

Appendix 1 – Our Vision for Manchester Libraries 2023 (Draft)



OUR VISION FOR Manchester Libraries 2023



The possibilities are endless
manchester.gov.uk/libraries

Manchester Libraries

the beating heart of
our communities



Manchester Libraries and Archives Service deliver leisure, cultural, learning and information services through a network of neighbourhood libraries, community partnership libraries and the internationally renowned, world-class Central Library – one of the most visited public libraries in the country – HMP Manchester Prison library and Books to Go for housebound people.

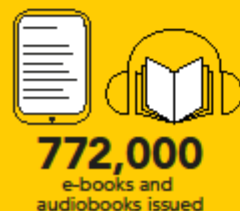
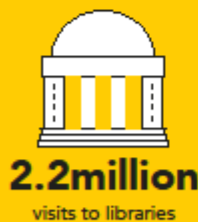
People are at the heart of everything at Manchester Libraries. Each library helps to make its neighbourhood a vibrant place and serves the whole community, offering a warm welcome to all. Our high-quality buildings have received investment of several million pounds in recent years and are high-quality buildings that enable a fantastic service to be delivered.

We want everyone to get the most from our libraries. In recent months people have been facing a cost-of-living crisis that will last for months and possibly years to come. Libraries are helping Manchester residents more than ever. They provide welcoming spaces that improve people's lives by offering a free service for all in the community, as well as a warm welcome, support and resources. We have recently abolished fines for late returned books.

There are so many reasons to use libraries, including:

- A vibrant, exciting and diverse events programme for all ages
- Book stock that promotes reading for pleasure and literacy
- High-quality Internet, Wi-Fi and printing at each library
- A skilled workforce, dedicated to offering an excellent service to customers.

Manchester Libraries in 2022





*The library is a place
of refuge to me – a world
of knowledge, with the
latest books to read and
fantastic events.*

Forum Library customer



Our priorities for the next five years

Our Manchester, Our People

Our libraries will continue to focus on people, helping to make our neighbourhoods great places to live and Manchester a world-class city.

We will:

- Be neighbourhood venues where local residents are welcome, can talk to people and be helped by skilled hospitable staff
- Provide a warm welcome to all, helping people to live side by side, and be Libraries of Sanctuary
- Be fully accessible, increase opening hours through Open+, and deliver books to people who are housebound
- Support people's skills and job prospects
- Increase engagement with young people
- Support local businesses and start-ups through the BIPC and other projects
- Implement the Green Libraries Manifesto, contributing to Zero Carbon
- Continue to invest in high-quality buildings – refurbishing libraries and outreach venues
- Support safer and stronger communities and thriving neighbourhoods
- Tackle poverty and social exclusion, combating disadvantage.



The library stops time and noise, broadens my mind, and it makes me explore and discover new things. It excites my little boy and he feels happy. I love my library because it's always there.

Central Library customer

Literacy and reading

Reading remains at the core of our library service. Literacy is key to life chances.

We will:

- Run Read Manchester as a National Literacy Trust Hub
- Provide access to books for all ages, in all formats, including ebooks and books in different languages
- Ensure that libraries and archives stock represents our diverse communities
- Run Storytimes in every library
- Manage Bookstart
- Engage with schools, running class visits
- Run the Summer Reading Challenge
- Gift thousands of books to children
- Support book clubs
- Host book festivals, eg. Chorlton Book Festival, Manchester Literature Festival
- Work with the Shannon Trust to improve prisoners' literacy
- Work in partnership with Read Easy, improving residents' literacy.

Digital inclusion

Our libraries provide free, high-quality access to Wi-Fi and the internet, and help residents with their skills and confidence.

We will:

- Provide drop-in and structured learning and skills sessions
- Support residents with specific initiatives, eg. parking permits, voter ID
- Provide higher-level skills sessions through the Business and IP Centre
- Seek opportunities to provide free data and devices for residents
- Continue to provide and improve services and resources online that are available 24/7.

Culture and creativity

Our libraries are neighbourhood cultural and creative spaces where people can enjoy creative activities and events on their doorstep.

We will:

- Programme vibrant, diverse and exciting events, accessible to all ages, including International Mother Language Day, Festival of Libraries and Fun Palaces.
- Encourage and foster creativity and participation for all ages
- Widen access and opportunities by partnering flagship organisations, such as Factory International, HOME, and Royal Exchange Theatre
- Run Holiday Activity Fund sessions
- Host exhibitions
- Bring archives and local history to neighbourhood libraries and Central Library
- Present Library Live, Central Library's cultural and creative programme.

Health and wellbeing

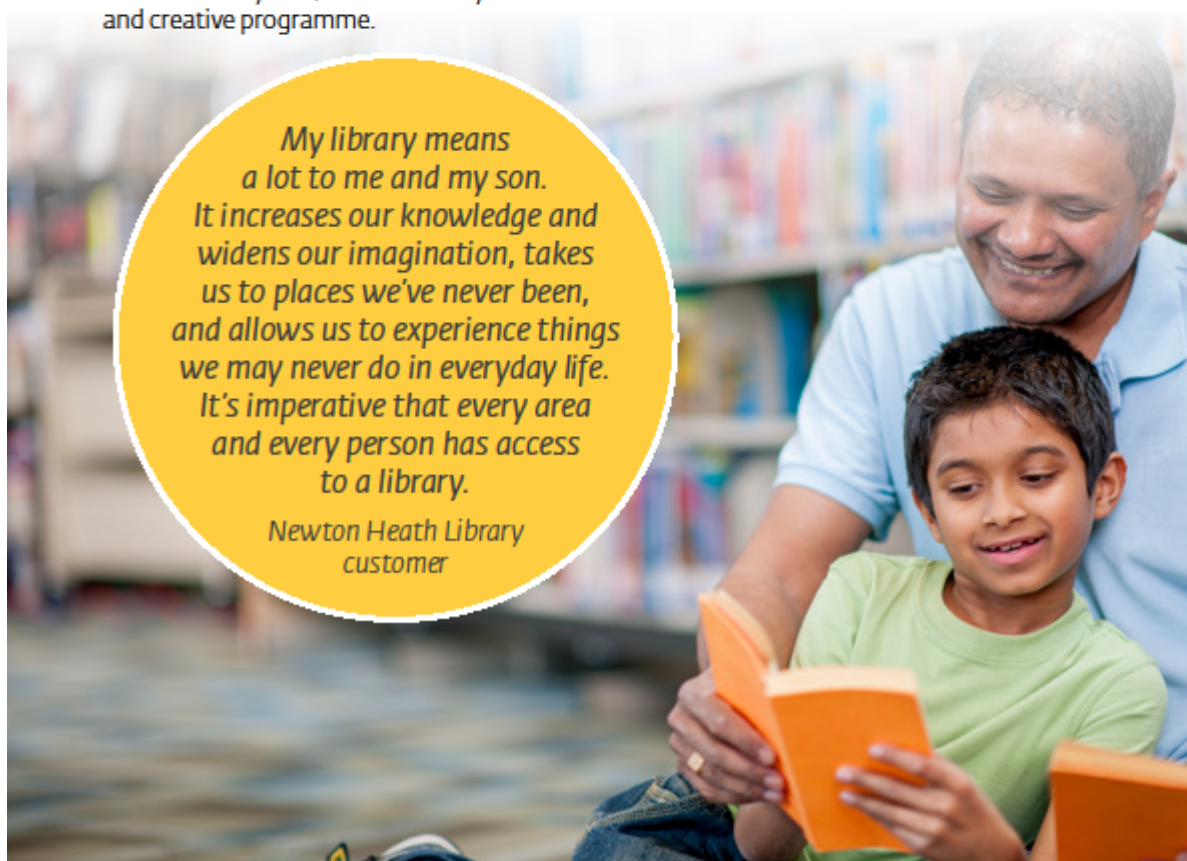
Using our libraries makes people feel better.

We will:

- Encourage people to use our safe, warm, free spaces, helping to reduce loneliness and make people feel better
- Be Age Friendly libraries
- Run social clubs, reading groups, coffee mornings
- Provide access to health information in the library and online and through signposting
- Provide and promote health books and books that improve wellbeing
- Host organisations that support people's health
- Increase the number of volunteers
- Be a trusted ear to residents
- Increase people's pride in their local area through archives and local history.

*My library means
a lot to me and my son.
It increases our knowledge and
widens our imagination, takes
us to places we've never been,
and allows us to experience things
we may never do in everyday life.
It's imperative that every area
and every person has access
to a library.*

Newton Heath Library
customer





"Manchester Libraries are extremely popular, well-used and well-loved, and we take pride in helping to make people's lives better. We will continue to improve our services in the future, including our online resources."

Councillor John Hacking – Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure, and
Councillor Adele Douglas – Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

If you have any questions about this vision, or any of its contents, or want to make suggestions or comments on how we can improve further, email libraries@manchester.gov.uk