



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

STEP A) Description of what is to be assessed and its relevance to equality

What is being assessed? Please tick ✓

Review of a service ✓ Staff restructure Decommissioning a service

Changing a policy Tendering for a new service A strategy or plan

Provide details here:

Relocation of Uxbridge library

Who is accountable? E.g. Head of Service or Corporate Director

Perry Scott

Date assessment completed and approved by accountable person

15.11.2023

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Darren Deeks – Head of Libraries and Cultural Services
Vicky Trott – Equality Diversity and Inclusion Manager

A.1) What are the main aims and intended benefits of what you are assessing?

Review of a service – benefits are to make efficiency savings, improve disabled access and safety in the event of emergencies, and provide an improved service for our residents through the introduction of additional features

A.2) Who are the service users or staff affected by what you are assessing? What is their equality profile?

[Uxbridge South Ward Profile.pdf](#) (note: Uxbridge library is now in Uxbridge ward but this profile is the most recent available)

The table below shows new members (those who have joined in the last 12 months as of 30th October 2023) and active members (those who have used the library at least once in the last 12 months as of 30th October 2023).

Uxbridge Library User Profiles	Active Users	Active Users as % total	New Users	New Users as % total
Residents aged 18-59	3,951	46.2%	2,015	63.6%
Residents aged 60+	1,485	17.4%	254	8.0%
Non Residents aged 18-59	251	2.9%	140	4.4%
Non Residents aged 60+	186	2.2%	35	1.1%
Preschool aged children	239	2.8%	154	4.9%
Childminder / Playgroups	14	0.2%	3	0.1%
Children aged 4-7 (Primary)	775	9.1%	273	8.6%
Children aged 8-11 (Primary)	831	9.7%	160	5.1%
Children aged 12-14 (Secondary)	406	4.7%	55	1.7%
Young Adults 15-17 (Secondary)	350	4.1%	49	1.5%
Refugees and Homeless	16	0.2%	14	0.4%
Hillingdon Leisure Card	7	0.1%	0	0.0%
Users declaring disability (PWD)	37	0.4%	6	0.2%
Reading Groups	9	0.1%	2	0.1%
Other	2	0.0%	7	0.2%
Total	8,559	100.0%	3,167	100.0%

Uxbridge Library User Profiles by Gender	Female	Female as % total	Male	Male as % total	Not specified/ Unkown	Not specified/ Unkown as % total	Total
Residents aged 18-59	2,174	55.0%	1,252	31.7%	525	13.3%	3,951
Residents aged 60+	728	49.0%	613	41.3%	144	9.7%	1,485
Non Residents aged 18-59	139	55.4%	94	37.5%	18	7.2%	251
Non Residents aged 60+	96	51.6%	82	44.1%	8	4.3%	186
Preschool aged children	119	49.8%	109	45.6%	11	4.6%	239

<i>Childminder / Playgroups</i>	4	28.6%	1	7.1%	9	64.3%	14
<i>Children aged 4-7 (Primary)</i>	393	50.7%	361	46.6%	21	2.7%	775
<i>Children aged 8-11 (Primary)</i>	471	56.7%	344	41.4%	16	1.9%	831
<i>Children aged 12-14 (Secondary)</i>	221	54.4%	167	41.1%	18	4.4%	406
<i>Young Adults 15-17 (Secondary)</i>	211	60.3%	124	35.4%	15	4.3%	350
<i>Refugees and Homeless</i>	4	25.0%	6	37.5%	6	37.5%	16
<i>Hillingdon Leisure Card</i>	5	71.4%	1	14.3%	1	14.3%	7
<i>Users declaring disability (PWD)</i>	20	54.1%	14	37.8%	3	8.1%	37
<i>Reading Groups</i>	3	33.3%	0	0.0%	6	66.7%	9
<i>Other</i>	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2
TOTAL	4,589	53.6%	3,168	37.0%	805	9.4%	8,559

A.3) Who are the stakeholders in this assessment and what is their interest in it?

Stakeholders	Interest
Uxbridge and Hillingdon Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure there is continued access to library services in a way that is convenient to them. To ensure that no groups who share equality characteristics are disproportionately negatively affected by the proposals.
Uxbridge Library Branch staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That staff are supported the relocation of the branch. To ensure that no groups who share equality characteristics are disproportionately negatively affected by the proposals.
Head of Library Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the sufficiency of library services in line with Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. To ensure the library service is cost effective and efficiently run. To ensure that users of this library are kept informed of changes to location and service provision To ensure that no groups who share equality characteristics are disproportionately negatively affected by the proposals.

Corporate Director of Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the sufficiency of library services in line with Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. • To ensure the library service is cost effective and efficiently run. • To ensure that users of this library are kept informed of changes to location and service provision • To ensure that no groups who share equality characteristics are disproportionately negatively affected by the proposals.
Leader of the Council and Council Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the sufficiency of library services in line with Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. • To ensure the library service is cost effective and efficiently run. • To ensure that users of this library are kept informed of changes to location and service provision • To ensure that no groups who share equality characteristics are disproportionately negatively affected by the proposals.

A.4) Which protected characteristics or community issues are relevant to the assessment? ✓ in the box.

Age	✓	Sex	✓
Disability	✓	Sexual Orientation	
Gender reassignment		Socio-economic status	
Marriage or civil partnership		Carers	
Pregnancy or maternity		Community Cohesion	
Race/Ethnicity		Community Safety	✓
Religion or belief		Human Rights	

STEP B) Consideration of information; data, research, consultation, engagement

B.1) Consideration of information and data - what have you got and what is it telling you?

Uxbridge library is the largest branch in the borough and designated one of three flagship libraries (alongside Ruislip Manor and Botwell Green). The current library building is spread over 5 floors, with a 6th floor for Local Studies and Archives. The proposal is to relocate the library approx 300 metres down the road, with plans showing a one-floor library spread across the main reception and Middlesex Suite areas of the Civic Centre.

The library member data in A2 shows that Uxbridge library members show a higher than service average for adults under 60 – with 46% in the 18-59 range compared to 34.9% service average. This is most likely due to Uxbridge library's position in the borough's main town centre that has a younger demographic and working age people working in office, retail, services and businesses. Uxbridge is the closest public library to Brunel University and Uxbridge College. In recent years, the St Andrew's development has added 1300 homes to the area, which alongside the aforementioned factors may explain why over 63% of new members (those joining in the past 12 months) are in the 18-59 age range.

In contrast, there is a lower than service average percentage of primary school children registered as members of Uxbridge library. This is in keeping with the demographics of the area, with ages 0-15 being the lowest % in the area, and lower than any other Hillingdon ward. (Note that the Uxbridge South ward profile dates from 2018 and that the library is now situated in Uxbridge ward.)

Data on gender is patchy, and only available where the information has been provided by the library member. The data we do have shows that more women than men are members of Uxbridge library (53.8% vs 36.9%); again, this is common in the library service in general, although according to the 2018 Uxbridge South ward profile, there are slightly more men than women living in the area.

It is important to note that Hillingdon library members can be registered at one branch and regular users of another branch, so some regular visitors to Uxbridge library may not be visible in the above referenced data.

The library service does not collect data on the physical or mental disabilities of its members or visitors, but anecdotally is visited by a wide range of people including people who use wheelchairs or walking aids and people with neurodiverse learning difficulties, on a daily basis. The library also runs groups specifically for people with dementia, and their carers.

Consultation

B.2) Did you carry out any consultation or engagement as part of this assessment?

Please tick ✓ NO YES ✓

A public consultation was not carried out as relocation of an existing service does not require one. However, a customer engagement exercise is being conducted sharing the draft plans with residents.

B.3) Provide any other information to consider as part of the assessment

Legal context

The council has a public duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (Equality Act 2010).

The council has a public duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service (Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964).

Financial context - standard text

Since 2010, the Business Improvement Delivery (BID) Programme has driven transformation across the Council, reducing costs and improving efficiency to ensure that in an environment of increased expenditure from population growth and inflationary uplifts we continue to deliver high quality services that put residents first.

Hillingdon's approach to maintaining sound financial management ensures that our finances are in a robust position, and therefore the Council is well placed to respond to Government funding not increasing at the same pace as the combined impact of a growing demand for services and increased market forces. Our latest projections indicate that further savings of £35m will be required by 2026/27 to bridge the resulting budget gap. A new five year Library Service Strategy was approved in May 2023 following public consultation as part of the Council's transformation programme, with 5 ambitions:

1. Reading, Literacy and Culture
2. Health and Wellbeing
3. Improving digital services and inclusion
4. Information and learning
5. Sustainable service delivery

The fifth of these five ambitions link directly to the need for sound financial management as explained above, including consideration to relocate libraries to create efficiencies. Ambitions 1-4 aim to support residents with access and provision of services, initiatives and promotions that enrich, empower and inform those who live, work or study in the borough.

C) Assessment

What did you find in B1? Who is affected? Is there, or likely to be, an impact on certain groups?

C.1) Describe any **NEGATIVE** impacts (actual or potential):

Equality Group	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
People with physical disabilities	<p>The change to location and layout could have a potentially negative impact on those with a physical disability as it could add additional travel time to the library.</p> <p>We will carry out regular engagement activities with this group to ensure everyone is fully informed of the changes and supported in the transition.</p>
People with a learning disability	<p>The change to location and layout could have a potentially negative impact on those with a learning disability as it could interrupt their routines and travel plans.</p> <p>We will carry out regular engagement activities with this group to ensure everyone is fully informed of the changes and supported in the transition.</p>
Older people with disabilities including dementia	<p>The change to location and layout could have a potentially negative impact on older people with disabilities such as dementia, as it could interrupt their routines and travel plans.</p> <p>We will carry out regular engagement activities with this group to ensure everyone is fully informed of the changes and supported in the transition.</p>
Women	<p>Across all age ranges, there are more female library members than male and while it is hard to quantify what the potential negative impact could be as a result of relocation of the service, any negative impacts will affect women more due to the fact they are the majority of people using the service at Uxbridge library.</p>
Community Safety	<p>The change to location will introduce additional travelling time on foot for those approaching the library from the station/bus garage side of the high street. This could potentially make people feel less safe and increase exposure to antisocial incidents between the current location and the proposed new location. However, it is a short distance from the current location to the proposed new location, through a main thoroughfare that is well lit in the evenings.</p>

C.2) Describe any **POSITIVE** impacts

Equality Group	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
People with physical disabilities	<p>The proposed new library is planned to be on one floor and to be step free, eliminating the need for visitors to use stairs or lifts and vastly improving safe use of the library e.g. in the event of evacuation particularly for people who cannot self-transfer to evacuation equipment.</p> <p>This has the potential to positively impact on people with physical disabilities.</p> <p>Five buses stop outside the Civic Centre, reducing travel time for anyone arriving in Uxbridge via bus on one of those routes.</p>
Service users with a learning disability	<p>The proposed new library is planned to be on one floor, with the intention of improving signposting and wayfinding inside the library. Designated spaces for events and activities will reduce sound leakage that can disturb people with certain learning disabilities.</p>
Older people with disabilities including dementia	<p>The proposed new library is planned to be on one floor, with the intention of improving signposting and wayfinding inside the library. Designated spaces for events and activities will ensure that people with dementia have a calm environment in which to meet.</p>
Women	<p>Across all age ranges, there are more female library members than male and while it is hard to quantify what the potential positive impact could be because of relocation of the service, any positive impacts will affect women more due to the fact they are the majority of people using the service at Uxbridge library.</p>
Community Safety	<p>The change to location will reduce travelling time on foot for those approaching the library from the St Andrews end of the high street, and those arriving by bus on routes that terminate outside the Civic Centre. The proposed new library is on one floor and in a location shared with security services, potentially making people feel safer while using the library.</p>

D) Conclusions

The Council intends to maintain a large network of libraries, run in an efficient and cost effective manner without compromising on the high level of service offer. The proposed relocation of Uxbridge library to approx.300 metres down the road could be an inconvenience to those approaching the library from the bus depot, Underground station or other access points to the high street; conversely, for those using the five bus routes that stop outside the Civic Centre or other access points from the St. Andrews end of the High Street, the relocation will be beneficial.

It is acknowledged that the proposed new library will have a smaller footprint than the current building, and that some residents have expressed concern that this will reduce the offer. The reduction in book stock will be based on analysis of stock that has not issued for over 2 years, which is broadly equivalent to the reduction in shelf space. While the library will be smaller, the optimisation of space means it will have an increase of features that are beneficial and in demand by the community, including meeting rooms and study pods currently not featured in Uxbridge library. An increase in laptop/device charging bars and informal/relaxed study space will be introduced based on observed trends.

Although libraries are universal spaces and adaptations based on specific user groups are limited as a result, the provision of a one-floor, step free access library in Hillingdon's main town centre provides opportunities to improve the visitor experience, including for people with neurodiverse learning difficulties, dementia and mobility issues.

The proposed new location for the library negates the need for evacuation equipment and, due to being on one floor with step-free fire exit access, meets the requirement to ensure all visitors can use the library safely and evacuate the building in the event of a fire, power failure or other emergency.



Signed and dated:..... ...15.11.2023.....

Name and position:.....Perry Scott, Corporate Director of Place.....