

“Let’s Get Barking and Dagenham Reading” A Library Strategy for Barking and Dagenham, 2013 – 2016

Aim: The aim of the strategy is to provide the highest quality, affordable and accessible library service for all those living, working and studying in Barking and Dagenham in order to improve literacy levels in the Borough, enrich people’s lives and enable them to achieve their full potential.

Priorities:

1. **Marketing – Tell people about it** – making residents aware of the services on offer through a marketing and engagement strategy
2. **Community Engagement and Collaboration** – we want more residents engaged in helping to shape and participate in the delivery of library services
3. **Improving our buildings** – review library buildings, staff, volunteers, stock, technology and innovation
4. **Staff and volunteers** – ensuring staff have the right skills to deliver the service effectively and exploring how the roles of volunteers in supporting the service can be expanded and encouraged
5. **Stock and reader development** – consult with customers and staff on what they want and make the best use of available evidence to meet these needs in the most cost-effective way.
6. **Technology and innovation** – taking a strategic approach to the development of new services and to explore offers that will enable the service to respond to changing demands over the next few years.
7. **Financial sustainability** – looking at innovative and creative ways to achieve best value services for the community. This includes considering a variety of different service delivery models and income generation plans.

Governance

- The Barking and Dagenham Library Service will work with colleagues throughout the borough including other council officers, the third sector, private sector, and local health providers to drive forward the strategy.
- The Get Barking and Dagenham Reading Network will play an integral part in promoting the service’s three year reading campaign and overseeing the delivery of this strategy.
- The library service will also continue to work with Barking & Dagenham College, University of East London and Adult College to encourage take up of courses.

Facts and figures about libraries in Barking & Dagenham in 2012/13

- There were **1.406 million** visits to our libraries last year
- **684,957** items of stock were issued
- There were **3,531** e-book issues
- Volunteers donated **2,575** hours
- Barking and Dagenham libraries hold **420,958** items in stock
- Residents have access to over **6 million items** through the London Libraries consortium libraries



Monitoring & Evaluation

Throughout the life of this strategy the monitoring, evaluation and review will be undertaken by the Senior Management Team of the Library Service. There will be regular updates to the Get Barking and Dagenham Reading Network who will monitor the progress of the service action plan.

Resourcing the Strategy

As well as aiming to drive improvements in the library service, the strategy will inform the budget setting process of the Council and its partners. It will also help to provide a compelling strategic rationale to support external funding bids for new projects, programmes and facilities.

A cornerstone of the strategy is the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness to deliver the same quality and range of services for less money, or to deliver more for the same level of expenditure. There will also be a continued focus over the life of the strategy and beyond to secure funding from other sources working in partnership with local, sub-regional and national agencies.

There also needs to be the consideration of a range of management models including asset transfer of libraries as well as services being delivered by the voluntary, private or trust sectors. These could provide a more effective way of maximising available resources in order to release funds for the continued development of library provision in these financially constrained times.

