
Collaborate with the Armed Forces Covenant programme to develop the library service's role in supporting members of the Armed Forces and their families in Dorset	2.2 Communities 	DC Armed Forces Covenant (AFC), DC Communities and Partnerships, Covenant Programme Board	  	Provide library outreach at AFC events from Spring 2023; update AFC paper resources at libraries with digital provision by Winter 2023; refresh training for all library staff as part of workforce development plan by end of 2024
Review and update Community Managed Libraries Service Level Agreement and provide a platform for communities to propose delivery of new community managed libraries	2.3 Library Network 	DC Assets and Regeneration, Community Managed Libraries (CMLs)	 	Carry out a review of the Community Managed Libraries Service Level Agreement by Summer 2024
Standardise our operating model and opening hours, reflective of community needs	2.4 Accessibility 	DC Communities and Partnership	 	Implement new operating model for Dorset Council libraries from Spring 2024

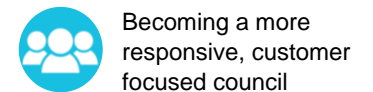
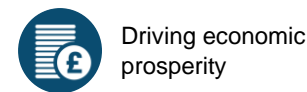
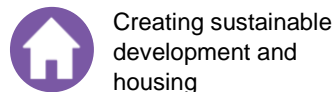
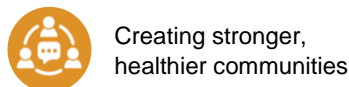
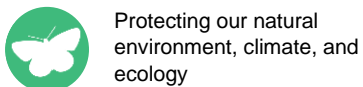


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Connect

To connect with and meet the needs of our communities by linking people together with each other and with services from libraries, Dorset Council and partners

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
<p>Collaborate with the Dorset Council equality, diversity and inclusion groups, networks, and governance to improve provision of accessible services</p>	<p>2.4 Accessibility</p> 	<p>DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Employee Networks, DC Equalities Reference Group</p>	 	<p>Explore and pilot a process to 'walkaround' and review library spaces to ensure inclusion and access in the widest possible sense by Spring 2024.</p>
<p>Provide customer service support at all libraries, including dedicated customer access points, in line with identified need and the customer transformation strategy</p>	<p>2.5 Council's Front Door</p> 	<p>DC Customer Services</p>	  	<p>Review customer demand at customer access points in libraries by Winter 2023; regularly host DC services offering outreach customer appointments at library sites by Winter 2023.</p>



Enable: our communities











To create welcoming library buildings which are accessible, inclusive spaces for our communities to share and use in many ways

Strategic Aims

3.1	Multipurpose Spaces	Create inviting, flexible, well used spaces
3.2	Trusted Spaces	Provide safe trusted spaces
3.3	Community Growth	Sustainable buildings which keep pace with community growth
3.4	Community Hubs	Library services form part of community hubs
3.5	Health and Wellbeing	Provide space where residents can connect with health and wellbeing opportunities

Enable: our communities

To create welcoming library buildings which are accessible, inclusive spaces for our communities to share and use in many ways

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Develop an Asset improvement plan for our libraries network, including Blandford and Ferndown libraries, which require review and potential investment to become successful Library Connect locations.	3.1 Multipurpose Spaces 	DC Assets and Regeneration	  	Scope assets plan for libraries by end of March 2024.
Jointly pursue local capital receipt, grant funding and national funding opportunities to invest in building improvements as a council and community asset	3.1 Multipurpose Spaces 	DC Assets and Regeneration	 	Submit funding bid for open access technology during 2023-24.
Review use of library spaces, especially by children and young people, to design library spaces around customer need	3.1 Multipurpose Spaces 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Children's Services	 	Complete the review of use of library spaces to inform development of asset improvement plan by end of 2024.










Enable: our communities

To create welcoming library buildings which are accessible, inclusive spaces for our communities to share and use in many ways

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Maximise availability and use of library spaces, including hiring, to increase its use and community value	3.1 Multipurpose Spaces 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Digital Services	 	Launch a new customer focused room booking system by Summer 2023.
Establish libraries as inclusive, welcoming and trusted spaces, offering refuge and support	3.2 Trusted Spaces 	DC Communities and Engagement	 	Train library employees to provide signposting to local support groups by Summer 2024.
Carry out an audit of accessibility in our buildings, including layouts, services delivery points, signage and quiet zones	3.2 Trusted Spaces 	DC Assets and Regeneration, Equality Reference Group	 	Carry out an accessibility audit by Summer 2024.
Utilise developer contributions and other sources of funding to invest in our libraries in areas of community growth and explore opportunities to ensure buildings remain in line with community need	3.3 Community Growth 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Planning	 	Once library asset improvement plan has been developed by end of 2024, ensure full allocation of developer contributions, and use to access additional sources of funds.

Enable: our communities

To create welcoming library buildings which are accessible, inclusive spaces for our communities to share and use in many ways

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Work with Dorset Council Assets and Regeneration team to pursue local and national funding opportunities to install low carbon solutions on our library network	3.3 Community Growth 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Climate and Ecological Sustainability	 	Identify carbon neutral opportunities to feed into asset improvement plan by end of 2024.
Collaborate with services, partners and providers to help shape Dorset's hub initiatives around local need	3.4 Community Hubs 	DC Assets and Regeneration, DC Children's Services, Citizens Advice	 	Identify co-location and collaboration opportunities as part of Dorset's hub initiatives, such as Dorset Health Village and Family Hubs. Design libraries family hubs offer by Spring 2024.
Continue engagement between the library service, assets and regeneration, other services and partners to identify opportunities in relation to relocation or co-location of services and in regard to 'one public estate'	3.4 Community Hubs 	DC Assets and Regeneration DC Services	 	Included within scope of assets plan for libraries.

Enable: our communities

To create welcoming library buildings which are accessible, inclusive spaces for our communities to share and use in many ways

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Provide space where residents can connect with health and wellbeing opportunities, partners and groups	3.5 Health and Wellbeing 	DC Adult Social Care, Our Dorset Integrated Care System, Public Health Dorset, LiveWell Dorset	 	Host annual LiveWell Dorset health and well-being outreach events at our libraries by Autumn 2023; pilot the training of library staff as LiveWell Ambassadors by Winter 2024, who can sign post residents to LiveWell pathways; include within workforce development plan by end of 2025
Explore making connections with Dorset's health and care networks and promote library's social prescribing offer.	3.5 Health and Wellbeing 	Our Dorset Integrated Care System	 	Develop relationships with appropriate health and care organisations by Winter 2024 and work with Patient Participation groups to develop services which meet their needs by Winter 2025.



Enable: our library teams






To invest in the development of our workforce and volunteers to deliver services that meet current and future community needs and customer expectations

Strategic Aims

3.6	Employee Empowerment	Each employee feels valued and empowered, with career opportunities in the library service and Dorset Council more broadly
3.7	Employee Opportunities	Flexible resourcing across our library network, allows employees to develop a range of skills and experience
3.8	Employee Development	We offer inclusive routes to employment and development opportunities via apprenticeship programmes
3.9	Volunteering	We have a strong partnership with, and wholly value the contribution of, our volunteers to the library service. We have a framework in place for supporting future partnerships to build on their success

Enable: our library teams

To invest in the development of our workforce and volunteers to deliver services that meet current and future community needs and customer expectations

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Undertake workforce transformation to realign our workforce to equip us to meet the aims and aspirations of the strategy	3.6 Employee Empowerment 	DC Organisational Development	  	Employees in position in new roles by Spring 2024
Develop a new Workforce Development Plan which supports and empowers all employees in their employment pathway in the library service and Dorset Council	3.6 Employee Empowerment 	DC Organisational Development, DC Equalities Reference Group, Libraries Connected	 	Implement Workforce Development plan with new operating model from Spring 2024; actively support EDI Strategies and Accreditations the Council adopts; further promote Employee Networks amongst library employees from Spring 2024.
Utilise library employee's strengths with shared learning and rotation throughout the network of libraries	3.7 Employee Opportunities 	DC Organisational Development	 	Flexibly resource libraries by Summer 2024. Complete skills audit of teams so we can utilise strengths within service delivery from Spring 2025.

Enable: our library teams

To invest in the development of our workforce and volunteers to deliver services that meet current and future community needs and customer expectations

ACTION	STRATEGIC AIM	PARTNERSHIPS	BENEFITS	MILESTONES
Develop library employees via apprenticeship programmes such as apprenticeships, pathway to employment, work experience and other national initiatives which build relevant skills for the service and for careers within the council	3.8 Employee Development 	DC Organisational Development	 	Further promote development opportunities for underrepresented groups and explore opportunities for additional apprenticeships from Spring 2024.
Review and promote the opportunities for volunteering in the library service	3.9 Volunteering 	DC Communications, Royal Voluntary Service		Update the application process for volunteering with the library service by Autumn 2023; co-ordinate the promotion of volunteer opportunities across the library network by end of 2024