

Consultation and Engagement Report: Future Libraries



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Contents

Executive summary	3
Background	4
Analysis of responses.....	5
Age of respondents.....	5
Location.....	6
Visiting hours	7
Most important use	7
Value of libraries	9
Benefits of library use	10
Service design	11
Inspiring public spaces	11
Suggestions for reinvented spaces	12
What we should be providing.....	14
Where we could reduce spending	15
Other co-location options.....	16
Restructuring options	16
Analysis of children’s survey responses.....	18

Executive summary

The Future Libraries Survey ran from September to November 2024. It included an adult's survey and a children's survey, and was available online via Engage Stirling, as well as a paper format from libraries. It was advertised online via Stirling Council and Stirling Libraries' social media channels; in local press outlets; and via community council channels.

In total, 2,520 responses were received, of which 335 (13%) were from children and young people. Most of the adult responses (82%, n=1797) were submitted online, while most of the responses from children and young people (91%, n=273) were manual submissions.

The majority of responses were from existing users, with 2057 adults and 301 children indicating that they visit the library at least occasionally.

Key findings emerging from the survey were:

- Existing users value the service as it is, and it is important to them that the physical spaces and community aspect of libraries are retained in any adjustments.
- Popular specific asks for future developments include:
 - access to hot drinks (and, in some cases, light snacks);
 - spaces for relaxing, socialising, or working and studying;
 - bookable spaces for community use;
 - and increased options for adult learning opportunities in libraries.
- Non-users also value libraries in their communities, despite not visiting for a range of reasons.
- Non-users were more likely to request greater digital expansion, but also understood libraries as social and community spaces and suggested developments on that theme.
- Advertising existing services more broadly may lead to an increase in users, given that non-users frequently stated that they did not know about some or all of the services on offer.

The next phase of engagement will include focus groups in libraries, to identify potential areas for progress in the light of the findings as well as budgetary constraints arising from the 2025-26 budget-setting process.

Background

This engagement activity was undertaken by the libraries services to gather the views of those who live, work, and study in the Stirling Council area to inform the development of a future Libraries Strategy, 2025-2030. The service's intention is to redesign and deliver a modern, financially sustainable, and a fit for the future service that meets local needs and demands. The final outcome of the engagement will be a draft Libraries Strategy that will set out changes to service delivery. The Strategy will be presented to the People and Community Wellbeing Committee for approval in 2025.

The first phase of engagement took the form of a survey, which was designed in collaboration with the Engagement and Consultation Group to ensure best practice and maximise reach. There were adult and children's copies of the survey available to ensure young people are able to have their voice heard. Paper copies of the survey in libraries enabled those with limited digital access or skills to participate in the survey.

The survey was available online (on the Engage platform) and in libraries for two months. An email was sent to people registered on the Engage platform notifying them that the survey was live, and social media promotions were also run on Facebook and X by Stirling Council's central media page as well as by Libraries and Archives. The survey was the subject of a newspaper article in the Stirling Observer, and other local media promoted the survey. Schools also promoted the survey, and supported children to complete and return in some instances.

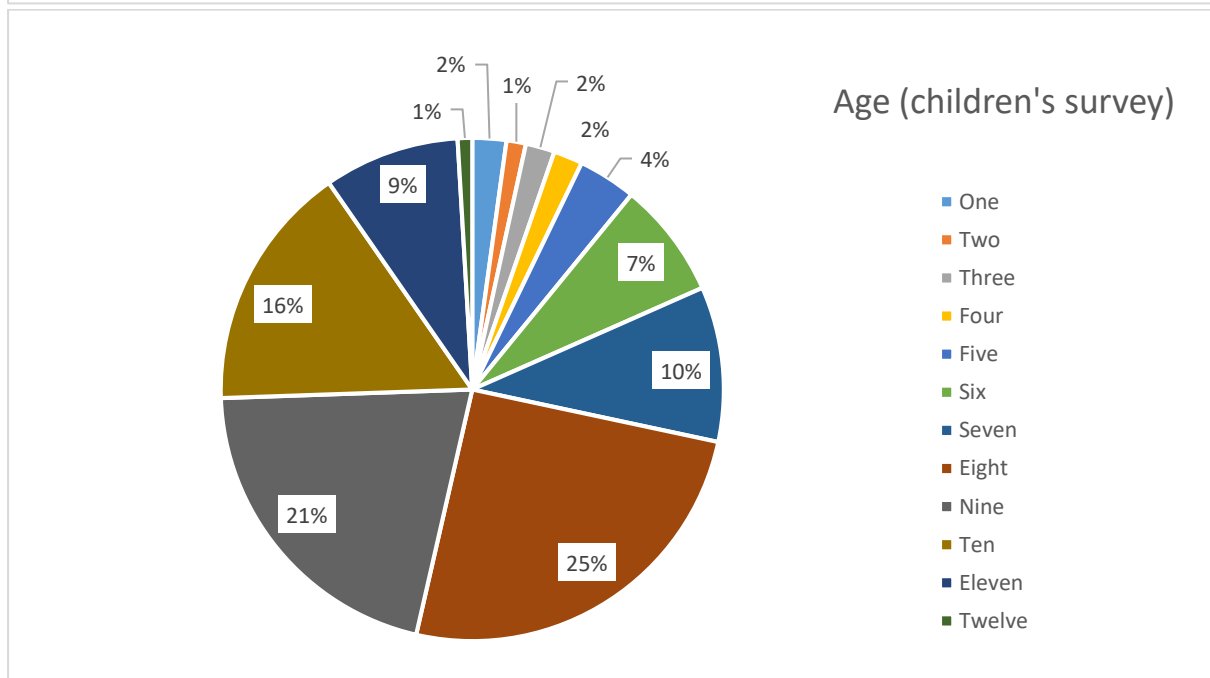
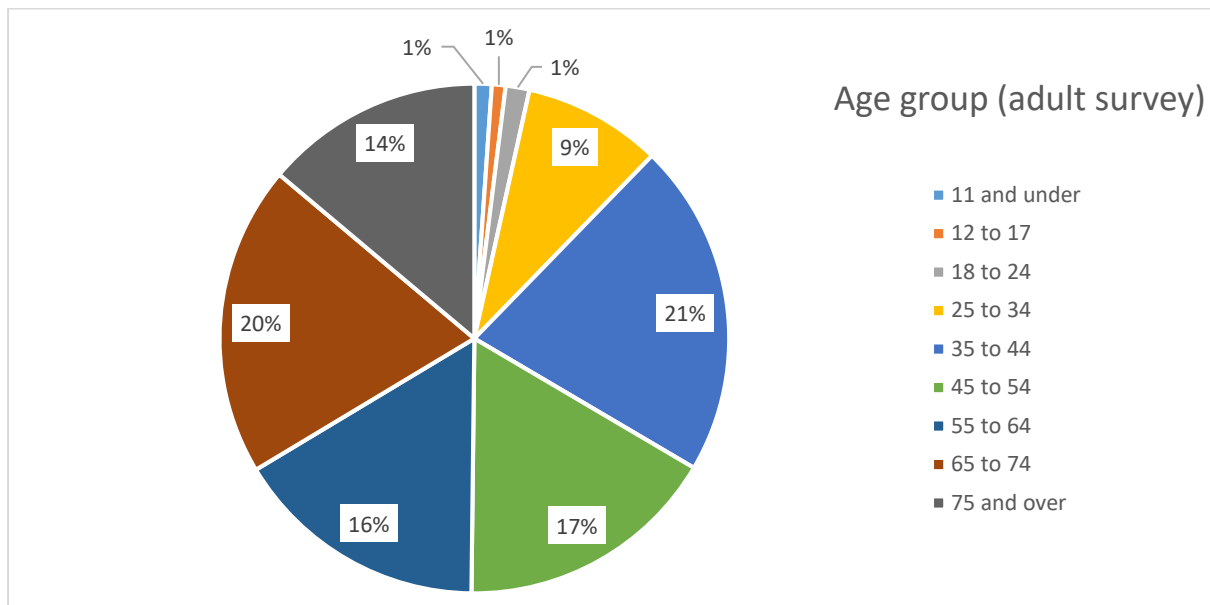
Future phases of engagement will include focus groups, which will draw on the findings from the survey as well as account for budgetary updates, to identify priorities and actions for the new strategy. Officers from the Engagement and Consultation Group have offered to support this work.

Analysis of responses

Age of respondents

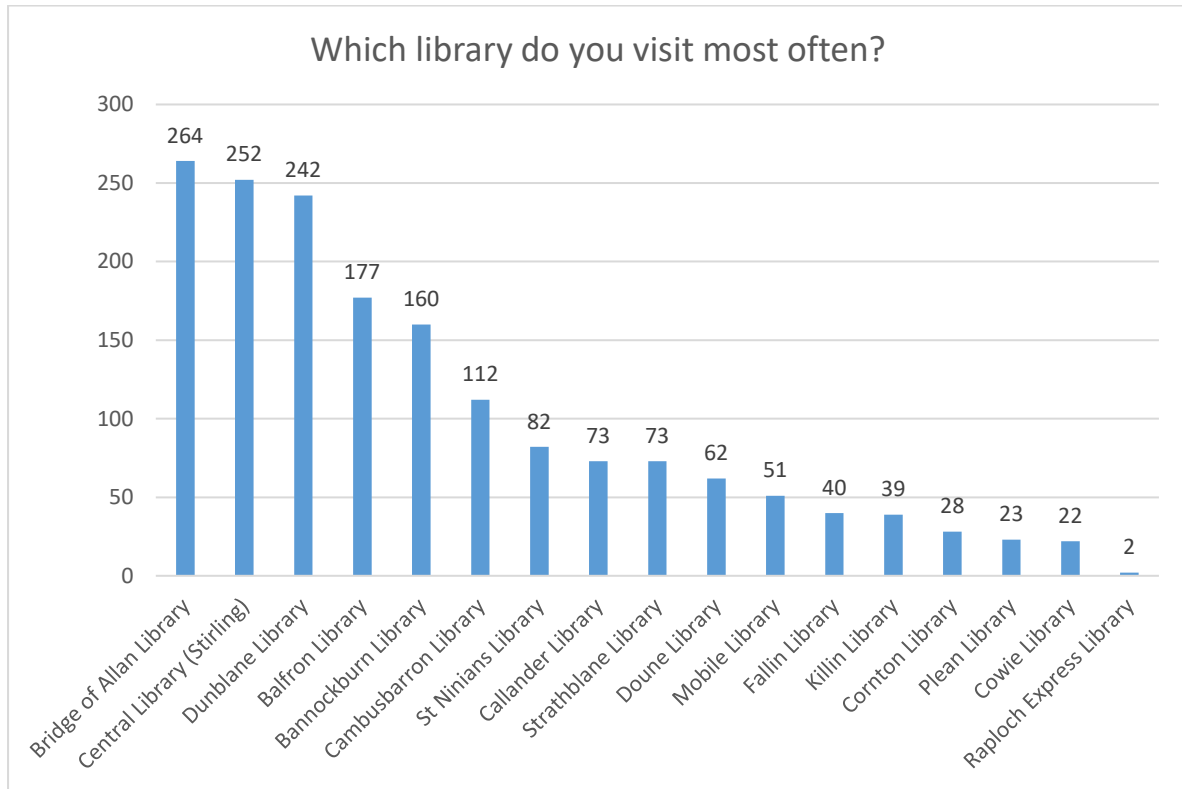
Of the 2185 respondents to the adult survey, there was even representation across age groups over the age of 34. A Smaller proportion of 25 to 34-year-olds responded, and very low numbers of 18- to 24-year-olds. In addition to the 335 respondents to the children’s survey, 43 under-18s responded to the main survey.

Of those completing the children’s survey, the highest proportion of responses (25%) were from eight-year-olds, followed by nine- and ten-year-olds (21% and 16%, respectively). Other ages were well represented, with the exception of under-fives and over-elevens. In some cases, parents filled out the survey on behalf of their child.



Location

Bridge of Allan, Central Library and Dunblane all saw high response rates, at 16%, 15%, and 14% (respectively) of total adult respondents who said that they visit the library. Responses were lowest from the eastern villages of Plean and Cowie, but Raploch Express was by far the lowest response rate with only two respondents saying that this is the library they visit most often.



Of the 121 adults who said they **do not** currently visit the library, 25% told us that their nearest library is Central Library in Stirling. This was followed by Balfron and St Ninians, at 11% and 10%, respectively. Plean, Cowie and Raploch were the least-selected choices, and one non-visiting respondent selected Strathblane. The consistency between highest and lowest response areas indicates that further work should be done in Plean, Cowie, and Raploch to ensure existing or potential library users in these areas feel able to participate in engagement activity.

Of all adult respondents who currently visit the library, 1719 answered the question about whether it is easy to get to their local library. Of these, 1662 (96%) said it was easy. This is a slightly higher proportion than the 86% of non-visitors who said it was easy to get to their local library. Correspondingly, 11% of non-visitors said it *was not* easy to get to their local library, compared to 4% of current visitors.

Of visiting respondents, 1419 people told us how they get to their library. Walking or wheeling was the most common mode (64%), reflecting the local nature of most libraries. 29% of visitors drove to their library (including 2% who use an electric car), while 3% of people used public transport and another 3% cycled (including e-bikes).

Visiting hours

In total, 1824 respondents told us how often they visit, and when they most frequently use library services. Combined, 74% of visitors told us that they visit weekly or monthly, with few people visiting ‘most days’.

Weekday afternoons were the most popular visiting times among respondents (51%), followed by weekday mornings (42%) and Saturday mornings (33%).¹ It should be noted that this is not necessarily indicative of ideal preference as it reflects the current opening hours available in different libraries.

Of the respondents who do not currently visit libraries and told us why this is, 13 (12%) indicated that the current opening times do not suit them.

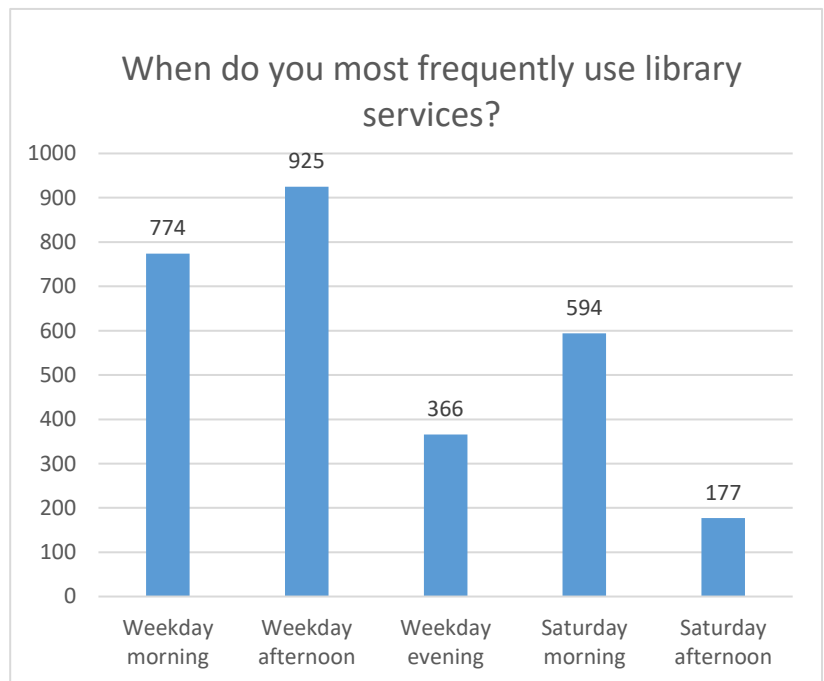
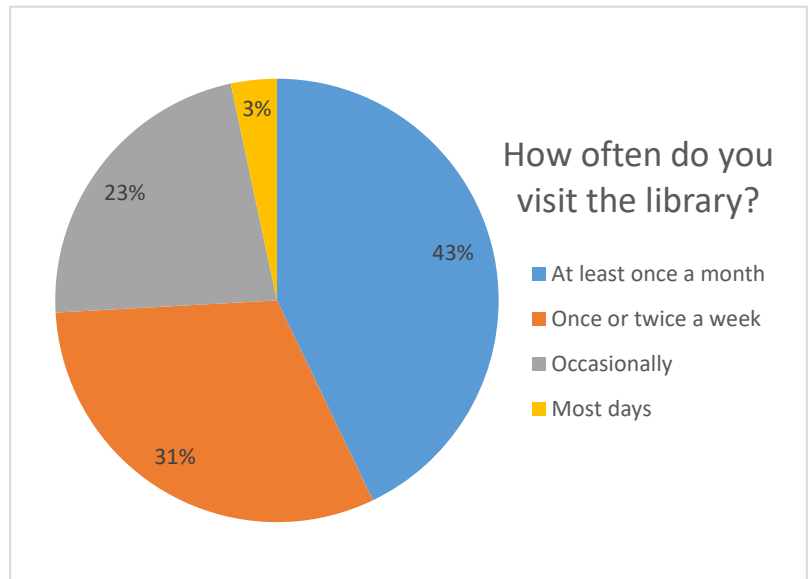
Several comments from both sets of respondents indicated that it is currently difficult to access the library around full-time working hours.

Of the 139 who suggested alternative or improved opening hours:

- 59 suggested more weekend availability;
- 48 more evening opening;
- 6 requested every weekday (where their branch doesn’t currently offer this);
- 5 requested after school;
- 4 noted lunchtime opening across all branches would be beneficial;
- 3 suggested early opening before work or school.

Most important use

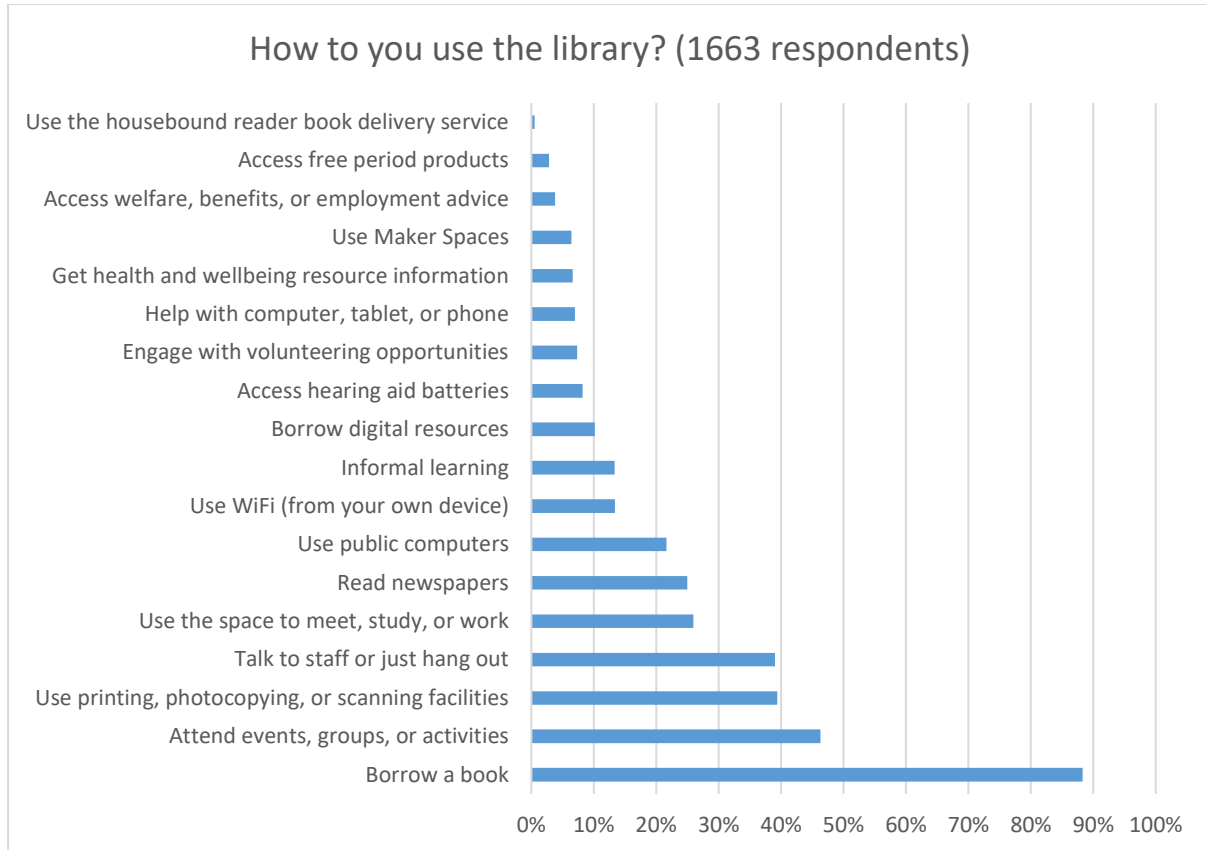
Nearly 90% of visitors who told us what they use the library for said that they borrow a book, indicating that book lending is still the main reason for library visits. Further, when asked which of



¹ This question was multiple choice. Percentages presented here are the proportion of total individual respondents to the question (who may have selected multiple options) and therefore add up to more than 100%.

the options selected was the most important, the majority of respondents indicated that it was borrowing books.

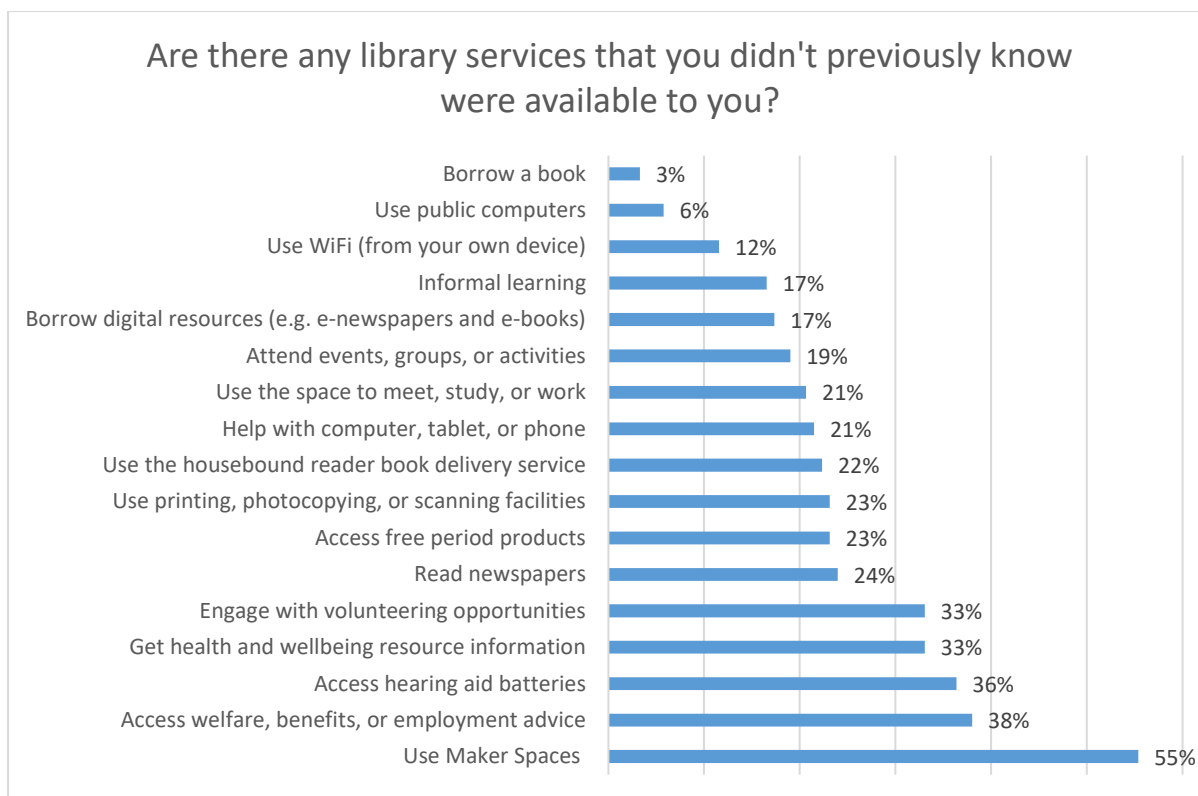
High numbers of people also visited to attend events and social groups; to use printer facilities; and to socialise with staff or spend time in the library. This indicates that visitors use the library as a ‘third place’.²



In comments arising from this question, one respondent noted that “the most important aspect of the library is its community base and connection”, while another explained that “interaction is key”. A number of others also saw the social aspect of libraries as a vital function that has improved their wellbeing and reduced loneliness. In several instances, respondents told us that ‘all’ of the options they had chosen were the most important, with one respondent explaining that “the library is the single most used place my family has attended for more than a decade and all [options selected] are an essential part of my family life.”

Many non-visitors were unaware of the services provided within libraries, particularly Maker Spaces (55% unaware) and access to a range of advice and resources (33 to 38%). There was limited knowledge about other facilities like printing (23%), digital support (21%) and digital resources (17%), and social opportunities (19 to 21%).

² ‘Third places’ are “Community meeting spaces such as cafés, pubs, and village halls which are neither domestic nor work spaces” (“[third place](#).” *Oxford Reference*, accessed 2025).



Some respondents provided comments indicating other reasons for not visiting the library. These included:

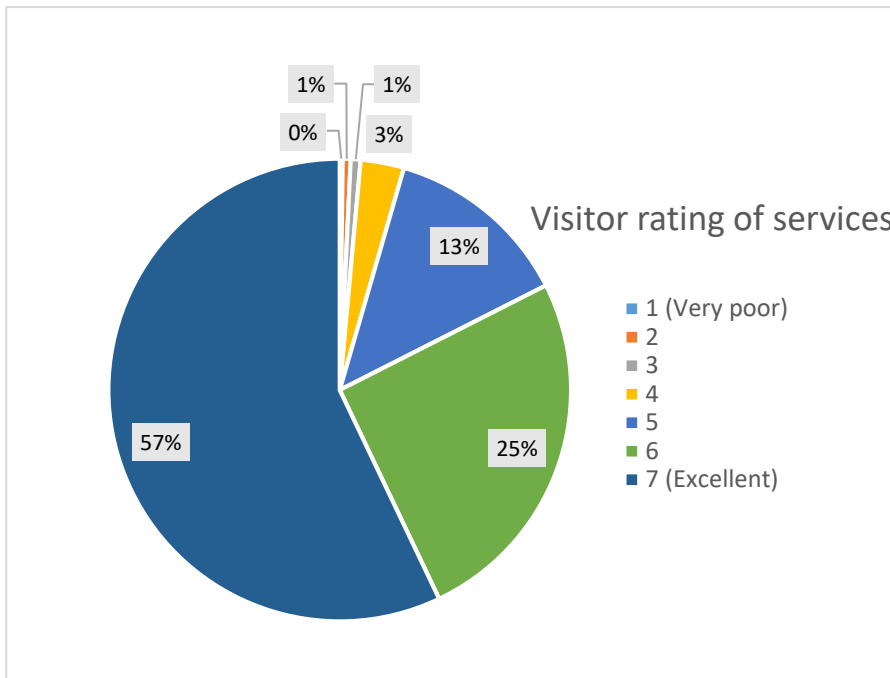
- Having personal access to digital books (8);
- preference for purchasing their own books (3);
- unsuitable times (3);
- concern that reading material was not up-to-date or relevant to their interested (2);
- physical accessibility (1);
- lack of knowledge about services (1);
- needing to take a pet (1);
- perception of being child-oriented (1);
- and not feeling welcome (1).

In comments relating to these questions, some individuals noted that they might use the services in the future, for themselves or for family. One suggested that “the council should do much more to promote” digital offering, “especially amongst the elderly.” Other comments indicate that the services “could become very useful” as they age. There was also acknowledgement that, although some respondents may not need to use the libraries services themselves, “for some people the library is the only way families can get a good supply of books”.

Other respondents suggested that “the library needs to offer something different – book readings, training classes, events, digital café, etc, if it is to remain relevant”. While some felt that “borrowing books from a library is obsolete almost... they provide a much needed community space.”

Value of libraries

When asked to provide a rating for the current service, 82% of the 1449 respondents to the question gave a rating of very good or excellent).



1490 visitors told us whether they thought their local library is valuable to their community. 99% of these (1471) said it was, with 4 people answering 'no' and the remaining 15 'don't know'.

Non-visitors largely agreed. Of the 111 who told us whether they thought their library was valuable to their community, 95 (86%) answered 'Yes'. Fourteen

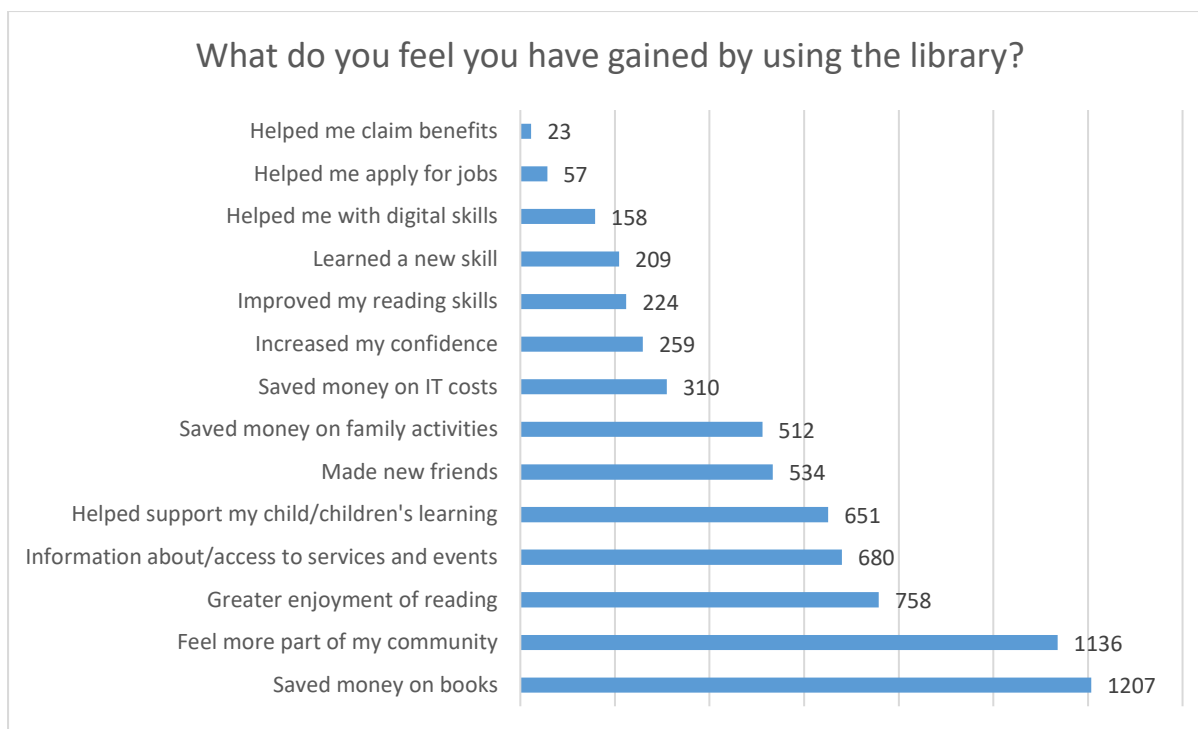
(13%) answered 'No', with the remaining two (2%) answering 'Don't know'.

Although a minority of comments considered libraries to be “outdated and irrelevant”, some of the non-visitors who explained their response echoed comments noted above about the value that their local library brings to other members of their community. One explained that, “just because I don't need to use doesn't mean it's not vital for young and old alike”. The themes of equality was repeated by several others, including one respondent who noted that, the 'digital first approach' can make life harder for those in financial need, and that “Stirling Council should take a lead role in supporting all of its residents to have equitable access to resources. By not doing so we continue to foster a whole range of inequalities.”

Another respondent noted that “Libraries have always been a fantastic public facility, putting reading, learning and resources at the heart of the community. I think they just need some modernising.”

Benefits of library use

1455 respondents who currently use the library answered the question about what they felt they have gained by using the library. The most-selected benefits on the multiple-choice question that asked what visitors gained by using the library were saving money on books (83% of those who answered), and feeling more part of their community (78% of those who answered).



Comments in relation to this question again demonstrated strong feelings about the importance of the library service. For example, one respondent explained that:

“Mental health is improved by knowing I can read books that are expensive if I can't afford to buy them... it makes me feel anything is possible and the atmosphere of a library is encouraging as someone who left school with no higher education the library has helped me achieve multiple goals and has helped my [child] to enjoy reading...”.

Another felt that the library “reminds me that I am still part of a community” when faced with an isolating medical condition. The theme of community came across throughout comments, with many also recognising that libraries can improve equity by giving access to books and, to a lesser extent, services, for other members of a community who may not otherwise be able to access them.

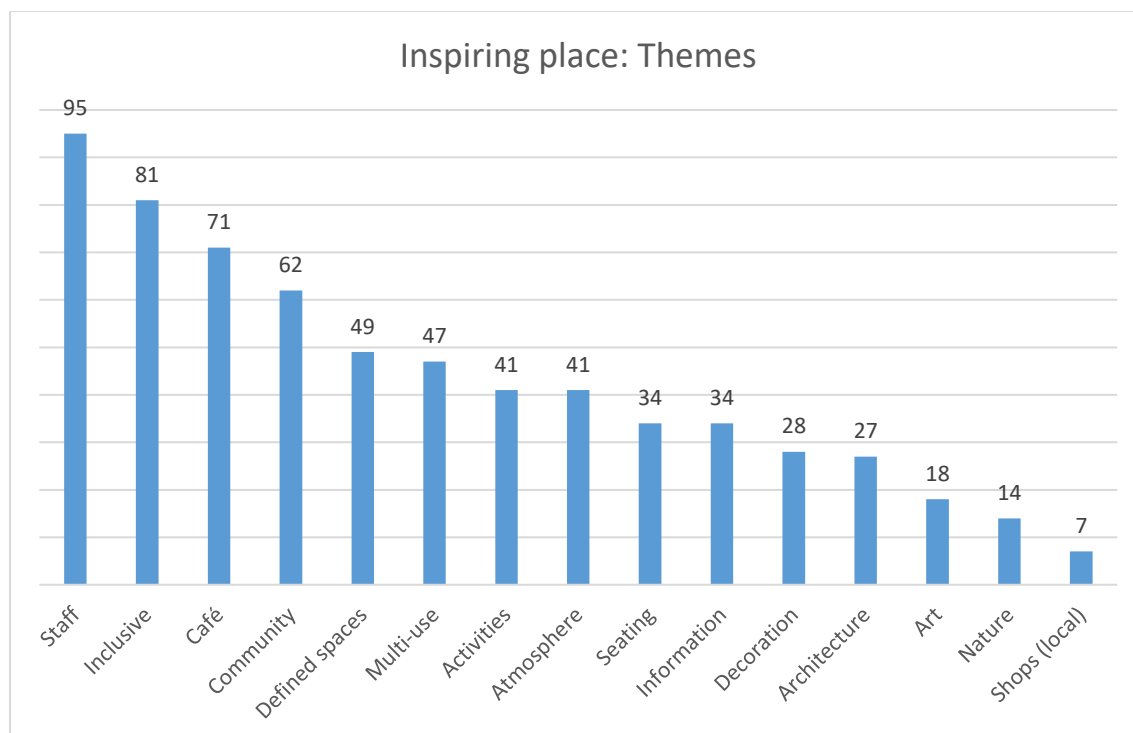
Service design

Inspiring public spaces

We asked participants to give us an example of a public space that they found welcoming, engaging or inspiring. More than 700 respondents provided a response, many of which referred to places like libraries and museums as examples of places that feel welcoming. Among comments that provided explanations for their example, the most significant recurring themes from these comments were staff who are friendly and helpful; an inclusive approach that makes all feel welcome and provides for a range of different groups; and a café space or refreshments available, to allow for space for relaxation and rest amid other activities. Many of these referred to the importance of well-defined zones for different purposes, to ensure the space remained inclusive for all users’ purposes.

Some of the specific places mentioned include existing local libraries; the V&A in Dundee; the Kelvingrove gallery and museum in Glasgow; libraries in Europe, including in Malmo, Oslo, Amsterdam, and the Oodi library in Helsinki; and bookshops including the Book Nook and Topping & Co.

These findings largely reflect comments in other areas of the survey, by highlighting the importance of the social aspects of a space and provision of appropriate facilities and services for a range of purposes and individuals. One respondent, who was one of two individuals to use the example of the GALE centre in Gairloch (which features a community-run café, shop and visitor centre), explained that “the learning point is what can be created when a community that loves the place they love come together to enrich it.” Other comments refer to the new Thomas Graham Library in Strathblane as a local example of this kind of space.



Suggestions for reinvented spaces

The most common response to the question asking for suggestions about ways to reinvent a library space was that there is no need to reinvent: of the 973 people who provided a response/suggestion, 138 (14%) actively stated that they were happy with existing provision and did not feel reinvention was necessary or desirable. One commented that “it’s already perfect. Cosy, welcoming, helpful staff”. Another asked: “Why reinvent something that works? The current library system seems to delivery so much to so many people.”

Other comments suggested areas for development or improvement. Over 110 comments (12%) indicated that they would like to have access to some café services – primarily hot drinks, but with some suggestions for simple food offers. One respondent explained that “a café or tea/coffee facilities might make the libraries more of a destination.” Some respondents suggested that this could be a hot drinks machine only, while others indicated a more service-based café model. A few comments suggested ‘franchising’, where a space within the library was rented by a local café to provide the service. Others suggested that profit from any refreshment sales would support the continuation of the core library services. Particular models used as examples include the Book Nook, Kirkintilloch Library (pre-Covid), and Malmo library. It should be noted that all but one of Stirling’s libraries currently offer tea and coffee (for free in winter) and biscuits, so these suggestions indicate that development of this existing provision into more defined café spaces, or more comprehensive marketing of the service, could be beneficial.

Almost 100 comments raised the potential for a community hub model, with respondents suggesting that library spaces should be available for use by communities for a range of purposes, including socialising, group activities, local information, and co-location of other services. Many of these suggestions were intended to help “make the library a place to linger more rather than just grabbing a book and going”, supporting socialising opportunities “for folks who need company”. Specifically, 80 comments related directly to social opportunities; 72 to meeting spaces or room rentals; 63 to co-locating other services provided by the council or local third-sector organisations; and 55 to offering citizens advice resources. One respondent noted that by having a single location hosting a range of services, including “a library, [local offices], visitor information services, post office, banking hubs... it engages a wider range of people to come into the space as well as reducing cost by sharing the space.”

Ninety-two comments mentioned digital service, including access to printing and photocopying, and digital skills support. This was seen as an important feature of the service because “so many services are being reduced on the basis that everyone has access to IT at home and lots of older and young folk don’t”. Other training and learning opportunities suggested in 54 comments, with one respondent noting that suggesting events like “language classes or art classes. I see really great craft events but they are for children. Adults would like these too!” Other comments suggested “language learning and cultural exchange”, or “climate and biodiversity literacy” to support the net zero transition.

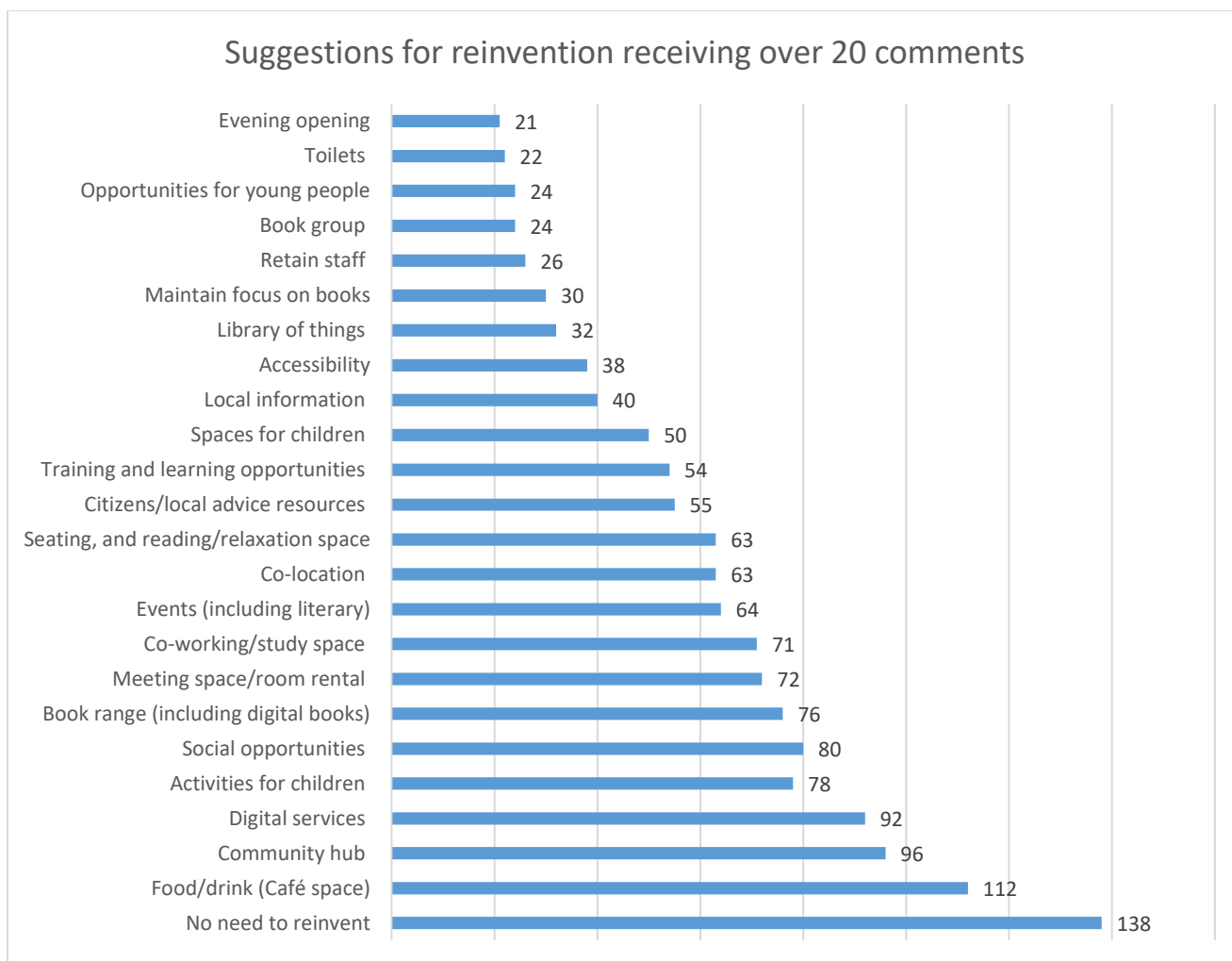
Further popular suggestions were:

- Activities for children (78 comments)
- Improved range of books, including digital books (76 comments)
- Co-working or study space options (71 comments)
- Events, including author events (64 comments)
- Reading/relaxation spaces and improved seating (63 comments)
- Spaces for children and young people (50 comments)
- Local information provision (40 comments)
- Improved accessibility (38 comments)
- A library of things (32 comments).

Many comments indicated a willingness to pay for services such as room rental, co-working space, and events as revenue-raising avenues for the service.

Overall, themes within these suggestion point towards the need for community spaces (as seen also in the question relating to how people have benefitted from using the library) for a range of uses, including social spaces like cafés and relaxation zones; spaces for local groups, learning opportunities; and co-working and study. The idea of co-location for council services as well as for community services that are currently threatened with or have been closed, such as banking or post offices, was also prevalent. This includes provision of local information, citizens’ advice resources, and face-to-face staff interaction. There was also recognition that any changes must be inclusive, and take into consideration physical accessibility needs, as well as additional learning needs.

Non-visitors were more likely than visitors to suggest increased digital services, including a wider range of e-books, design software, and digital support. Opportunities to use library spaces as a community hub with social opportunities and access to other services via a co-location model was also a key suggestion, echoing the theme from visitor responses.



What we should be providing

A second open question asked whether visitors thought there was something Stirling libraries should be providing that they currently do not. There were 398 visitor, and 11 non-visitor responses to this. As before, the most frequent theme from visitors was that there were no specific suggestions, with 134 (34%) explicitly stating this. It is likely that a number of those who did not answer the question at all also felt this, and chose not to answer on that basis.

For those who did provide suggestions, as in the reinvention question themes point towards community spaces, especially for learning opportunities; social café spaces; social groups, and co-working and study spaces. One comment summarised this as “more occasions for interaction between citizens of Stirling.”

The idea of co-location for council services and other community services also surfaced here, seen both in the ‘co-location’ and ‘community hub’ themes. One respondent suggested “there are many community or health services or information that could be delivered via libraries. This might fit with Scottish Government ambitions to provide more preventative and wrap-around support.”

The ‘wider range of books’ theme came out more strongly in this question than in the reinvention questions, highlighting that book lending is still considered to be at the heart of libraries’ purpose. This related to digital books as well as physical books, and to reference materials. Comments here and elsewhere pointed to the equality aspect of libraries in providing books and spaces for those who may not have the means to purchase books or services for themselves.

Eleven non-visitors answered the question about what is currently missing that should be provided. Digital services expansion and co-location were both mentioned multiple times.

What Stirling libraries should be providing (all respondents)		
No specific suggestion	134	31%
Classes or learning for adults	24	6%
Wider range of books	23	5%
Café space	22	5%
Co-location with other council and community services	21	5%
Events – including literary events, after-school events, and ASN events	20	5%
Community hub	19	4%
Social groups	16	4%
Toilet	14	3%
Accessibility	14	3%
Co-working or study spaces	14	3%
Advertisement of services	14	3%
Rooms to hire	13	3%
Groups for children/young people	9	2%
Improved opening hours	9	2%
Advice services	8	2%
Library of things	8	2%
Printing (including WiFi printing)	6	1%
Tourist and local information	6	1%
Digital books and services/expansion	6	1%
Exhibition or creative spaces	5	1%
Out-of-hours service	5	1%
Membership	4	1%
Volunteer opportunities	4	1%
Academic reference	3	1%
Catalogue improvement	3	1%
Recommendations	3	1%

Where we could reduce spending

1617 respondents answered the multiple-choice question asking where they would reduce spending first, if tasked with making reductions. The highest two answers were print newspapers, which was selected by 52% of respondents, and Maker Spaces, which was selected by 45% of respondents. All other options were significantly less popular.

If you had to reduce spending on library services, which area would you reduce first? (1617 respondents)		
Newspapers (print)	839	52%
Maker Spaces	735	45%
Digital resources	235	15%
Cultural events and activities for adults	190	12%
Other	154	10%
Mobile library services	149	9%

Access to free Wi-Fi	128	8%
The number of library buildings	112	7%
Access to public computers	103	6%
Housebound reader book delivery service	82	5%
Range of books to borrow	77	5%
The number of library staff	51	3%
Events and activities for children and families	43	3%

Respondents who selected 'other' often said that "all hold value," with many more describing the whole range as "vital". While some suggested reducing opening hours, others suggesting longer opening hours. One comment added that, instead of reducing services "it would be better to generate an income".

Other co-location options

Similar themes arose in response to the question about what additional services people may use if they were provided alongside the library. Of the 1366 respondents to this question, 986 (72%) said they would attend adult education classes or sessions; 948 (69%) said they would attend cultural activities; and 869 (64%) said they would use bookable spaces for meetings or community events. As in previous questions, this highlights that many respondents would like libraries to function as a hub for social and local opportunities and events. Other suggestions, some of which reflect suggestions made elsewhere, included:

- Travel and tourism services, including tickets and bus passes, and tourist information;
- Incorporating services under threat elsewhere such as banks and post offices;
- Co-working or study spaces for those who work from home or for students;
- Offices for local authority staff from other departments or third-sector organisations.

In some cases, co-locating services into one physical space can help save money. Are there other services you might access if they were provided alongside the library service?			
	Number of selections	% question respondents (1366)	% total respondents (2185)
Adult education classes/sessions	986	72%	45%
Cultural activities	948	69%	43%
Bookable spaces for meetings or community events	869	64%	40%
Access to health-based services	679	50%	31%
Welfare, debt, or citizen advice support services	556	41%	25%
Employment advice and support	420	31%	19%
Housing information services support	333	24%	15%
Other	61	4%	3%

Restructuring options

A high number of respondents (985, or 45%) chose not to answer this question.³ This question also elicited a high number of comments (n=634) about the suggested options, many of which indicate

³ This question was deliberately non-compulsory, to enable people to opt out of responding.

opposition to any of the ideas proposed and express support for continued provision at the current level.

Different ways we could restructure the services we provide		
No answer	985	45%
Keeping the same number of physical libraries, with fewer staff and more self-service options	693	32%
Fewer physical libraries, but those retained being fully-staffed, with improved facilities and opening hours	298	14%
Fewer physical libraries, and providing library services within other spaces, e.g. community centres	142	6%
Fewer physical libraries, partly-staffed, and self-service options available when staff are not present	57	3%
Keeping online library services only	10	0%
Total	2185	100%

Of the available options, the most-selected was to retain the number of libraries under a more self-service model (selected by 32% of respondents). It should be noted that many of those who selected this option also commented that it was a reluctant choice, and they would not actively choose to reduce the number of staff. This option was more than twice as popular as the option to have fewer, fully staffed libraries with improved facilities and opening hours (14%).

The most prominent theme arising from the comments relating to the question about restructuring was the importance of libraries to communities and to community identity and support. As a result, many of the comments were opposed to reductions in the number of buildings. One respondent explained that their “reason for choosing this option is that I think it's important to have libraries in as many places as possible so they can really connect with the local communities they are in.”

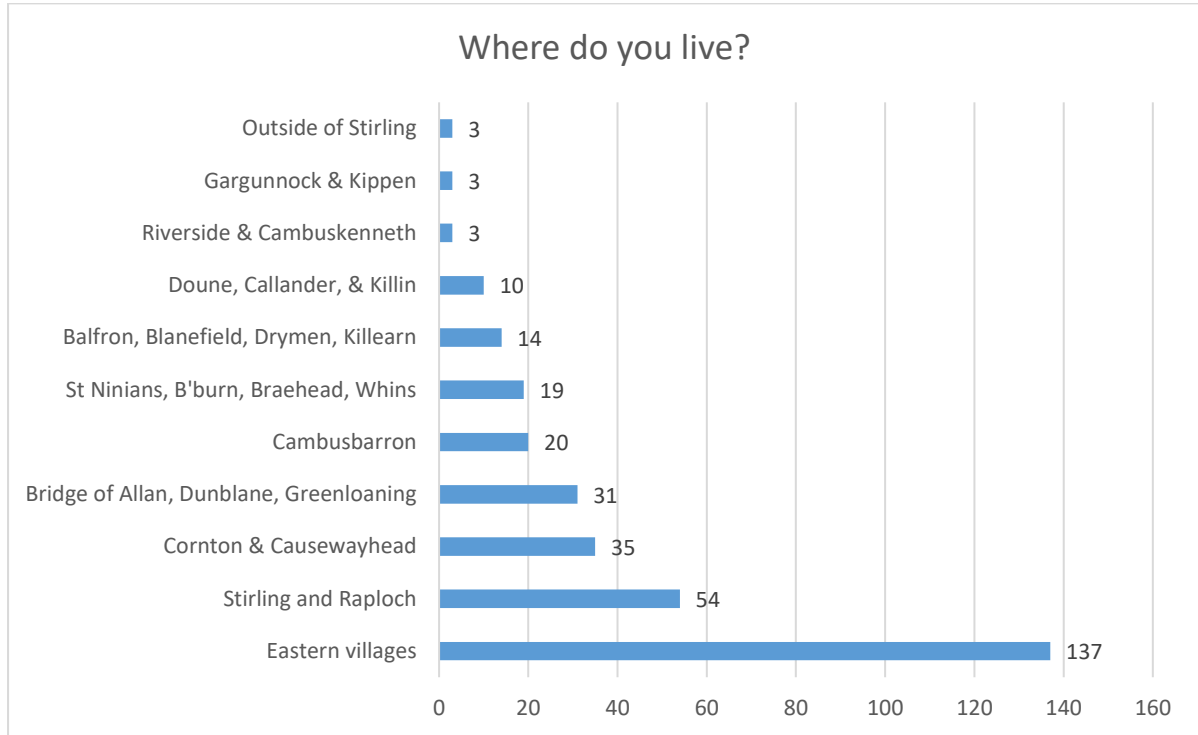
Many comments also noted the role that librarians play in facilitating access to library services and information, so likewise opposed reductions to the number of staff. For example, one respondent noted that “for many older people, human contact with library staff probably makes their day”, and another felt that “your staff are your most valuable resource”.

Some comments note that closures would be particularly detrimental in rural areas without efficient public transport links to another service. For instance, one respondent felt that “libraries are a vital lifeline for limiting rural isolation and improving mental health. Physical libraries need to be priorities.” Another stated that “in rural communities, families and the older generation need a place of gathering, interaction and community that’s warm, safe, supportive and free.” The issue of social isolation and support for learning (both for children and young people, and for adults) was raised multiple times, with comments noting that closures would have negative impacts on these vulnerable groups.

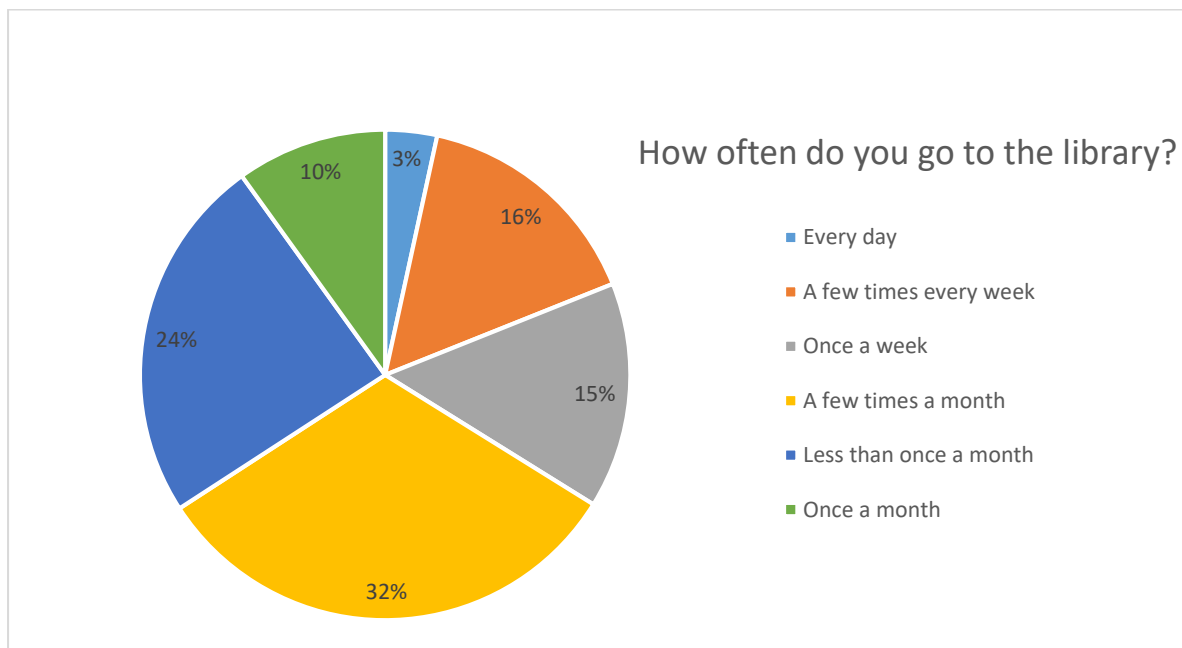
There was again some support for the community hub model, whereby one building could be used for multiple services including a library, as well as (for example) other council services and officers, health services, community rooms, or educational services.

Analysis of children’s survey responses

In contrast to adult respondents, who primarily identified their closest libraries as Dunblane, Bridge of Allan, and central Stirling, the highest response rate for children and young people was from Plean (n=83). Fallin was the second-most common location for respondents with 37 responses, followed by Cornton (33 responses) and Stirling (32 responses). Almost all of the responses (82 of 83) from Plean were received offline.



The highest proportion of children and young people told us that they go to the library a few times a month, with 31% of respondents indicating this.



297 children told us who they normally go to the library with. This was a multiple-choice question. 59% of those who answered said that they go with 'mum, dad, or carer'; 30% (n=89) said that they go with their school; and 19% each with siblings or friends. Thirty-nine of those who selected 'school' *did not* also select mum, dad, or carer, indicating that school visits are their primary way of accessing the library.

323 people (96% of all respondents) told us how they feel when they go to the library. 84% of these selecting 'Very happy' (n=152) or 'happy' (n=121). A further 14% (n=46) said they feel 'Neutral', and one selected 'A bit unhappy'.

Similar numbers of respondents found their library welcoming, with 289 (86% of all respondents, or 99% of question respondents) agreeing. 42 people (13%) did not answer the question, and four individuals *disagreed* that their library is welcoming.

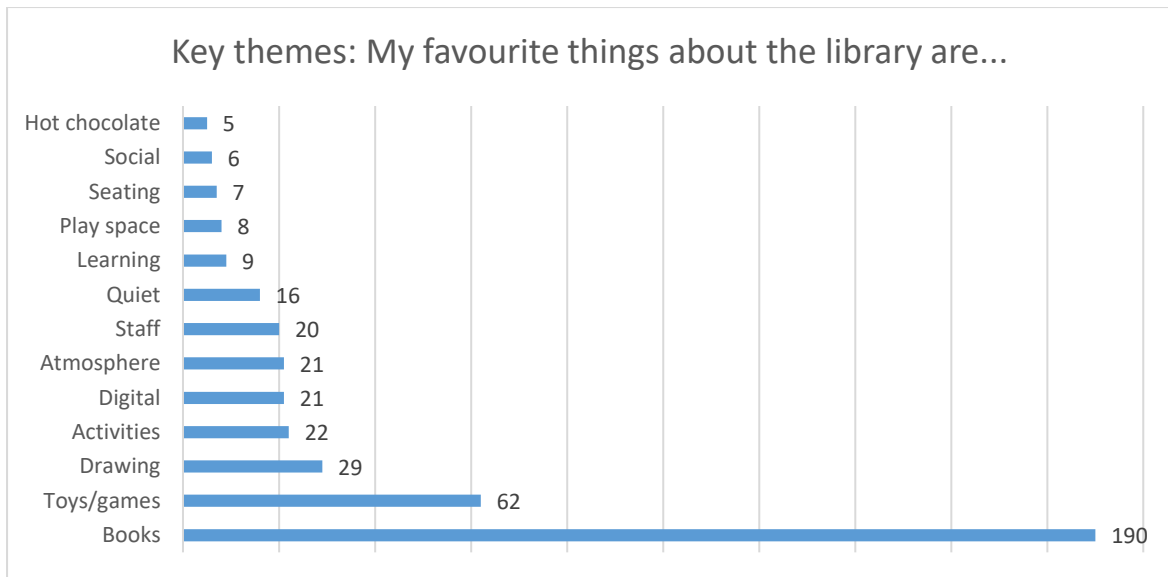
Slightly fewer respondents felt that they could find what they want at the library, with 257 (77% of all respondents, or 91% question respondents) agreeing, and 25 (7% of all respondents, 9% of question respondents) disagreeing. 53 did not answer. This is reflected by some of the qualitative comments (explored in more detail below) which suggested increasing the library's stock of specific kinds of titles, or ranges for particular groups of children and young people.

Lower numbers of respondents answered the question about whether they like coming to events at the library, with 69 respondents (21%) not answering, many because they had not attended events. Of those who answered, 197 said they liked coming to events at the library (74% of question respondents), and 69 (23% question respondents) disagreed.⁴

When asked about what their favourite things about the library are, 283 responded. 67% (n=190) of these respondents referred to books in their answers. These comments included sub-themes such as the ability to choose from a selection; opportunity to access books that they would not otherwise have; and having time to read. One respondent said that their favourite thing about the library was that "they have so many books to choose from", with others agreeing that "picking out books" and getting to take them home was their favourite part. Another respondent liked being able to "read quietly without any distractions".

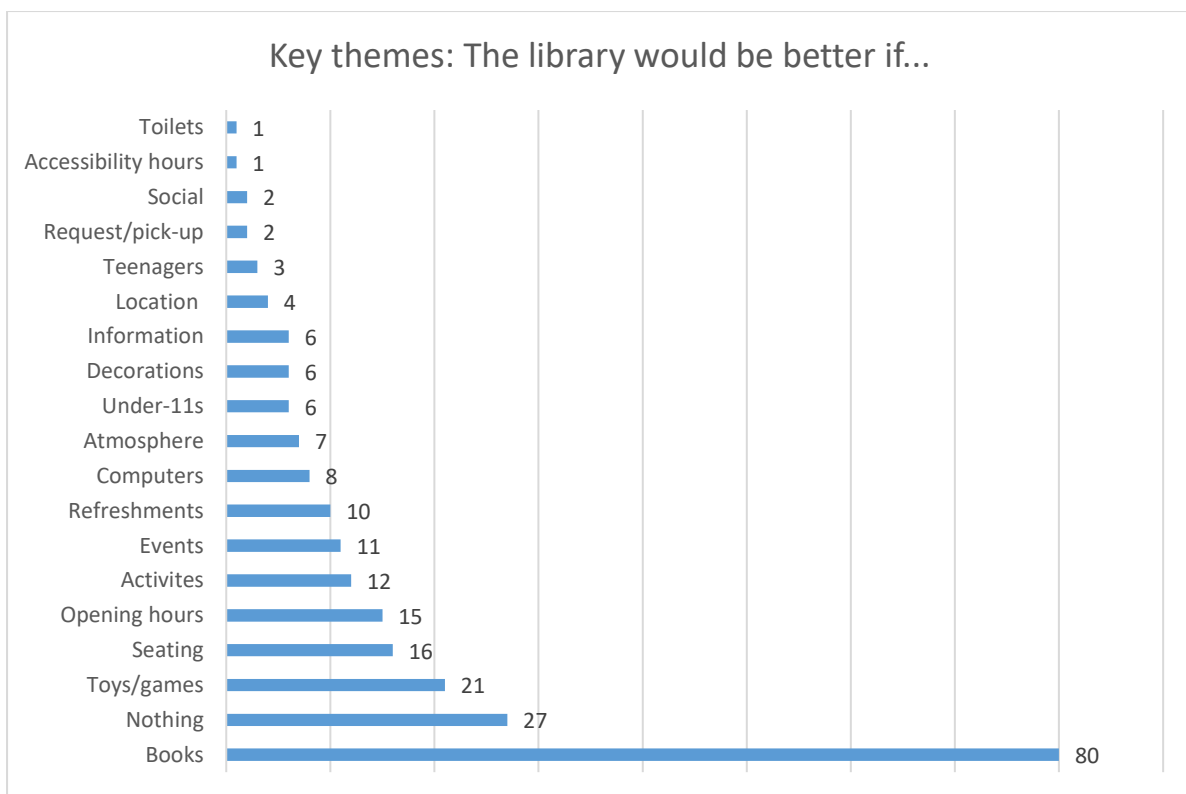
The second-most common theme was access to toys and games (including Lego, puzzles, and PS4/5 games), with 62 respondents (22%) including this in their answer. Other key repeated themes were drawing, activities, access to computers, the atmosphere, staff, and the quiet space provided by the library. One person said that their favourite aspect of the library was that they could "have some [calm] time", which "make[s] me [feel] happy", a sentiment echoed in many other comments.

⁴ It should be noted that some of those giving a thumbs down also indicated that they had not attended events before, but because it is not clear that this was lack of opportunity or actively deciding not to attend because of perceived enjoyment, these responses have been included here as a negative response.



221 respondents went on to offer suggestions about how the library could be better. Books emerged again as the key theme, with many respondents suggesting specific series, genres, or ranges for particular age or interest groups. Some also suggested that it would be better if “it was easier to get to different sections, like if topics were divided”, indicating the need to divide children’s sections as well as adults’.

As in the adult’s survey, a number of responses also indicated that the library already met their needs, and that nothing was needed to improve it, with one saying that it is already the “best it can be!” Beyond this, toys and games, seating, and improved opening hours were also common themes for improvement.



A second improvement-based question asked what would help children go to the library more. As in previous questions, books and opening hours were key themes. One respondent explained that “most of the opening times are during school time”, and so getting to the library was difficult. This echoes concerns raised in the adult’s survey about accessing the library outwith a standard working week. Many respondents also felt that they did not have enough time to visit the library around school and other social commitments.

Having a library nearby “close to my house” was also an important factor for supporting attendance. Finally, as for adults, the theme of refreshment (hot chocolate, drinks, and snacks) emerged as a potential improvement.

