



Sandwell Library and Information Service

Strategy for Service Delivery 2010 -2015

**Delivering high quality
and efficient library
services that continue to
meet the needs of local
communities during a
period of budget
reductions.**

October 2010

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1 Introduction

We want Sandwell to be a “thriving, sustainable, optimistic, and forward looking community” by 2020. We need to be serious about tackling the cycle of poverty, income, aspiration and power that has affected people living in Sandwell.

To achieve this vision we need citizens to be well informed, to be proud of their skills and talents and have opportunities at all levels for local people to be in control of their own lives. Delivering high quality library services to local communities is an integral part of achieving this vision.

This strategy sets out an approach to delivering high quality and efficient library services that continue to meet the needs of local people during a period of budget reductions. At the time of writing we do not yet know the full extent of savings required to be made from library budgets, but we are expecting them and we know they are likely to be severe. We have to plan for the savings, taking on board the adoption of best practice in systems and processes to deliver efficiencies, whilst responding to the needs of our customers.

We want this document to form the basis around which consultation can begin to ensure we understand the issues and priorities for all people who have an interest in Sandwell libraries – Council members, partners, staff and most importantly library customers and residents of Sandwell.

No organisation wants to see a reduction in its budget, but if we can take this opportunity to focus on priorities and improve efficiencies, we can emerge from the period of budget reductions much stronger, as we continue to deliver a library service that the residents of Sandwell need and deserve.

Councillor Ann Shackleton,
Cabinet Member for Youth, Culture and Leisure

2 Vision

What do libraries do?

- ***Free resources to engage people in books and reading***
 - Books, audio books, e-books, newspapers and magazines, DVDs
 - Support for literacy from early years on
 - Support for lifelong learning through resources and courses
 - Motivating reading for pleasure, reading groups for all ages

- ***Computers – free use for Internet, e-mail and office software***
 - Help to narrow the digital divide, making computers available to those who don't have them
 - Encourage reluctant users onto the Internet
 - Support and courses, support for homework

- ***Access to information, in the library and on the web***
 - Community information, council information, business information, family and health information, help in hard times and for life events
 - Family and local history
 - Available locally or able to signpost to specialists

- ***Safe, free, warm public spaces – with activities and advice sessions***
 - Community hubs for all communities and ages to come together
 - Positive activities for children and young people
 - Events and displays to celebrate community and diversity
 - Facilities for partners to deliver services locally
 - Guardians of many of the best loved public buildings

What impact do libraries have on local people?

Active and well people

- Activities and free resources that meet social, information and educational needs
- Free access to electronic and printed resources in libraries and on the web
- Staff help and signposting to advice from partner agencies
- Resources and activities that meet the needs of people with reduced vision and mobility

Library users have attributed increased personal confidence levels, improved mental health and well-being and reduced social isolation directly to their use of these services.

“So pleased my friend said to come to this talk. Better than TV and found out about using the computers.” – Great Barr user

“My child was very quiet and reserved before he started coming. After attending a few storytime sessions he is interacting with adults and children.” – Smethwick user

“I live by myself, therefore being part of a group helps me feel human and less depressed” – Langley user

A safe and clean place to live

- Involving local people in the design and delivery of services
- Adapting service delivery to overcome barriers for specific groups
- Buildings and resources contributing to community identity and pride

Library users from new communities and specific interest groups such as LGBT groups make active contributions to the library service, in turn also contributing to community cohesion.

“What a great way of getting people together” – Rounds Green user

“Pauline brings books to Tameside which I take home to read with Saarang. This also helps me as I can only read very little English.”

– Wednesbury user

Educated and skilled people in employment

- Activities and free resources that encourage reading for pleasure and learning in order to raise educational achievement and personal development
- Resources and courses for independent, formal and informal learners

- Providing opportunities for people to improve their employability – volunteers and work experience, business start up resources and courses
- Contributing to the viability of High Streets through the footfall they bring

Libraries impact on education, skills and employability in many ways and for all ages, from support for formal education and learning to the provision of self-directed learning opportunities.

“When I left school I didn't know anything but I educated myself by using the library and now I have certificates and degree and it's all due to the library.” – Glebefields user

“Since bringing Elizabeth to the library, she is reading more and I think this is due to a good choice of books. Her reading has improved a lot.” – Wednesbury user

“Very helpful advice with a positive job interview as a result.” – Brandhall user

“Gave me some excellent leads into starting my own business” – Central user

How are libraries changing?

Sandwell Libraries have embarked on a major modernisation programme:

- £4.75m investment in library buildings: Extensions and refurbishments (Thimblemill, Smethwick, Bleakhouse, Great Bridge) and new builds (Oldbury, Blackheath) – delivering community spaces as well as traditional library services, increasing the range of services to broaden their appeal
- £0.7m Investment in I.T. to improve efficiency (Library Management System, E.D.I. i.e. on-line ordering and receipt of stock and direct delivery to reduce back office, self service)
- £170,000 to increase opening hours at the busiest libraries
- Developed alternative models of delivering services, through partnerships and co-location:
 - Space used by another service with sharing of costs
 - Library located in a building owned by a partner
 - Satellite and express library models
- Developed more efficient use of staffing:
 - Shared staffing resources with partners for reception duties

- Self service to reduce staffing in larger libraries
- Increased community engagement through Big Lottery projects as pilot to roll out to all libraries

Future modernisation will involve:

- Develop more cost effective staffing models
- Shared services managed with other Black Country or West Midlands authorities
- Review and roll out alternative models of delivery
- Staff development to improve information skills and provide advice and learning

Who uses libraries in Sandwell?

- Generally representative of the whole population but with a trend to a higher proportion of younger users compared to the Sandwell population and to other Metropolitan authorities
 - Under 16s represent 24% of our users (22% of population)
 - Sandwell has highest % usage by 15 - 20 years olds out of all 36 Mets
- More often unemployed (14% in Autumn 2009) than in the general population
 - Highest % of usage by unemployed out of all Mets
- More likely to be from bme communities
 - 28% of adult and 40% of child visits by people not classing themselves as White
 - 3rd highest usage from bme communities of all Mets
- More likely to have a long term limiting illness
 - 27% of library users compared to 22% of the population
 - 5.4% of library users have mental health needs
- Higher proportion of library membership than total population of low income groups:
 - “Lower income workers in urban terraces in often diverse areas” (18.1% library membership compared to 14.0% households)
 - “Families in low-rise social housing with high levels of benefit need” (12.8% library membership compared to 10.2% households)

How will we deliver the library service?

The Library Service of 2015 will be delivered through a network that consists of:

Central Library and Archives Service

- Located on the Library/ Town Hall site, playing a key role in regenerating West Bromwich High Street
- Flagship library with a wider range of books and other resources, special collections of resources not available elsewhere in the borough and the largest number of public access computers
- Information and enquiry service direct to customers, and support for information across the whole service
- Community space for local groups to meet and allowing partners to deliver services
- Open 6 full days a week including all day Saturday and two late nights
- Main venue for reader development activities, new initiatives and innovative ideas piloted

Area Libraries

- At least one per town, in or near shopping centre locations, or busy libraries with annual visits of over 80,000
- Open 5 or 6 full days per week including all day Saturday and Sunday afternoon at Smethwick
- Higher numbers of public access computers
- Space for community groups and partners to use within the library, extending the range of services delivered
- Support for nearby Community or Neighbourhood libraries

Community Libraries

- Libraries able to attract at least 50,000 visits each year
- Open 3 or 4 days per week including Saturday mornings
- Resources and services targeted to meet local needs

Neighbourhood Libraries

- Part time libraries serving local estates, managed through a number of different models including:
 - Shared spaces – in ours or partners, to reduce costs
 - Satellite libraries – no supervisor, staffed from main library
 - Express libraries – located and staffed by partners

Mobile Library

- Library services delivered directly to hard to reach communities:
 - In areas not served by a static library (e.g. Yew Tree, Friar Park, Burnt Tree, Timbertree)
 - To groups unable to access the service in other ways (e.g. vulnerable and frail older people, people with learning and physical disabilities)
 - To targeted sites (e.g. day centres, nursing homes, schools, nurseries, sheltered accommodation, children's centres)
- Used to promote the library service through outreach events (e.g. Sandwell Show, community days, Picnic in the Park etc.)

Housebound Library Service

- Providing a library and information service to Housebound residents and carers on a monthly basis, through visits to people's homes, nursing homes and sheltered housing
- Range of library and information services, including books, information and free Internet access

Deposit Collections

- Loan of books at a non-library venue, to the users of that facility, e.g. care homes, children's centres etc.

Community outreach work

- Visits to schools, community venues and groups, working jointly with other community development workers, to successfully encourage and enthuse people to read and learn

Website

- A 24 hour library and archives service available through the website
- A range of on-line services and resources including access to the library catalogue, reservation service, user account management, information resources, on-line joining, comments and complaints
- Information about services, locations, opening hours, what's on etc.

3 Budget Reductions

Current position

Sandwell Libraries have a well established modernisation programme that has improved efficiency, and allowed budget reductions required over the past six years to be achieved without impacting frontline services. This programme will continue to ensure that Sandwell matches national best practice for efficient delivery of library services.

In recent years we have made efficiency savings by:

- Implementing E.D.I. (electronic ordering, receipt and invoicing of stock) and direct delivery to reduce back office costs and improve speed of supply of new books
- Locating libraries in partner's buildings to reduce costs (Blackheath, Hamstead, Hill Top, Oldbury)
- Sharing building costs with partners who move in with us (Glebefields, Great Bridge, Tipton)
- Improving discounts on buying new books, through a joint contract in partnership with the other Black Country libraries
- Sharing staffing costs and increasing opening hours by providing reception duties for partners (Great Bridge and Oldbury)
- Rationalising the van fleet, reducing by two vehicles, and introducing a smaller low floor mobile library
- Implementing self-service (Great Bridge and Bleakhouse), to be rolled out to 12 largest libraries by March 2012
- Introducing a low cost satellite model for staffing libraries (Hill Top)

Strategy to deal with major budget reductions

Future budget reduction proposals for the library service include:

- Deletion of management posts
- Deletion of back office posts
- Savings to supplies and services
- Improved efficiency through further investment in ICT and introduction of alternative staffing models, allowing for reduction in staffing levels

These proposals will result in major changes for the delivery of library services, with the introduction of self-service and reduction in staffing levels across the Borough. The changes will have to be managed carefully because of culture change and lower staff morale, and customers who will perceive a loss of personalisation of service.

These savings alone will not meet the requirements for the full budget reduction. 65% of the library budget covers staffing, the majority of which supports frontline services. In order to achieve the budget savings required, reductions to frontline services will be necessary.

The number, pattern of distribution and opening hours of libraries across Sandwell are the key issues to determine. We are entering a period of cuts to public funding and with expected reductions the budget cannot support the present pattern. The modernisation programme, although improving efficiency and reducing costs, will not deliver all the savings required.

There are two strong factors affecting levels of library membership and use – the proximity of customers to libraries, and investment in libraries to extend services and opening hours. Although 98% of the population live within 1 mile of a library, if a radius of half a mile is drawn around each library the bulk of lowest membership areas lies outside these areas. If we close a library a majority of people living near will stop using us, as people in Sandwell do not travel to use services. The dilemma for planning library provision is that we know where we have invested in libraries through increased opening hours, refurbishments and extensions, usage has increased and we want to sustain this.

Sandwell provides high quality library services, as evidenced by the successful Chartermark and Customer Service Excellence standard awards of the last four years. Despite the budget reductions we want to continue to provide high quality, forward looking and customer focussed services.

The result of answering these dilemmas will be the need to reduce the number of libraries or reduce opening hours, or more likely a combination of the two, ensuring that efficiency and value for money are still being delivered.

Previous library closures in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when cuts were made in a short term “salami-style”, the number of libraries in Sandwell was reduced by five down to the current 19. Those closures were in Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich towns. There were no closures in Oldbury or Rowley towns at this time.

Now we want a wider strategic view to be taken of the number and location of libraries that can be afforded from severely reduced budgets. During previous library closures the library service withdrew almost completely from the areas that were served (apart from mobile library stops, which do not provide anything like the same level of service). The new models of delivery we have developed (e.g. satellite libraries, express libraries) allow a commitment to look for alternative provision, to ensure the most vulnerable are still able to access library services, even if library closures are necessary.

The changing nature of the population and their changing needs and preferences mean that libraries cannot remain static. Different opportunities across the borough will result in a range of delivery models, each suiting the local conditions.

Future Options

- The Department for Culture Media and Sport have set up the *Future Libraries Programme*; with ten pilot projects to spread learning between library authorities to achieve cost savings, new partnerships and governance models, and to take advantage of digital opportunities
- Libraries in the West Midlands have secured funding through the regional RIEP (local government improvement partnership) to develop shared services as a means of reducing costs. Libraries in the Black Country intend to work together, as this very local partnership is more likely to deliver results
- In 2009/10 85 people worked as volunteers in Sandwell Libraries. They add value and are a useful resource, but cannot be seen as an alternative to paid, trained staff if we want to continue delivering high quality services

4 Performance Information

Statistics

- 1,451,420 visits to libraries last year
- 1,178,204 issues of books and other items
- 338,524 one hour computer sessions
- 196,105 enquiries answered
- 59% of library visits are to borrow a book or other item, 37% to use a computer, 36% to find something out (higher than 100% as some people do more than one thing when they visit)
- 415,732 books and other items in stock
- 126 FTE staff
- 85 volunteers, undertaking 1,505 hours of work
- 277 computers, 6th highest per head out of all 36 Mets
- 52,054 stock requests satisfied, 65% within 7 days
- 648 housebound readers
- 92% of adult library users think the library is “good” or “very good” (PLUS 2009)
- 67% of residents think the library service is “good” or “very good” (Place Survey 2008)
- 43.7% of people aged 16+ have used a library in the last 12 months (Active People 2009)
- 53% of children say libraries have helped them with their homework (Highest % out of all Mets)
- 40% of children say libraries have helped them with computers (4th highest out of all Mets)
- 3rd lowest expenditure per head on books out of all Mets
- 5th lowest expenditure per head on premises out of all Mets
- 13th lowest expenditure per head on employees out of all Mets
- 5th highest expenditure per head on central support costs out of all Mets (and increased by 12% in last 2 years)

Value for money indicators

Service Point	Visits	Issues	Computer sessions	Activities for adults and children	Weekly opening hours
Oldbury Town					
Bleakhouse	84306*	36738	3559	38	46
Brandhall	37874	34271	6762	131	27.5
Langley	45230	45469	11309	284	36.5
Oldbury	49459	36847	11715	161	28
Rounds Green	35912	27147	6540	215	27.5
Total	252781	180472	39885	829	165.5
Rowley Town					
Blackheath	40442	55957	6387	100	35
Cradley Heath	65927*	46942	12371	88	37
Oakham	26589	34370	4352	88	27.5
Total	132958	137269	23110	276	99.5
Smethwick Town					
Smethwick	189182	69781	42568	542	53
Thimblemill	131001	92904	26377	663	45.5
Total	320183	162685	68945	1205	98.5
Tipton Town					
Great Bridge	35560*	23501	3291	74	27.5
Glebefields	119638	47120	18233	183	42.5
Tipton	70281	45863	16116	219	37.5
Total	225479	116484	37640	476	107.5
Wednesbury Town					
Hill Top	15578	15288	1537	187	20.5
Wednesbury	123827	90827	43146	914	50
Total	139405	106115	44683	1101	70.5
West Bromwich Town					
Central	280606	157360	102197	1034	50.5
Great Barr	52019	57290	9041	133	35.5
Hamstead	52153	45527	6189	210	35
Stone Cross	52502	49841	6834	196	38
Total	437280	310018	124261	1573	159

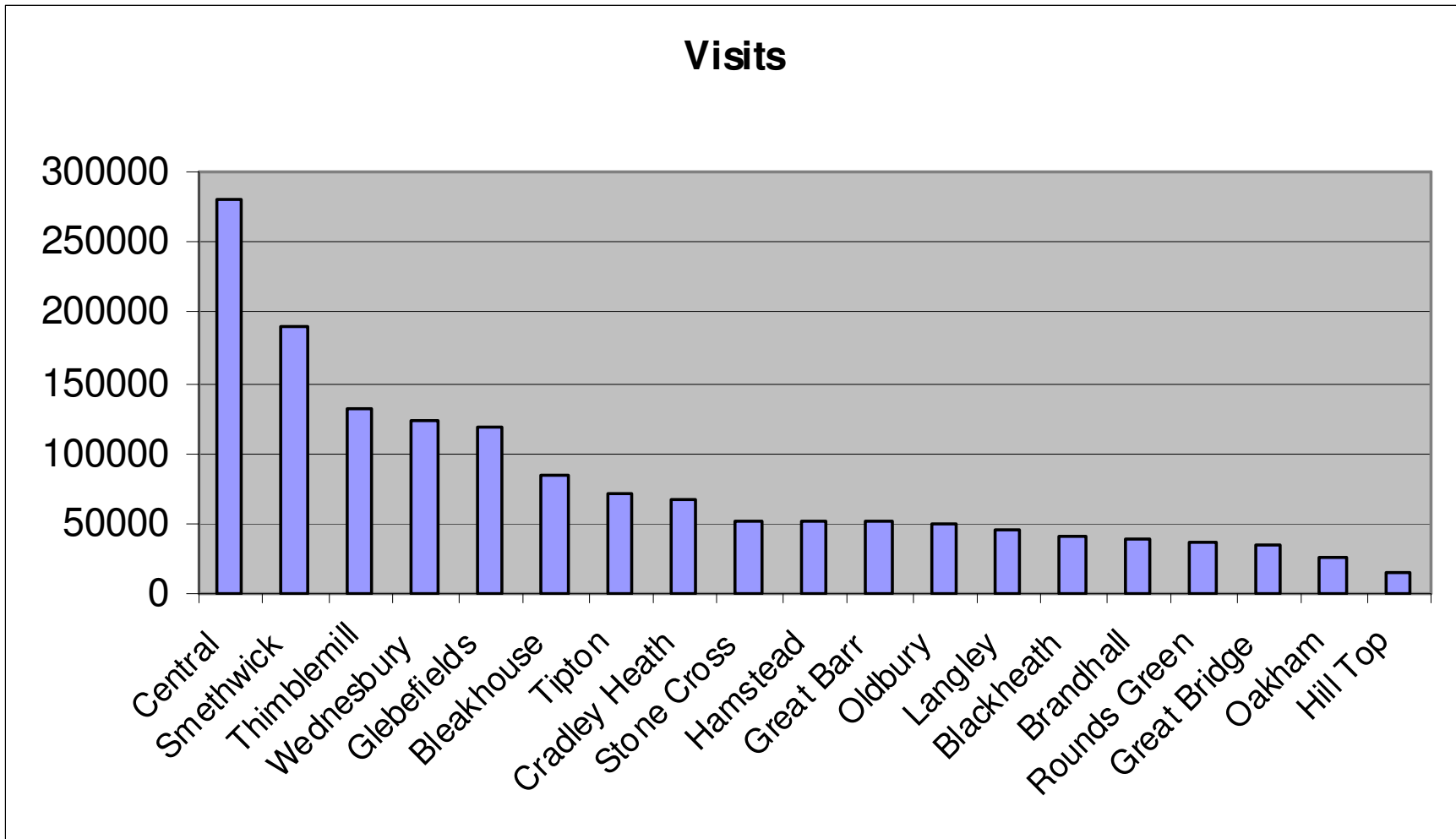
* 2008/9 visit figures used because of closures in 2009/10

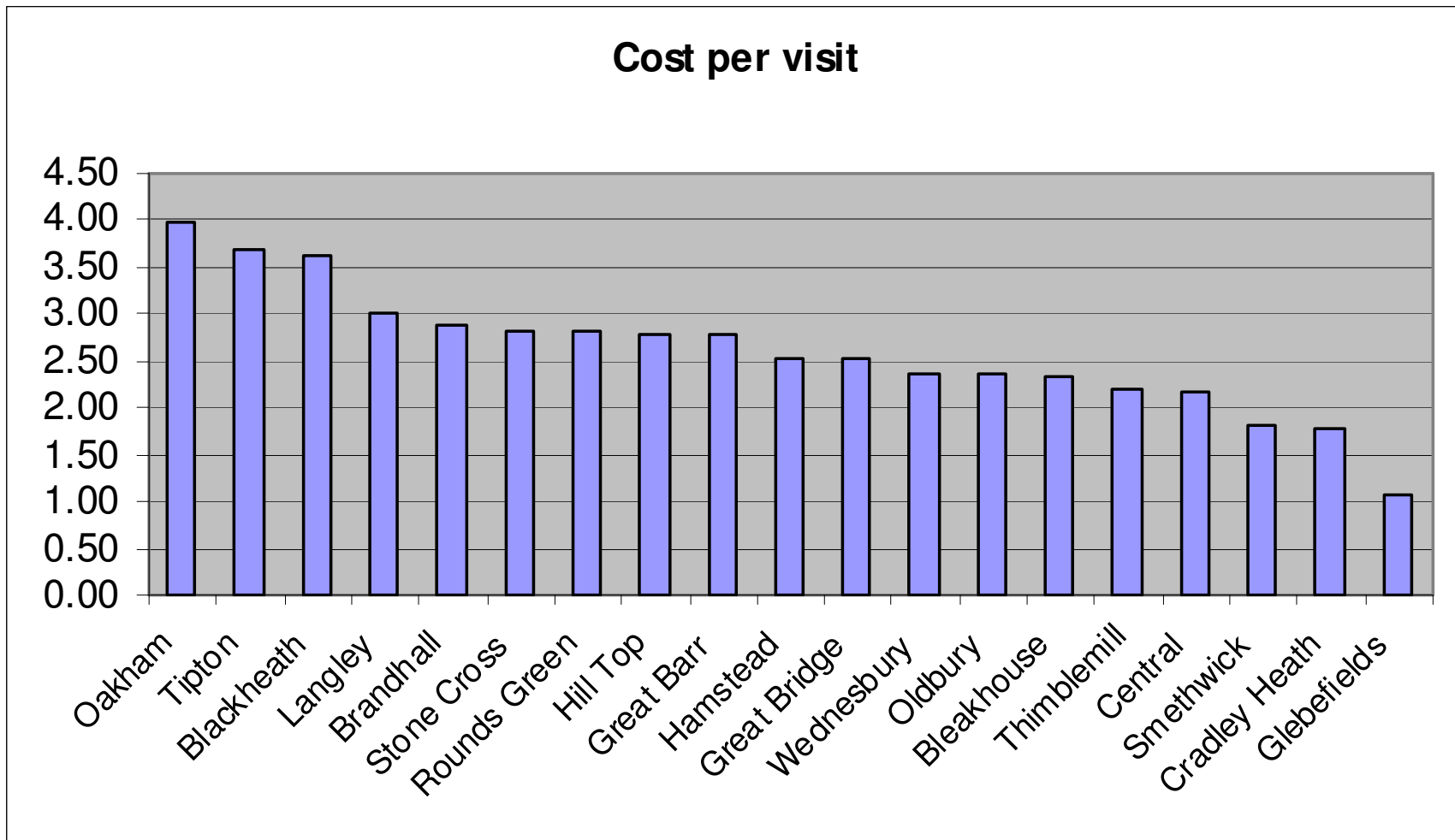
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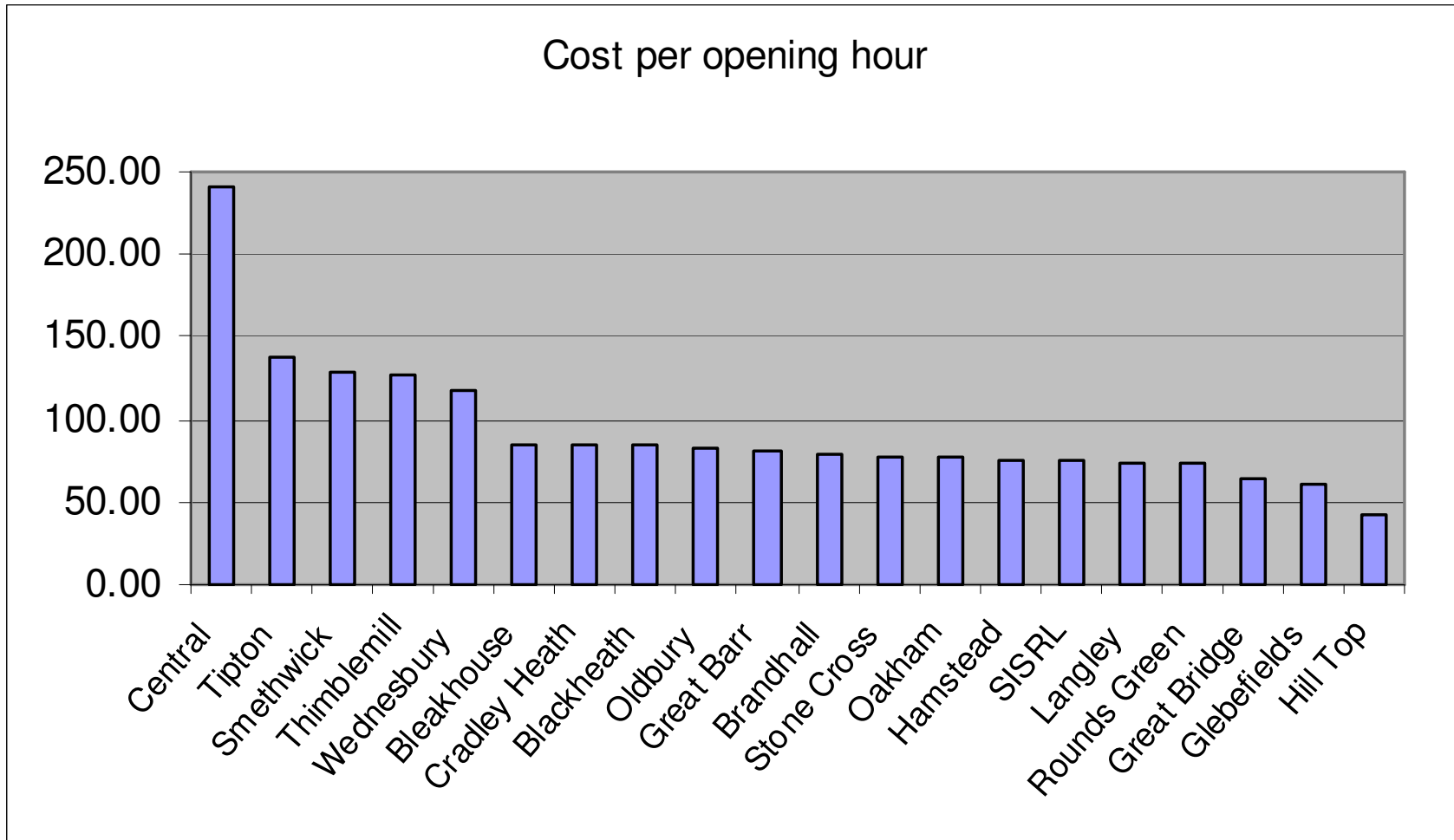
Service Point	Staffing costs (£)	Premises and supplies costs (£)	Stock costs (£)	Income (£)	Annual cost (£)
Oldbury Town					
Bleakhouse	109275	17125	24175	-5900	144675
Brandhall	61075	20800	11375	-1900	91350
Langley	75275	17750	15650	-3400	105275
Oldbury	66175	12950	13950	-2500	90575
Rounds Green	55275	18900	11100	-2200	83075
Total	367075	87525	76250	-15900	514950
Rowley Town					
Blackheath	72350	17400	18625	-2700	105675
Cradley Heath	83450	17475	19375	-3700	116600
Oakham	53900	14875	12925	-1600	80100
Total	209700	49750	50925	-8000	302375
Smethwick Town					
Smethwick	200250	84050	28825	-19600	293525
Thimblemill	137500	68600	25550	-5900	225750
Total	337750	152650	54375	-25500	519275
Tipton Town					
Great Bridge	40000	16525	15625	-2200	69950
Glebefields	75375	7875	15600	-3300	95550
Tipton	105150	119175	15300	-10200	229425
Total	220525	143575	46525	-15700	394925
Wednesbury Town					
Hill Top	20550	6600	7825	-700	34275
Wednesbury	161825	42075	31225	-12400	222725
Total	182375	48675	39050	-13100	257000
West Bromwich Town					
Central	367875	96100	55300	-17400	501875
Great Barr	70875	18675	18675	-5700	102525
Hamstead	74025	13050	15975	-4200	98850
Stone Cross	78450	20925	16900	-4100	112175
Total	591225	148750	106850	-31400	815425

Strategy for Service Delivery 2010 - 2015

Service Point	Cost per visit (£)	Cost per opening hour (£)	Staffing costs per visit (£)	Staffing costs per opening hour (£)	Visits per opening hour
Oldbury Town					
Bleakhouse	1.72	62.90	1.30	47.51	37
Brandhall	2.41	66.44	1.61	44.42	28
Langley	2.33	57.68	1.66	41.25	25
Oldbury	1.83	64.70	1.34	47.27	35
Rounds Green	2.31	60.42	1.54	40.20	26
Total	2.04	62.23	1.45	44.36	31
Rowley Town					
Blackheath	2.61	60.39	1.79	41.34	23
Cradley Heath	1.77	63.03	1.27	45.11	36
Oakham	3.01	58.25	2.03	39.20	19
Total	2.27	60.78	1.58	42.15	27
Smethwick Town					
Smethwick	1.55	110.76	1.06	75.57	71
Thimblemill	1.72	99.23	1.05	60.44	58
Total	1.62	105.44	1.05	68.58	65
Tipton Town					
Great Bridge	1.97	50.87	1.12	29.09	26
Glebefields	0.80	44.96	0.63	35.47	56
Tipton	3.26	122.36	1.50	56.08	37
Total	1.75	73.47	0.98	41.03	42
Wednesbury Town					
Hill Top	2.20	33.44	1.32	20.05	15
Wednesbury	1.80	89.09	1.31	64.73	50
Total	1.84	72.91	1.31	51.74	40
West Bromwich Town					
Central	1.79	198.76	1.31	145.69	111
Great Barr	1.97	57.76	1.36	39.93	29
Hamstead	1.90	56.49	1.42	42.30	30
Stone Cross	2.14	59.04	1.49	41.29	28
Total	1.86	102.57	1.35	74.37	55







Library Visits: Five Year Analysis

	2005/6	2006/7	% Increase	2007/8	% Increase	2008/9	% Increase	2009/10	% Increase	5 Year Increase
Central	275,542	242,635	-11.9%	268,540	10.7%	271,138	1.0%	280,606	3.5%	1.8%
Blackheath	44,446	42,753	-3.8%	43,780	2.4%	44,603	1.9%	40,442	-9.3%	-9.0%
Bleakhouse	88,520	77,607	-12.3%	79,789	2.8%	84,306	5.7%	26,471*	-68.6%	-70.1%
Brandhall	38,807	32,837	-15.4%	30,051	-8.5%	32,412	7.9%	37,874	16.9%	-2.4%
Cradley Heath	72,822	66,531	-8.6%	65,962	-0.9%	65,927	-0.1%	52,098*	-21.0%	-28.4%
Glebefields	77,152	77,938	1.0%	82,741	6.2%	105,622	27.7%	119,638	13.3%	55.0%
Great Barr	58,522	54,481	-6.9%	46,003	-15.6%	47,791	3.9%	52,019	8.8%	-11.1%
Great Bridge	37,250	35,866	-3.7%	34,454	-3.9%	35,560	3.2%	25,245*	-29.0%	-32.2%
Hamstead	66,686	60,638	-9.1%	55,276	-8.8%	55,485	0.4%	52,153	-6.0%	-21.7%
Hill Top	27,261	32,994	21.0%	31,259	-5.3%	14,843	-52.5%	15,578	5.0%	-42.8%
Langley	54,019	57,680	6.8%	45,253	-21.5%	46,351	2.4%	45,230	-2.4%	-16.2%
Oakham	38,679	37,532	-3.0%	36,078	-3.9%	30,967	-14.2%	26,589	-14.1%	-31.2%
Oldbury	59,744	57,479	-3.8%	55,767	-3.0%	55,388	-0.7%	49,459	-10.7%	-17.2%
Rounds Green	33,606	32,128	-4.4%	30,982	-3.6%	35,030	13.1%	35,912	2.5%	6.8%
Smethwick	148,459	146,508	-1.3%	162,777	11.1%	169,466	4.1%	189,182	11.6%	27.4%
Stone Cross	58,754	54,669	-7.0%	53,381	-2.4%	53,464	0.2%	52,502	-1.8%	-10.6%
Thimblemill	95,158	96,369	1.3%	83,010	-13.9%	103,106	24.2%	131,001	27.1%	37.6%
Tipton	63,061	66,986	6.2%	59,459	-11.2%	62,941	5.9%	70,281	11.7%	11.4%
Wednesbury	144,258	120,721	-16.3%	119,553	-1.0%	123,290	3.1%	123,827	0.4%	-14.1%

*Libraries closed for part of 2009/10 for extension building works and refurbishments/ repairs

5 **Impact of Budget Reductions on Frontline Services**

Neighbourhood Libraries

The risk of closing libraries will be a loss of service for the most vulnerable groups – older people and families with young children, impacting upon use of libraries and satisfaction.

Impacts on:

- Registered members (adults; children; groups)
- Visits; issues; hourly computers sessions; information enquiries
- Venue for activities:
 - Cllrs and MP surgeries
 - Storytimes and clubs for early years
 - Homework clubs
 - Class visits
 - Children's activities in school holidays
 - Coffee mornings and clubs for adults
 - Computer training, UK Online courses

Mobile Libraries

Mobile libraries deliver services to individuals and groups unable to access the standard service provided through static libraries. Sandwell currently has two mobile libraries. The implication of losing one of them is that the number and frequency of stops will be reduced, and the ability to provide outreach services severely reduced.

Oldbury Town

- Oldbury
Opening of new library in autumn 2010 will confirm this as the area library for the town. Currently visits are declining, but great potential for increase because of new facilities and services, and likely increase in opening hours funded through shared reception with Adult Services.
- Bleakhouse
Extension and refurbishment funded through Big Lottery, reopened in Spring 2010. Although not near to a shopping centre, should be regarded as the town's second area library, due to improved facilities and the potential to increase use further.
- Langley
Use diminishing and no developments to building planned; listed building status makes this difficult. High cost per visit, may need to reduce opening hours to reduce costs.
- Rounds Green
Low levels of use with above average cost per visit. Could investigate ways to provide a service locally by working with partners.
- Brandhall
Use increased during closure of Bleakhouse, but now diminishing; very close to Bleakhouse Library which now has much improved facilities. High cost per visit due to low numbers of visits. Potential for shared use, but would require redecoration and reconfiguration, or may be an opportunity of working with local Children's Centre to provide a service jointly.

Rowley Town

- Blackheath
New library being built in partnership with Black Country Housing, due for completion Jan 2011. High street location and improved facilities will make this the area library for Rowley. Visits at existing library are currently decreasing, probably due to local people aware of relocation. Expectation that new library will see an increase in use, especially if opening hours were increased so that library is open 6 days a week. To do this would mean a reduction in opening hours at the other libraries within the town.
- Cradley Heath
Currently main town library for Rowley Town, but expect this to change when new Blackheath opens. May need to reduce opening hours to enable extra opening hours at Blackheath and reduce costs.

- Oakham
Use is diminishing resulting in high cost per visit. Potential for shared use although would require redecoration and reconfiguration.

Smethwick Town

- Smethwick
Area library for Smethwick town, with longest opening hours as open 7 days a week. Very busy library, with many services and activities – delivering low cost per visit. Big Lottery funding has enabled refurbishment and creation of community spaces and a community run café.
- Thimblemill
3rd highest visits with below average cost per visit. A recent extension and refurbishment has created community spaces leading to increased visits. Level of business and services available makes this the town's second area library.

Tipton Town

- Tipton
This is the area library for the town, but Glebefields has taken over in terms of business and longest opening hours. Leased accommodation, at high rental and service charge makes it very expensive for volume of use. Actively looking at moving but costs to leave current lease almost certainly prohibitive. Shared use with the museum service, and may have the potential for developing community spaces or sharing space with another partner to reduce costs.
- Glebefields
Shared building in partnership with Children's Services makes this a very low cost per visit library to run. The number of visits has increased significantly since opening the children's centre and increasing opening hours. Much of the use is repeat visits by children and young people to meet friends or use a computer, with little need for intervention from frontline staff. Level of business suggests this should be an area library, but insufficient size for community spaces. Potential to reconfigure the reception, to share resources with children's centre, as at Great Bridge.
- Great Bridge
Re-developed site in partnership with Children's Centre, making library footprint smaller but better use of space, with shared costs improving value for money. Extending opening hours from October

2010 (extra cost funded by Children's Services, with shared reception duties) should see an increase in use.

Wednesbury Town

- Wednesbury
4th busiest library for visits. Comparatively high cost per visit, although recent changes to staffing, reconfiguration of the ground floor, and partnership work with Sandwell Adult and Family Learning who will be delivering learning from the first floor has brought this cost down somewhat. Now ceased drop in use for computers on the first floor, will reduce computer use, but has freed up community space to extend the range of services provided.
- Hill Top
Lowest number of visits, which reduced dramatically in 2008/9 when closure was planned, and lowest number of opening hours. Low costs due to location in Community Centre. Piloting this as a satellite library, so may use this model elsewhere.

West Bromwich Town

- Central
Borough's main 'flagship' library with low cost per visit but high staffing and building costs. Building not fit for purpose and expensive to run. Feasibility undertaken re expansion of site to include Community History & Archives Service, and community spaces – to allow Central to offer the same range of services as area libraries.
- Great Barr
Potentially an area library, but would ideally move location to other side of road into Scott Arms shopping centre, but currently no opportunities. Could reconfigure existing site to make better use of the space – moving staff area and children's area round, to develop community space.
- Stone Cross
Well used library with average cost per visit. Requires investment to upgrade interior and exterior.
- Hamstead
Future is dependent on Tanhouse centre. Currently plans to incorporate GP surgery in the centre should mean greater footfall to centre giving opportunities to promote library and increase use.

Current Pattern of Library Provision in Sandwell

