

REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY

Policy Statement

Context

1. This document sets out the policy for the provision of reference and information services by Wiltshire Libraries. This policy complies with Wiltshire Council corporate goals and national agendas such as the national Information and Digital Library Offers.
2. The reference and information service will enable libraries to:
 - Respond to customer requests by providing accurate and timely information.
 - Provide resources for those customers who wish to access self-service information.
3. Wiltshire library services will be planned and managed so that they provide equal access, especially to those with protected characteristics in accord with the Equalities Act 2010 including age, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion and belief or sexual orientation.

Access

4. Customers should be able to access reference and information Services in the following ways:
 - In-person at static libraries and through the network of mobile library stops across the county.
 - Remotely by telephone, email and through the web-based library services.
5. The major reference collections are held at Salisbury and Trowbridge libraries. All other libraries are able to refer enquiries to them if necessary.
6. Libraryenquiries@wiltshire.gov.uk is the address provided for all email communication with the library service. This should be used for all reference and information enquiries submitted by email.

7. Wiltshire Libraries will seek to take advantage of any new technologies to enable access to library information services as they become viable.

Reference collections

8. Staff at libraries will answer enquiries locally when possible and will refer enquiries which are beyond the scope of local resources or knowledge to Salisbury or Trowbridge libraries or another suitable source.
9. Reference stock will be maintained primarily through the purchase of annual standing order publications.

Resources

Hard copy

10. The majority of the hard copy reference material will be held at Salisbury and Trowbridge libraries. Other town libraries will provide a quick reference collection and significant reference resources such as encyclopaedias, atlases, council information and consultation documents. Smaller libraries will house a small quick reference collection.
11. A limited range of reference books will be made available at all libraries through the provision of a list of core titles.
12. Hard copy collections will be difficult to maintain in future as the number of hard copy titles published declines. This will however be offset by the provision of online resources.

Online resources

13. Online resources can be used at any location where Internet access is available and usually by an unlimited number of customers at a time. Online resources are fully searchable.
14. Online resources are available to all holders of a Wiltshire library card either in-library from a Wiltshire Libraries Online computer or from any home, school or work computer with Internet access.

15. Customers and staff are encouraged to use the Internet gateway (www.cyberLibrary.org.uk) to access the wide range of high quality information which is available free of charge. This access is augmented by the range of online subscription services which are free to customers at the point of use. These will be provided in those subject areas where there is inadequate free provision.

Circulation of reference books

16. Superseded reference books are not transferred to other libraries at the end of their currency. Superseded reference books other than those containing legal or medical information may be transferred to lending stock at the discretion of the Senior Information Librarian.

Magazines and Periodicals

17. Libraries provide magazines and newspapers for both information and leisure purposes.
18. Superseded newspapers and magazines should not generally be circulated to other libraries. Limited exceptions may be made where the cost of the title is too high to warrant multiple copies.

Leaflets and posters

19. Although leaflets and posters are valuable sources of local information, libraries only have limited space for leaflets and posters. Provision is made in accordance with **Policy statement: Display of notices, posters and leaflets in libraries.**

Maps

20. All libraries should hold a street atlas for Wiltshire and where appropriate street atlases for adjacent counties.
21. Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham libraries offer a map printing service for planning applications for a fee.

Government publications

22. A collection of current Acts of Parliament will be maintained at Salisbury and Trowbridge libraries but, for other current

government publications, online access is available through the Wiltshire Libraries Online computers. Relevant resources are signposted from the cyberLibrary Internet gateway.

Study Space

23. Study space is available where possible in libraries. Wi-Fi for online study is provided in all libraries.

Good practice in enquiry work

Staff and volunteers

24. There will be an active policy of referral from all libraries to Salisbury and Trowbridge where an enquiry cannot be answered locally. Where appropriate, users will be referred on to other specialist organisations that are better able to supply the information required.
25. Library staff are able to help customers access information online using the online resources and other reputable websites.
26. Smaller libraries operated in partnership with community library volunteers are able to refer reference and information enquiries to their linked library or to Salisbury and Trowbridge libraries.

Training

27. To ensure that an excellent service is provided when handling enquiries all permanent front-line staff will receive enquiry skills training as part of the Information Skills training programme.

Abby Hoath
Information Services Manager
December 2014

Wiltshire Council
 Where everybody matters