

Appendix 2 - Tiered library opening hours

Background

Part of the Library Service Strategy is the aim for Sustainable Service Delivery, ensuring libraries in Hillingdon can continue to deliver services in a way that is effective and cost efficient.

Pre-Covid, Hillingdon libraries were open 937.5 hours per week and usage figures showed these hours were too high when compared to actual usage. Examples included libraries open until 8pm or 9pm but recording low footfall and book borrowing. When libraries began to reopen following the easing of restrictions, a decision was made in April 2022 to operate on reduced temporary hours rather than return to pre-Covid hours which were expensive to operate and not a good use of available resources. Since April 2022, Hillingdon libraries are open 731 hours per week.

The 3 busiest libraries provide the longest opening hours, with 9am openings, lunchtime opening and two 7pm closures per week. Two of these three libraries are also open 3 hours on Sunday.

Four other libraries are open through the lunch period and with one late night per week, based on their usage and busyness; Harlington library opens through lunchtime due to the school's requirements.

The remaining 9 libraries close at lunchtime Mon-Sat and are not open beyond 5pm Mon-Fri (4pm Sat).

Proposed Tiered Opening Hours

It is proposed that alongside the library service strategy, the Council consults on adopting a tiered set of library opening hours. These hours would total 678 hours per week across 17 libraries* and 4 Tiers, ensuring that the north, south and centre of the Borough have libraries available to visit on a range of hours that are mapped to location, size and busyness. This enables libraries to operate on a set of hours based on supporting data. While the Council intends to be flexible and keep usage under review to ensure library opening hours can continue to respond to demand, if it is agreed the Tiered hours would be initially implemented broadly as follows:

- **Tier 1 / Flagship Libraries** (3 libraries – Botwell Green, Ruislip Manor, Uxbridge): Mon 9-7, Tues 9-7, Weds 9-5, Thurs 9-7, Fri 9-5, Sat 9-5, Sun 10-1 (Ruislip Manor closed on Sun)
- **Tier 2** (5 libraries – Manor Farm, Northwood, Oak Farm, Yeading, Yiewsley): Mon 10-7, Tues 10-5, Weds 10-5, Thurs 10-7, Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4
- **Tier 3*** (5 libraries – Eastcote, Harlington, Ickenham, Northwood Hills, South Ruislip): Closed either Mon or Weds; open 3 weekdays 10-1 and 2-5pm; 1 weekday 10am-1pm and 2pm-7pm; Sat 10-4
- **Tier 4** (4 libraries – Charville, Harefield, Hayes End, West Drayton): Closed either Mon or Weds; open 4 weekdays 10am-1pm and 2-5pm, Sat 10am-2pm

**Tier 3 includes Harlington library, subject to consultation about its future/decommissioning of service. Also includes Northwood Hills library, proposed to open throughout lunchtime pending rebuild.*