

Results of public consultation

The Mobile Library Service in Devon

The mobile library consultation concluded on the 30th November 2013 and a total of 1,585 completed user surveys were received.

In addition 11 town or parish councils submitted a response.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the consultation and who have expressed a desire to see the continuation of a service which helps to maintain a sense of independence and community in rural locations.

Proposal One to withdraw 69 stops

These stops currently used by three or fewer regular users were proposed to be withdrawn in line with existing mobile library service policy.

- Total number of responses from these stops: 62
- Number of borrowers who will use another stop: 19
- Number of borrowers who will use a static library instead: 15
- Number of borrowers requesting Home Library Service instead: 9
- Number of borrowers who state they will not use the Library Service in any form: 19

It is now confirmed that 65 stops will be withdrawn from service from April 2014.

Mobile library stops at Capton, Holcombe Rogus, Tweenmoors Cross and Zeal Monachorum will be retained due to a regular increase in usage.

Proposal Two To reduce the frequency of all mobile library visits from two weekly to four weekly.

- Total number of responses from these stops: 1,523
- Number of borrowers who will continue to use the service based on its new rota: 1,472
- Number of borrowers who will use a static library instead: 6
- Number of borrowers who state they will not use the Library Service in any form: 45

It is now confirmed that from April 2014 all the remaining mobile library stops will be visited every four weeks. New timetables will be available to customers in February 2014.

We are very grateful for the many additional comments, concerns and suggestions received from users of the mobile library service and we have produced the following frequently asked questions overleaf to address those queries.

Withdrawal of mobile library stop

Q. My stop is being withdrawn, when will that happen?

A. The current service will continue to mid March 2014 during which time our drivers will talk to you about alternative ways of accessing library services.

Q. I have requested to use the Home Library service, what will happen next?

A. Our drivers will give you more information about the Home Library Service, delivered on our behalf by volunteers from the Royal Voluntary Service. Once you are registered, a volunteer will visit you at home at your convenience to explain the next steps and to ensure that you are able to continue to receive a regular selection of books / spoken word.

Proposed change of service frequency from two weekly to four weekly

Q. When will the new four weekly schedules begin?

A. The new timetables based on a mobile visit every four weeks will start from Monday 31st March 2014. Timetables will be published in February and given out by the mobile library drivers.

Q. Will we be able to take extra books to last the longer period between visits?

A. Yes there will be no upper limit to the number of books or spoken word items that you are able to borrow from the mobile library.

Q. If customers borrow more items won't the mobile library stock be depleted?

A. We will ensure that sufficient stock is available and that the stock is regularly refreshed. We will also ensure that stock is regularly swapped between vehicles to give customers a wider choice.

Q. What happens when the mobile library breaks down or my visit coincides with a maintenance week or bank holiday – we could be 8 weeks without a service?

A. We understand this is a genuine concern from our customers and as we cannot guarantee that a vehicle is not involved in a breakdown, we now plan to retain a fifth vehicle in service to be used as a spare vehicle. This will enable us to continue to deliver a service on planned and unplanned off- road periods.

Q. Could we be reminded in advance when the mobile library is due to call?

A. We are considering different ways of reminding customers when the mobile library is due to call including the possibility of working with local radio to help publicise the service.

Q. The mobile library visit provides a real social event in our village – this will be lost if the service is reduced.

A. We do recognise the social importance of the mobile library service especially in very rural areas. We do encourage communities to host additional activities around the visit of the library such as a coffee morning, lunch club, reading group etc and in drawing up the new four weekly rotas we will endeavour wherever possible to ensure that our visits coincide with these activities.

Q. The consultation survey mentioned Devon Libraries e-book service – what is this?

- A. If you own an e-reader, tablet or smartphone and have access to the internet you may be able to borrow digital titles from the library service. If you would like to find out more about this service, please ask your mobile library driver for a leaflet.

Q. I understand that if I am unable to use the mobile library, I may be eligible for the Home Library Service – how does this work?

- A. If you are unable to use a static or mobile library because of illness or due to advanced age or disability then the Library Service in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Service may be able to deliver books and recorded sound to your door.

If you would like to find out more about this service, please ask your mobile library driver for a leaflet.

Q. Many people in my village seem unaware of the mobile library service – why don't you publicise more?

- A. We work very closely with individual parish councils to ask them to help publish the library times in local parish newsletters / magazines and to display posters around their communities. As previously mentioned, we will also be contacting local radio and press to ask them to consider helping to advertise the service. If you or your neighbours would be willing to display a laminated poster, please give your name and contact details to the mobile library driver.