

Cambridgeshire Libraries Stock Policy

Updated December 2022

The stock within libraries is both our greatest resource and one of our greatest expenditures. This policy document sets out how Cambridgeshire Libraries manages its stock from the initial selection of a title to withdrawal, in order to gain maximum return from that investment in meeting the needs of the citizens and communities of Cambridgeshire.

This policy document is based on the template recommended by The Chartered Institute of Library and Informational Professionals. It will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of the service planning process and in order to inform the annual stock purchasing plan.

1. National Policies and Guidelines

The following list provides the legal and policy framework within which this stock policy operates:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- Copyright and related rights Regulations 1996
- Public Order Act 1986
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Representation of the People Act 2000
- Freedom of Expression: Article 10 ECHR
- Copyright (VIP) Act 2002
- Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion 9 ECHR
- Terrorism Act 2006
- Obscene Publications Act 1959 (and amendments)
- Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991
- Incitement to Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- EC Directive 77/62 (public procurement)
- Blasphemy Common Law
- EU Copyright Directive 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment 2000)
- Sale of Goods Act
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Local Government Act 1988
- The Children Act 1989
- Video Recording Act 1984
- CILIP guidelines: What makes a Good Library Service
- Copyright Design and Patents Act 1988

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- MLA Guidance Controversial Materials 2009
- BPI/Library Association Agreement 1994
- The Copyright and Rights in Performances (Research, Education, Libraries and Archives) Regulations 2014

Other factors include:

- Libraries Connected <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/> (formerly the Society of Chief Librarians) Universal Library Offers and other national initiatives such as Libraries from Home
- the impact of disposal re: sustainability and climate change

2. Local Policies and Strategies

Cambridgeshire County Council's Business Plan is renewed every year. Our ambition is for people in Cambridgeshire to live independently and safely within strong and inclusive communities, and with networks of support that they can call on.

To achieve this, the following four objectives have been set as priority outcomes for the people of Cambridgeshire:

- A good quality of life for everyone
- Thriving places for people to live
- The best start for Cambridgeshire's children
- Zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

In addition, three service delivery principles underpin the way we work:

- Delivering high quality effective and efficient services
- Listening and being responsive to the needs of Cambridgeshire's communities
- Working in partnership to achieve a shared vision for Cambridgeshire

The [Cambridgeshire County Council website provides more information about the current business plan](#).

3. Cambridgeshire Libraries is part of the Council's Cultural and Community Services

Our vision and objectives:

Cambridgeshire Libraries aims to be a universal service that serves people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, in order to enable individuals and communities to enhance their quality of life and achieve their potential:

- by opening up the worlds of
 - information, knowledge and learning
 - ideas, inspiration, creativity and imagination
 - reading for interest, discovery and enjoyment
- in order to further the achievement of the following outcomes:
 - enabling personal development and lifelong learning;
 - fostering community development and social inclusion; promoting cultural enrichment

The vision for the future of the Service is:

- libraries which are accessible, welcoming and easy to use, and part of the community
- staff who are knowledgeable, friendly and positive
- a wide range of inspiring books and resources, available how and when needed with easy-to-use systems of access
- a 24x7 service for online access to books and information
- a service that puts customers in touch with people and organisations and one that gives opportunities to participate, learn new skills, volunteer and meet people

The current Libraries Service Plan supports this vision by improving and expanding our work within communities, specifically:

- Improving the Digital Engagement for the Service
- Business and IP Centre growth in Cambridgeshire

- Help develop the audience of The Library Presents, as it moves to its Digital offer
- Develop and maintain volunteering in the service

4. Stock Management Policy Statement

Stock management is the buying and delivering of all library materials to the community. The policy aims to provide a clear and consistent approach in all libraries.

When selecting stock, we aim to create libraries that are vibrant, current and stimulating, celebrating books and the written word in a variety of media and formats.

The stock must be appropriate to the community that the library serves, ensuring that our customers are at the heart of all we do.

Our key objectives for stock management are:

- To select and manage stock based on identified customer needs and in support of the communities that our libraries serve
- To provide a wide range of materials in response to identified need
- To seek and utilise customer feedback
- To monitor actively the performance of stock and respond to trends and patterns of usage through the selection of new and management of existing stock
- To manage stock as a county wide resource
- To maximise stock use, access and choice for customers
- To achieve cost effectiveness and operational efficiency in both the initial acquisition of stock and its on-going management throughout its lifespan
- To maintain stock and minimise loss

The different types of stock that are purchased for Cambridgeshire Libraries are:

- Fiction books (paperback and hardback)
- Non Fiction books (paperback and hardback)

- Large Print & Audio books on CD
- Reference material & Newspapers
- Digital Resources (more information in Section 7.2)

Cambridgeshire County Council's policy for the basis on which different types of stock are made available to customers reflects the provisions of the Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991. Books and information are made available free. Audio stock is provided on a self-financing basis which means that a hire charge is made for its loan and the scope and availability of collections in libraries across the County is determined by demand.

The activities critical to successful stock management are the monitoring of performance (issues) and ongoing analysis of the needs of the community, to inform how budgets are used; the provision and use of stock.

5. Stock as a County Resource

Stock is a county wide resource and is not the property of an individual library. The provision of a broad range of stock is balanced with the need for more specialist material. In widening the range of materials on offer we support the library service's aim to appeal to all sectors of the community, not only serving existing users but also reaching out to potential users.

The ability to borrow an item from one library and return it to another and stock on rotation between libraries, ensures that the libraries are part of a whole whilst retaining their own individuality.

There is a small charge for reservations to cover the cost of transporting the book to the specified library, while opening up access to the entire catalogue for customers across the county. So even though the right book may not always be available in your local library, you will be able to request the title you want. It is therefore important that our catalogue reflects the wide range of stock available allowing it to be utilized as our most valuable resource.

6. Stock Profiles - forward planning in short, medium and long term

The use of stock profiles for each library ensures that we look at; stock holdings versus usage, the most popular genres, authors or areas of stock, in order to shape the stock to the needs and tastes of the users of each library.

These profiles are produced in consultation with our district managers and business information specialists and provide structure for an action plan of work to shape the stock in the library and encourage greater use of the

facility, increase book issues and create greater community integration and involvement.

7. Acquisition & Selection

7.1 Tendering and consortia

Cambridgeshire Library Service are members of the East Midlands and Mid Anglia Library Consortium (EMMAC) together with the library services of Leicestershire and Rutland, City Culture Peterborough, Lincolnshire, Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire which allows us to source and buy books cost-effectively from a specialist library supplier.

Other specialist stock is purchased from a wide range of specialist suppliers. These include suppliers of large print and audio book material.

Books in languages other than English are sourced from a variety of suppliers.

7.2 Electronic Resources

Many traditional reference works are now available online. Where the provision of this information is more cost-effective, current and accessible we will provide the online resource in place of print formats.

[Instructions and information for all the platforms and different resources are on our website.](#)

eBooks and eAudiobooks

eBooks are electronic books supplied by OverDrive. eAudiobooks are supplied by OverDrive, BorrowBox, and uLibrary.

eBooks and eAudiobooks are available from suppliers using several different licensing formats, including:

- time limited
- number of loans
- One Copy One User (OCOU)
- Multi-use, allowing multiple loans at the same time

All eBooks and eAudiobooks can be searched for and borrowed on the library catalogue or borrowed and reserved by using Cambridgeshire Libraries collections on the individual supplier's apps and websites.

eNewspapers

PressReader allows you to read the latest and back issues of thousands of newspapers and magazines. Sign in with your library card number to get free access.

eMagazines

OverDrive supplies magazines which you can borrow for up to 21 days. These are all simultaneous use, so can be borrowed by any number of people at the same time. You can borrow them from the Cambridgeshire library catalogue, the OverDrive website, or the Libby app.

Online Databases

Free access to online resources including online dictionaries, encyclopaedias, biographies and newspaper archives. Some of them you can only log in to from a library computer, but some you can use from home if you sign in with your library card number and PIN.

The [Business and IP Centre Cambridgeshire](#) has specific databases to support entrepreneurs, inventors and small businesses.

[Find our full list of databases online.](#)

7.3 Selection Factors - Introduction

The following sections (7.4 – 7.11) set out the important factors which inform stock selection.

7.4 Libraries and Library Levels

Cambridgeshire Libraries are divided into levels which are determined by several factors as detailed below:

Level of library	Catchment size and opening hours for level
Level 1 Libraries (Community Libraries)	Serving >4,000 catchment population 10 - 26 Opening Hours per week (sliding scale based on use)
Level 2 Libraries (Key Libraries)	Serving >7,000 population 27 - 35 Opening Hours per week
Level 3 Libraries (Hub Libraries)	Serving >14,000 catchment population 42 + Opening hours per week
Level 4 Libraries (Central Library)	Serving >50,000 catchment Population 58+ Opening hours per week

Mobile Libraries

Cambridgeshire Libraries operates 3 full time mobile libraries visiting 364 stops within 85 villages and communities throughout the county.

Find [more information about our mobile libraries on our website](#).

Community Managed Libraries

Cambridgeshire Libraries currently supports 12 Community Managed Libraries which are staffed by volunteers. They use and provide the same IT and Library Management System (LMS) as the other libraries.

Stock is provided through donations and fundraising by the volunteer groups and cannot be reserved/used by other libraries.

Find out [more information about our libraries](#).

Clay Farm Library is jointly owned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council. It is in a City Council building and run by City Council staff. It is stocked using Level 2 stock selection criteria by Cambridgeshire County Council.

7.5 Budgets

The budget supports a wide range of lending and reference material as well as the servicing of these items.

Budgets are set at the start of the financial year for different formats of stock and by library levels. Issues, stock size and turnover of stock are all considered. Our stock suppliers are provided with our requirements for stock selection and given a budget and suppliers provide selected stock lists for mediation by the stock management team.

On occasion, circumstances may lead to re-allocation of budgets or the diversion of funds to priority areas during the financial year.

7.6 Selection Principles

In the spirit of free and informed discussion a wide array of views are presented within the stock held in libraries, including religious and political views and topics on which opinion is divided in society. Whilst being sensitive to material that may cause offence, stock selection decisions will be made on the assumption that adults are able to make reasonable and critical evaluation of the views and opinions expressed in an item of stock. Censorship will only be exercised when required by the law (currently the legislation listed in Section 1 above).

As well as endeavouring to stock a wide selection of newly published material we also have a commitment to keep items available that have a long-proven popularity or interest.

Requested items and suggestions for stock are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Physical quality and value for money are considered at all stages of selection.

7.7 Selection Criteria and Methods

Various methods are employed for selecting stock for the libraries including a team of stock selectors who review forthcoming titles and select quantities for distribution throughout the county. We are currently using Supplier selection more widely than ever before. This is where we provide a series of parameters to our preferred stock supplier and they use this guidance in selecting stock for us. These selections can be reviewed and amended and will be done so closely during the initial process, and parameters will be reviewed on a yearly basis thereafter, based on the agreed stock spending plan.

Factors in selection include:

- Popularity of author, subject or genre
- Authority and reputation of the author / publisher in the field
- Underrepresented subject area in current stocks
- Item fills known stock gap, including new / emerging subjects or topics

- Item provides value for money
- Item is part of a proven series
- Attractive +/- or serviceable production
- Likely and potential use of item
- Item is new edition, especially in a subject area of rapid change
- Item presents positive images of stereotyped groups
- Item reflects social and cultural diversity
- Language
- Availability

Factors in rejection may include:

- Content of the item is of poor quality
- Content or information is out-of-date
- Content is prejudicial in terms of the policies and guidelines in Section 1 above
- Poor physical quality, e.g. type, binding
- Over-represented or a well-covered subject area

The stock profiles, borrower reports from the library catalogue and Community Insights of different wards are also used to assess what type of stock is popular in different libraries and the type of community in that area, to help with supplier selection.

7.8 Requests & Stock Suggestions

Requests for items currently available within the county (reserving books from any of the Cambridgeshire Libraries) incurs a charge of 50p. Stock borrowed from Suffolk or Peterborough (SPINE) has a charge of £2; and stock which is borrowed through other library services (Inter Library Loan) is subject to a request fee. [Inter Library Loan charges information is on our Fees and Charges page.](#)

Stock suggestions and requests for items that are not in stock are welcome from staff and customers and are subject to the normal stock selection criteria. Please use the [Suggest a Purchase form](#) in the right-hand menu on the library catalogue Homepage.

SPINE Stock

The library services within Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, and Peterborough share a library management system and operate as a consortium, enabling shared borrowing across the county borders for the benefit of their customers. There is a fee of £2 to reserve and borrow SPINE stock. You can [find more information about SPINE on our website](#).

7.9 Donations

We accept donated materials on the understanding that they are subject to the same selection criteria applied to purchased stock.

We therefore reserve the right to decide on the most suitable location for donated stock selected for retention and to dispose of or sell items not required or suitable for addition.

We also reserve the right to not accept items that are not required or considered suitable for addition to stock.

[Find more information about donating books on our catalogue.](#)

7.10 Responding to Trends

We need to be responsive to trends, so the book fund and our suppliers need to be flexible to allow us to respond to new or changing needs as they emerge. Media interest and promotions, titles linked to broadcast series and prize-winning books allow us to track sales and loan data throughout the country and apply this accordingly.

8. Promotion and Maintenance

Promotion

It is important that the stock collections we keep within our libraries are maintained and promoted to a high and consistent level, to ensure best value for money and to broaden the experience of our customers.

Current promotional activity includes:

8.1 Marketing

Stock needs to be marketed well either through promotional material such as posters and flyers or through word-of-mouth interaction with customers as well as online through the County Council Website, social media and the monthly eNewsletter.

[Read current and past issues and sign up to receive the newsletter on our website.](#)

8.2 Displays

Displays need to entice customers into taking items for check out and to broaden peoples reading habits. Drawing inspiration from the retail sector on

how best to do this and ensuring staff understand the importance of strong displays.

8.3 Face forward

Having as much book stock 'face out' as possible will help customers in choosing books, make a more appealing display and drive-up issue figures and use of stock.

8.4 Signs & shelf guiding

The libraries need to be user friendly and therefore signage needs to be strong, eye-catching and serve its purpose. As with retail there is opportunity to have individual touches in the form of handwritten reviews & recommendations.

8.5 Reader Development

Reader Development is the encouragement of a love of books and reading for relaxation, recreation and lifelong learning. This can be achieved through the setting up and running of reading groups, writing groups, active book promotion, customer interaction and author talks / visits and other book or literature events.

The Library Presents is a team of library staff and volunteers who run arts events online and in locations around Cambridgeshire. For more information on [The Library Presents and their programme of events see our webpage](#).

Maintenance

Stock care and maintenance ensures stock is suitable for use and looks attractive to customers

8.6 Shelf arrangement & Layout

The layout of the library and arrangement of the shelving is designed to offer practical access to stock whilst also creating a pleasant and aesthetically pleasing environment for our customers. The layouts of libraries are often revisited if there are issues and concerns from customers or staff.

8.7 Stock Management

The management of stock is a continuous and ongoing process carried out by library staff and supervisors as well as the Stock and Systems Team, this ensures stock that is not working or suitable in one location can be re located to another or removed entirely if unsuitable.

8.8 Weeding of stock

Weeding of stock is carried out currently as sections become too full and is generally done based on condition of the stock or by using a list of stock that has not been issued within a certain period of time. This can be done using Collection HQ. Weeding is carried out by library staff and by the Stock and

Systems Team. Weeded stock is reallocated, sold through book sales or recycled.

Books in poor physical condition will be subject to an assessment process which will take account of previous and current usage, future use, cost of re-binding / re-jacketing, and alternatives on offer.

8.11 Cataloguing & classification

Cambridgeshire Library Service Catalogue records are supplied from B.D.S (Bibliographic Data Services) where possible. Where none is available the record is created from book in hand. The stock is classified using the 23rd edition of the Dewey decimal classification system and local variation and catalogued according to the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd edition.

9. Circulation

Stock circulation is how stock moves between the libraries, this depends on whether it is set to be dynamic or non-dynamic. Stock can be reserved to be picked up from different libraries and returned to any library. If the stock is dynamic its location on Spydus will to where it has been returned. If stock is non-dynamic it will be sent back to its original location from whichever library the borrower returned it. Most fiction is dynamic, while nonfiction and Local Studies tend to be non-dynamic as they are often about that area or have been specifically requested for that library. Fiction and nonfiction that are part of the core collection, where every library has a copy, will also be non-dynamic.

Moving stock from library to library has the dual benefits of:

- widening choice and variety of stock available for customers
- increasing cost effectiveness by intensifying the use of stock throughout its lifespan and therefore achieving a greater return on the investment made

Stock being used for a particular purpose, like a themed display, should be issued to the library's in-house display card rather than set to Not Available for Reservation (NAFR).

Similarly, if staff want to retain items purchased by their Friends group, use the core collection option so that items return to branch. Use the in-house display card to feature newly purchased items for a limited time only and then allow out for reservation.

Collection HQ can be used to create transfer lists of areas that are understocked or overstocked, and which libraries to send or request more stock from.

10. Feedback and Consultation

Customer comments are dealt with locally and monitored by the Stock & Systems Manager and the Library Support Services Manager. Customers can use the library website to make suggestions on stock and also through forms within libraries, as well as through interaction with staff.

11. County Store Collection

Major factors to be considered in preservation of stock are:

- local value
- continued relevance of content
- classic or seminal works, especially those now out of print
- historical authenticity – that something is accurate to the time period it is depicting.
- rarity or monetary value

When an item meets one or more of these criteria it will be added to the county store reserve, where it is still on the public catalogue and available for loan by request though not directly accessible to the general public.

12. Stock Loss

A range of procedures are in place to safeguard library items such as overdue charges, recovery, catalogue management, management of loans and new membership.

Each year stock is lost either by theft from the library and through items that are not returned by borrowers. Whilst we endeavour to replace lost items, it is not always possible if items are no longer in print.

13. Disposal

Effectively managing stock will inevitably lead to stock disposal

Stock will be removed if it is:

- In poor physical condition, and not worth repairing or rebinding
- If the information in the book is out of date or makes reference to out of date processes or equipment
- The book itself has become dated – i.e. design books
- The book no longer reflects the needs or interests of readers

Options for stock that is still in good condition but no longer issuing in its current library, are:

- To reallocate it to another library
- To add to the county store
- Book sales – either ongoing or one off sales or via a third party
- Recycling
- Add to Reading Group Collection

The aim is to maximize our income whilst minimizing administration and handling processes and associated costs.

14. Training & Staff

Library staff interact with stock throughout its life cycle through the library service, from selection of stock, delivery, shelving, promotion & display, issuing, returns, weeding and eventual disposal.

Staff based within libraries handle the stock daily and are often best placed to make the decision on the condition of books and other materials. Where specialist knowledge is required library based staff should refer to the Stock and Systems Team.

They are also crucial in retrieving feedback from customers on stock items as well as promoting books and reading through work with displays and recommendations of authors or titles.

Although stock knowledge can be acquired over time a passion for books and reading should be seen as an essential quality in library staff that should be encouraged and developed continuously.

Training therefore will extend to all staff from those directly involved in the Stock Team to those serving the public and this should be monitored to ensure it is being effective across the board.