

# Draft St Helens Borough Library Strategy

## Consultation and Engagement Strategy

### Overview

The St Helens Borough Strategy outlines at priority 5 its intention to CREATE GREEN AND VIBRANT PLACES THAT REFLECT OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE. The Council wants St Helens to be a better, healthier and more sustainable place that proudly celebrates our culture and heritage whilst embracing new opportunities. However, like all areas the borough faces a number of challenges, including linking communities to services. The St Helens Library strategy sets out how we can link our communities to the many services both statutory and non-statutory that the Library service provides.

To support our commitment to *Make sure every resident has access to an outstanding Library Service*, the Council has prepared a Draft Library Strategy that specifically identifies and addresses the need for libraries across the Borough, it proposes reductions in the number of library buildings, the extension of existing services such as the Home Delivery Library Service, the improvement of the digital library offer and the introduction of new services, including community managed libraries and an outreach service working in partnership. The St Helens Library Strategy sets out an ambitious plan for the library service over the next five years.

Libraries have and continue to be great learning and social enablers, but the way residents and communities use our library service has changed. The digital library offer is a growth area with digital e-books and other digital materials increasing dramatically in recent years. St Helens Library Service also provides Cultural Hubs and Arts in Libraries Programme for which it is an Arts Council England National Portfolio (NPO) organisation. It has an accredited Archive Service and also provides a full library service to 75% of the borough's schools through the Schools Library Service.

However, the Council must make significant savings over the next year and therefore this will mean that we have to deliver many services differently including the library service.

In this context the five year Library Strategy will bring forward a vision for a more modern and exciting service that embraces local community involvement more and provides greater access and participation for everyone. This includes providing an outreach service for all communities in regard to arts in libraries, support to those seeking employment, home delivery of books and materials, the Archive Service and Schools Library Service. This is supported by our strategy that ensures our focus remains on our service and activities and not bricks and mortar, however we will wherever possible retain library buildings in communities that are most in need.

This communications plan supports activities to raise awareness of the Library Strategy and to promote and encourage customers, residents and communities to take part in a 12-week consultation process.

# Consultation Objective

- To raise awareness of the draft Library Strategy and the approach for a modern, effective and accessible library service
- To encourage customers, residents and communities to have their say on the proposals for the future of the library service including the specific proposal around library closures.
- To communicate to stakeholders about developing outreach library services and opportunities to promote the digital library service,
- To communicate to stakeholders which libraries will be retained and which ones are proposed to close and why.
- To encourage existing customers of the library service to consider new ways to access services differently.
- To involve a wide range of users and non-users in the decision-making process to shape the new Library Strategy and service.
- To ensure that those with protected characteristics that currently access library services are informed and encouraged to respond to the consultation to ensure their needs and the impacts of the draft Library Strategy proposals on them have been robustly considered.

# Consultation Notification

St Helens Borough Council will endeavour to engage in a variety of ways, to increase general awareness of the draft strategy amongst St Helens residents, businesses, and stakeholder groups. Subject to Cabinet approval, the consultation process will run over a twelve-week period in line with the Council's Consultation Code and Statutory Requirements. The consultation will run for twelve weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

The methods of engagement, awareness raising, and consultation are summarised as follows:

- **Social media advertising**: To notify all residents, businesses, and stakeholders within the Borough of the consultation.
- **Stakeholder social media posts**: Stakeholders will be encouraged to publish their own social media posts, advertising the consultation.
- **Press activity**: Press releases shall be issued to key local publications, with references to the consultation and an invitation to respond.
- **St Helens Library Strategy webpage and online survey**: will include a summary of the draft strategy and a survey link, for residents to respond.
- **Paper Based surveys**: paper questionnaires will be available in all libraries and the main council buildings including the Town Hall and customer contact centre. Questionnaires will be available in other languages and formats on request.
- **Street Survey**: a Market Research Company has been engaged to engage with a proposed representative sample of residents and users, circa 2,200.
- **Membership survey**: All library members where contact details exist will be sent a notification of the consultation and a link to the online survey. They will also be informed of where they can access the Paper version of the survey.
- **Drop in/ roadshow information sessions**: in libraries for people to find out more. The dates and times of these will be placed in each library and added to the council's website. All group users of the libraries will be contacted direct to inform them of the drop ins.
- **Specific Target group engagement to include**: engagement with individuals and groups with protected characteristics who currently use libraries to meet. This will be led by the Libraries Management and Equalities Teams who will proactively seek support and encourage them to respond to the consultation. They will include but not be limited to
  - Rainhill Railway and Heritage Society

- Faith groups
- Older persons groups
- St Helens Youth parliament
- St Helens Carers
- Veterans' groups.
- **Summary fact sheets:** will be made available for each local library providing information on the range of services currently on offer in individual libraries, insight into trends in usage and current costs. In addition, information will be made available on alternative models and how communities in other parts of the country are helping to deliver the service

## Social Media Advertising

Adverts for the consultation are to be distributed across the entirety of the Borough. The Council's Communications Team (with help from the Library Team) will lead on the content, comment management and the launch of all social media advertising. This will be via Facebook, as well as Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

The online social media campaign will run for 12 weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

## Feedback Mechanisms

During the consultation period feedback will be invited on the draft Library Strategy.

There will be several ways to provide feedback, including:

- Via a dedicated survey link available on our Library webpage.
- Via the same survey, available in paper form on request.
- Via a dedicated email address: [libraries@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:libraries@sthelens.gov.uk)
- Via individual interviews conducted by an independent marketing research company.

All the feedback submitted will be managed and collated by Library Service staff who will be supported by the Council's Policy Team. The team will produce a final consultation report following the end of the consultation. This document will outline the consultation methodology, and the feedback that has been received, and changes made to the draft strategy as a result. It will be published alongside the Cabinet report seeking adoption of the final strategy and will subsequently be available on the Council's website to provide all parties with a transparent overview of the consultation process.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Various public stakeholder groups will be invited by email to comment on the draft strategy as part of the consultation. Some of these groups have been consulted and engaged with as part of the development of the draft strategy to date and will have a further opportunity for formal comment during the consultation period.

Groups that will be engaged include.

- Library users
- All residents
- Community groups who use the library buildings
- Library staff
- Volunteers and potential future volunteers
- Local businesses

- Elected Members
- MPs
- Officers of the council
- Schools – primary, secondary and SEND provision schools.
- Nurseries and early years providers
- Colleges of Further Education
- St Helens Chamber
- Job Centre Plus
- The World of Glass, Heart of Glass and other local arts, culture and heritage organisations
- Torus and other housing providers
- Arts Council England
- DCMS

## Library Strategy Public Consultation Schedule 2023

Activity	Lead	Dates	Groups (protected characteristics)
Online Survey	Katherine Stanton	1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> July	Will be
Paper Based Survey	Paul Williams	1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> July	N/A
Street Survey	Murray Consulting	From 1 <sup>st</sup> May	N/A
<b>Drop-In Information Sessions</b>			
Chester Lane Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 11am – 1pm	Monday Read and Rhyme time 11am Friday Read and Rhyme time 11am  Tuesdays - Jigsaws and a brew: 10.30am - 2pm  Last Thursday of the month Reading Group 2pm
Eccleston Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 11am – 1pm	Tuesday Read and Rhyme time 10.30am  Tuesdays: Fit forever (run by Sports Development): 11:30am - 12:30pm (Places are booked for these sessions)  1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month Reading Group 2pm - 3pm  2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month Reading Group 1:45pm - 3pm

			Friday Read and Rhyme time 10:30am  Craft Group
Garswood Library	Tanya Wilcock / David Boocock / Bill Renshaw	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 2pm to 4pm	Monday Read and Rhyme time 10:30am  Friday Book and Browse Session
Haydock Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 2pm – 4pm	Monday Read and Rhyme time 10:30am  First Monday of the month Billinge Reading Group 2pm  Thursday Read and Rhyme time 2.15pm  Last Thursday of the month Reading Group 2pm
Moss Bank Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 10am – 12noon	Mondays - Gentle exercise and Boccia (run by Sports Development): 10am – 11am (Places are booked for these sessions)  1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month Reading Group 10am  Shared Reading (2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month) 10am – 11am  Friday Read and Rhyme time 10.30am

<p>Newton Library</p>	<p>Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw</p>	<p>Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 10am – 12noon</p>	<p>Monday Read and Rhyme time 10.30am</p> <p>Last Monday of the month Reading Group 5:30pm</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the Month: Local History Group 1pm - 3pm</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month Reading Group 2pm</p> <p>Friday Read and Rhyme time 2:15pm</p>
<p>Parr Library</p>	<p>Tanya Wilcock / David Boocock / Bill Renshaw</p>	<p>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2.00pm – 4.00pm</p>	<p>Brew Mondays: 1st Monday of the month, 5pm - 6.30pm</p> <p>Last Monday of the month Reading Group 5:30pm</p> <p>Tuesday Read and Rhyme time 11am Friday Read and Rhyme time 2pm</p>
<p>Rainford Library</p>	<p>Tanya Wilcock / David Boocock / Kathryn Boothroyd</p>	<p>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 11.00am – 1.00pm</p>	<p>Mondays - Gentle exercise and Boccia (run by Sports Development): 11:30am - 12:30pm (Places are booked for these sessions)</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month Reading Group 2pm</p> <p>Tuesday Read and Rhyme time 10.30am</p>

			Fridays - Dominoes: 2pm - 4pm
Rainhill Library	<p>Kathryn Boothroyd/Bill Renshaw/Dave Boocock</p> <p>Tanya Wilcock / David Boocock / Kathryn Boothroyd</p>	<p>May/June meeting date with Historical Society TBC</p> <p>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2.00pm – 4.00pm</p>	<p>Rainhill Railway and Heritage Society</p> <p>Tuesday Read and Rhyme time 2:15pm</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month Reading Group 5:30pm</p> <p>Friday Read and Rhyme time 10.30am</p>
St.Helens Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 10am – 12 noon	<p>Mondays Yarn Group: 10.30am - 12.30pm</p> <p>Last Tuesday of the month Reading Group 2pm</p> <p>Wednesday Read and Rhyme time 10.15am</p> <p>Thursday Read and Rhyme time 10:15am</p>
Thatto Heath Library	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 2pm – 4pm	<p>Mondays - Knit and natter: 2.30pm-4.30pm</p> <p>Thursdays: Fit forever (run by Sports Development) :1.15pm - 2.15pm (Places are booked for these sessions)</p>



			1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of the month Reading Group 2pm Friday Read and Rhyme time 11am
<b>Target Group Engagement</b>			
Rainhill Railway and Heritage Society	Kathryn Boothroyd / William Renshaw	Date to be confirmed	
Faith Groups	Kathryn Boothroyd / Simon Cousins	Dates to be confirmed	
Older Peoples Groups	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Dates to be confirmed	
St.Helens Youth Parliament	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Date to be confirmed	
St.Helens Carers	Kathryn Boothroyd / Bill Renshaw	Date to be confirmed	
Veterans Groups	Kathryn Boothroyd / Simon Cousins	Date to be confirmed	
<b>Media Activity</b>			
Launch of Consultation	Jayne Taylor	w/c 1 <sup>st</sup> May	N/A
Mid-Point Reminder	Jayne Taylor	w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> May	N/A
Consultation Closes 31 <sup>st</sup> July reminder	Jayne Taylor	w/c 24 <sup>th</sup> July	N/A