

MAYOR AND CABINET			
<b>Report Title</b>	Budget Strategy 2011-14 and Savings Options - Libraries		
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	Item No.	
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Community Services		
<b>Class</b>	Open	Date:	17 February 2011

## 1 Purpose

On 14 July 2010, Mayor and Cabinet agreed to initiate a public consultation exercise on the proposals for budget reductions. This report sets out the outcome of that consultation and presents a recommended option for delivering financial savings within the Council's Library and Information Service.

## 2 Recommendations

The Mayor is recommended to:

- Note the budget strategy for the Library and Information Service as detailed in section 6.
- Agree the closure of Blackheath Village Library, Sydenham Library, Crofton Park Library, New Cross Library and Grove Park Library with effect from 28 May 2011.
- Request officers to pursue the potential for asset transfer to deliver community library services in the affected neighbourhoods, as set out in Section 12, and report the outcome in due course to Mayor & Cabinet.
- Return to Mayor and Cabinet with a full report on the process and the financial findings.

## 3 Policy Context

3.1 *Shaping the Future*, the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy includes the following priority outcomes which relate to the work of the Library and Information Service and reflect the Council's aspirations for the service:

- **Ambitious and Achieving** – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.

- **Empowered and Responsible** – where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.
- **Healthy, Active and Enjoyable** – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing.
- **Dynamic and Prosperous** – where people are part of vibrant localities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.

3.2 The Library and Information Service also contributes to the following Council Priorities:

- **Community leadership and empowerment** – developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community.
- **Strengthening the local economy** – gaining resources to regenerate key localities, strengthen employment skills and promote public transport.
- **Active, healthy citizens** – leisure, sporting, learning and creative activities for everyone.

3.3 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 makes provision for regulating and improving library services and set out the duty of every library authority to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”. In addition to supervision, the relevant Secretary of State has the duty to “promote the improvement of those services generally”.

3.4 The Act also sets out that, in fulfilling its duties, a library authority should have regard to keeping adequate stocks of books, other printed matter, pictures, records, films and other materials in sufficient number, range and quality to meet the public’s requirements and the special needs of adult and children. Library authorities were enjoined to encourage and advise adults and children to maximise the use made of the services. The 1964 Act still governs the extensive public library network in the 21st century.

## 4 Background

4.1 The Council faces an extremely challenging financial environment, as set out more fully in the main budget report on this agenda. In summary, the reasonable working expectation before the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) on 20 October 2010 was that net savings of £60m over the period 2011/12 to 2013/14 would be required, or approximately 25% of the Council’s service budgets. As at the date of despatch of this report, there is insufficient detail available on the announcements in the CSR to be completely certain of the precise local impact. However, nothing in the CSR announcements has caused officers to make fundamental changes to their financial planning assumptions for the Council over this period.

- 4.2 In this context all service budgets have been closely examined to identify opportunities to reduce net costs. Officers across the Council have approached this task with the assumption that savings on this scale cannot be delivered without significant impact on the services being delivered. However, throughout the process, officers have also sought to find new ways of delivering services that will preserve and, if possible, enhance their core features in order to maximise the overall impact on the total service offer.
- 4.3 At the meeting of the Mayor and Cabinet on 14 July 2010, the Mayor endorsed the Council's financial survey 2011/14. He further instructed officers to develop and consult on the options for savings in Phase 1 detailed in the report, and to report back with proposals in November 2010. This report complies with the request. It is set out in much fuller detail than some other budget proposals because of the complexity of the issues and the degree of public concern and engagement.
- 4.4 Following on from the meeting of 14 July 2010, officers set up a series of public meetings about the future of the Library and Information Service. These meetings were very well attended and have contributed significantly to consideration of the proposal and the options set out in this report. Nationally, library services are held very dear by many citizens who have a strong sense of their history as one of the principal achievements of late 19th century municipalism. They have a strong belief that they offer a highly valued service today. The sense of history is important in this context: it has left the Council with buildings which are not necessarily appropriate for the delivery of a modern library service, albeit that some of them are well-respected examples of local architecture in their own right.
- 4.5 The public library service is very different today from that offered when it was first established, or indeed from that offered in even the latter part of the 20th century. However, the core function of the service, linked to self-improvement and access to services and information, is very much alive. Libraries are still a place where books may be borrowed, although nationally issues are in decline. Modern libraries also offer access to the Internet, a range of other media that may be borrowed or accessed (including eBooks), and they are increasingly used as a community facility, for example for story-telling and other activities for children and families.
- 4.6 The Library and Information Service budget for 2010/11 is £5,919.3k and currently supports a network of 12 libraries, the Library Resources Centre, the home library service, the Local Studies Centre and the Borough Archive. The Service employs a total of 179 staff, the equivalent of 96.6 FTEs.
- 4.7 Current opening hours for the Service are set out at Annex 1.

4.8 In the past four years, the Council has put substantial investment into the Service as detailed in 4.9 below. However, capital investment in the CSR has been the subject of some of the most significant cutbacks at national level. Since the Council's own capital programme is fully committed to at least 2012/13, the CSR announcement suggests that future finance to the programme could be placed at risk. It is therefore unlikely that any substantial future capital investment could be secured, although officers will continue to explore options for making use of Section 106 funding.

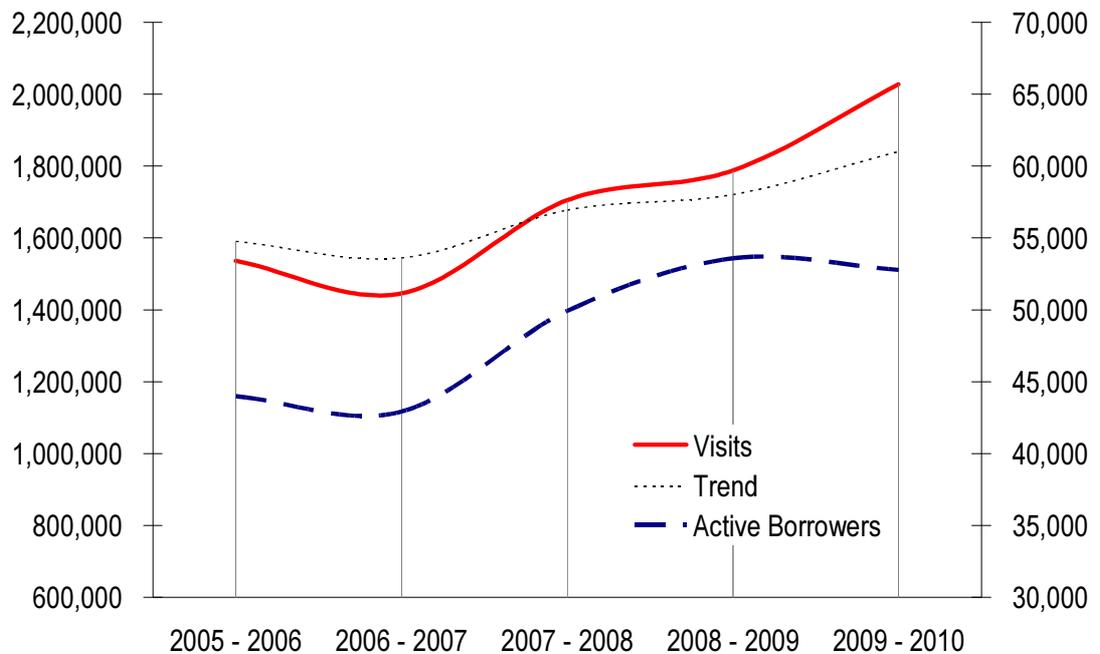
4.9 Library investment matrix

<b>Library</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Capital *</b>	<b>Description</b>
Downham	2007	£423k	Downham Health and Leisure Centre – PFI redevelopment including library, leisure centre, community hall, doctor surgeries, café, crèche, outdoor spaces and parking facilities.
Forest Hill	2007	£1m	Refurbishment of the library building and DDA compliance of ground floor spaces.
Manor House	2009	£401k	Refurbishment of the building to include a library, Children's Centre, hireable spaces, remodelled parking and full DDA access.
Catford	2010	£75k	Introduction of self-service facilities.
Lewisham	2010	£150k	Introduction of self-service facilities and redesign of the ground floor.
Torridon Road	2011	£75k	Refurbishment and extension of the building to include a library, Children's Centre, hireable spaces, full compliance with DDA access and self-service facilities.
Deptford	2011	£500k	Redevelopment of the site to include a new Tidemill Primary School, public library, facilities for adult learning, third sector provision, Access Point service, hireable spaces, café and full DDA compliance.

\* These amounts relate to the library component with the scheme.

4.10 These investments have transformed the Service by improving the book stock, introducing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) that allows the use of self-service terminals, extending the opening hours, improving the deployment of staff, and creating new spaces and opportunities for residents. These libraries have dedicated areas for young people, flexible spaces for children and families, projection facilities, improved technology and life long learning facilities. The use of RFID in particular has freed up staff time to facilitate the role of library staff who, as trusted and impartial brokers, provide unbiased access to resources, expert advice and support.

4.11 This investment has improved the overall performance of the Service. Visits and issues are the standard measures of satisfaction and public engagement. The table below shows the performance of the Service between 2005/06 and 2009/10.



\* Figures are recorded as at the end of the financial year.

4.12 There is a clear correlation between the previous capital investment and the performance of the libraries. Since it is not possible in the current financial climate to deliver additional capital investment to other library buildings, the Service must consider its options based on the assets in place.

The Library and Information Service Strategy

4.13 In May 2008, the Mayor’s Commission on Libraries and Learning was established to identify and respond to the challenges and opportunities faced by the Borough in developing library and adult learning services

across Lewisham. The Commission's recommendations have laid the basis for the Library and Information Service's strategic direction.

4.14 Lewisham's libraries have defied national trends by increasing visitor numbers and loans. The Council therefore aims to continue to maintain library services in the Borough and expand their scope and flexibility. This includes, where resources allow:

- Establishing self-issue as the standard to aim for in all Lewisham libraries, but without compromising opportunities for the public to interact with library staff.
- Establishing a 7 days a week service as the standard to aim for in all Lewisham libraries.
- Future-proofing the design of new buildings to promote flexible spaces capable of supporting a range of uses.
- Enabling service users and local communities to have a greater involvement in the design and delivery of library services and the use of library buildings.
- Extending and enhancing virtual services offered through the website and elsewhere, while recognising that not everyone accesses services in this way.

4.15 The Commission considered the future of the twelve libraries and recognised the difficulty of attracting investments for each library - *"Modernising the entire network of libraries is not achievable within existing spending plans and challenges will therefore remain for a number of the other library buildings. In responding to the challenges faced by older building all options should be considered including relocating to alternative buildings, refurbishing buildings, co-location with other services, selling or redeveloping buildings and reinvesting resources."*

4.16 A further recommendation of the Commission was to develop library services that are not dependent on council buildings for service delivery. In response, the Library and Information Service has been working to develop the following partnerships

- Elfrida School is hosting Books for Bellingham, run by the local community and supported by the Library and Information Service
- Honor Oak Community Centre is proposing to run a community library with support from the Library and Information Service and local volunteers.
- In November 2010, Pepys Resource Centre, run by Eco Computer Systems in partnership with Hyde Housing, will open and run a community library with support from local volunteers and the Library and Information Service.

4.17 The Service supports this network of community based provision by providing up to date stock, delivering professional input on the quality of the stock and services available, organising activities and book

promotions, training partner organisations, offering technical services such as access to online information resources. It is hoped that there will be an opportunity to introduce self service terminals in these neighbourhood facilities.

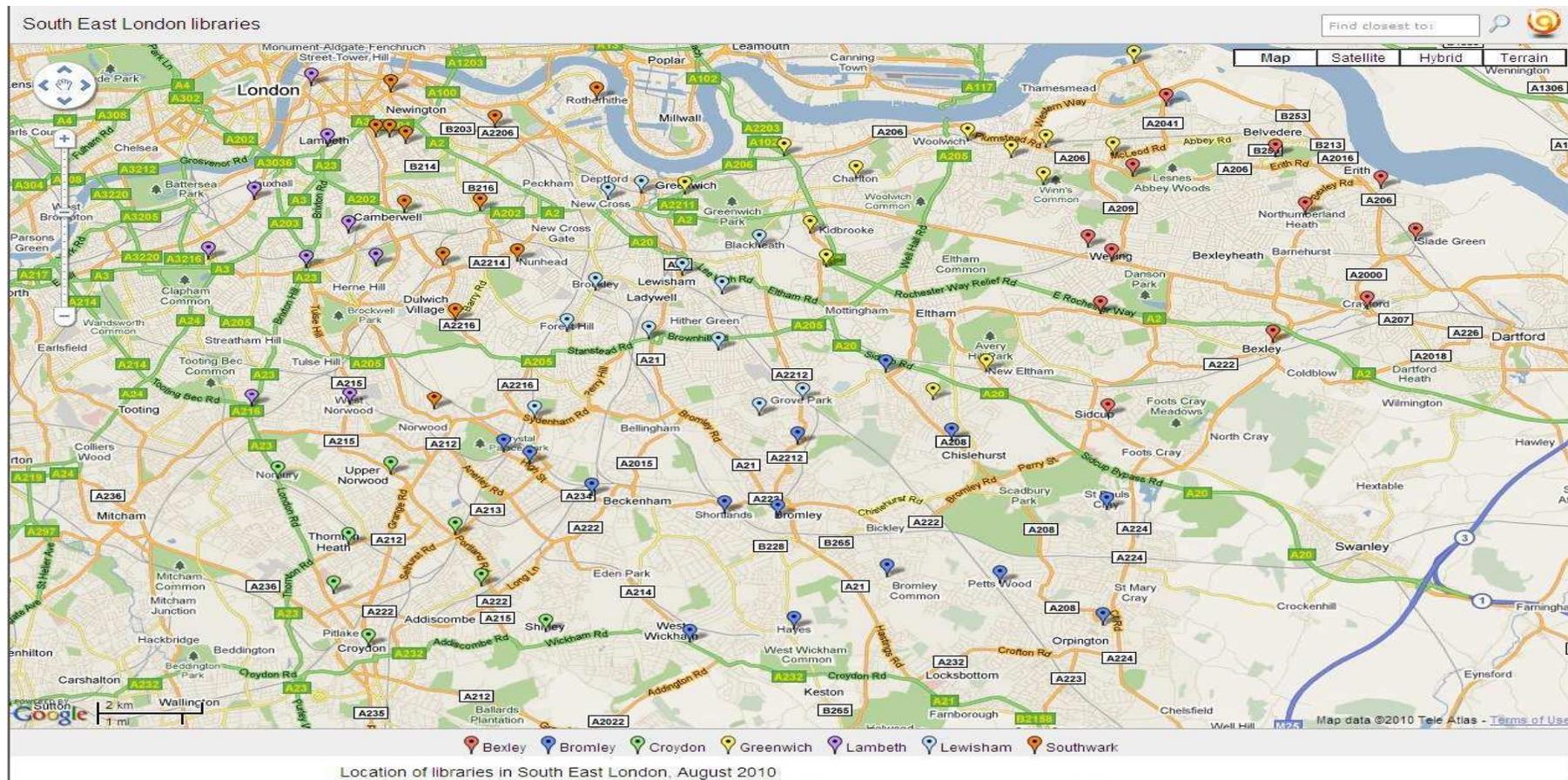
## **5 Service Remodelling**

- 5.1 The Service is working to position itself at the core of Council provision, integrating its services with the new Council website, linking up more closely with Oracle, the financial system and linking the new Library Management System to the Council-wide Customer Relation Management System. This will result in libraries being one of the main points of access into Council services, particularly through the one card approach being adopted by Library, Leisure and Cultural Services.
- 5.2 One of the key recommendations (Recommendation 10) of the Mayor's Commission focuses on the promotion of joined-up work. This is why the Service is working to position Lewisham as the benchmark for library provision in a wider regional context. Lewisham has been working with Bromley and Bexley to develop London Requests, a service that is delivering Inter Library Loan Services across three boroughs. The scheme now includes Croydon and is due to expand to include two more London Authorities by March 2011. The three original boroughs are also implementing a 'joined up' Bibliographic Services Unit that will be based at the Library Resource Centre in Hither Green.
- 5.3 Lewisham has now joined the London Library Consortium (a pan-London grouping of 12 Library Authorities – soon to be 14) who share one Library Management System as a basis for further collaboration in book acquisitions, bibliographic services, Inter Library Loans and performance evaluation.
- 5.4 From April 2011, Lewisham residents will have a library card that will enable them to borrow a book in more than 100 libraries across London, access any library service such as public access computers for free in 12 London boroughs and request books from 16 different London library services. Lewisham is leading on a bid on behalf of seven south east London boroughs to win additional resources from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for the Future Libraries Programme. Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark will look at opportunities for closer collaborations that will enable improved services and reduce costs. A report and action plan – due for submission to the DCMS in January 2011 – will offer a model of collaborative solutions for the whole of London.
- 5.5 The work that Lewisham is promoting across south east London dovetails with the initiative sponsored by Capital Ambition through the

London Library Change Programme which is part of the wider London Cultural Improvement Programme.

- 5.6 In line with the recommendations of the Mayor's Commission, the Service is therefore moving to remodel itself into one that will continue to provide an excellent service to residents for the foreseeable future.
- 5.7 However, in order to sustain the improvements while delivering substantial reductions in revenue costs the Service has to consider how current resources are deployed and what services are necessary to sustain quality provision for Lewisham residents.

## 5.8 Map of Library provision in south east London



This map shows the location of public libraries in the South East London region, including Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

## 6 Rationale for Savings Proposals

- 6.1 The Library and Information Service net budget for 2010/11 is £5,919.3k. This figure includes a controllable budget of £4,433.3k. This figure excludes the property related costs managed within the Property Services budget held by the Regeneration Directorate. In line with the Council's budget strategy all services have been tasked with identifying savings over the period 2011/12 to 2012/14. A number of factors may influence the way in which the percentage saving is calculated for the individual services, including the savings that a smaller percentage can realise if applied in year 1 and the different cost bases of each budget to which the savings are applied.
- 6.2 The budget for the Library and Information Service is broadly set out below.

Staff costs	£3,780.4k (£3,400.4k current base budget plus a further £380k in respect of Single Status costs)
Book Fund	£483.2k
Other running costs	£448.7k
Property costs (not managed under the Council's financial accountability framework within the Library and Information Service, but clearly relevant)	£537k (This figure includes £81k for building cleaning costs)
Other corporate overheads (support service costs and capital charges) not controllable within the Library and Information Service	£1,486k
Income	£(279k)

Budget figures are based on 2010/11 revised budget at October 2010.

- 6.3 In theory, a wide variety of options within the Library and Information Service could be considered. However, an analysis of costs demonstrates the constraints. The key considerations are set out below.
- a. Charges could be increased. However, income budgets account for only 6% of the total gross controllable budget and could not reasonably make a sufficient contribution materially to affect the overall strategic choices available. If fines for late returns and charges for borrowing those items which are currently chargeable were doubled, the additional income raised would not exceed £279k, even if the number of fines and the level of borrowing activity was unchanged as a result. The Council will separately consider whether such charges should be increased but as the financial impact of this cannot affect the overall strategic analysis it has been excluded from further consideration in this report.

- b. The book fund is, in economic analysis, an entirely variable cost. More or less can be spent without the need to consider, for example, contractual commitments or other matters that might limit the flexibility of the service to deliver savings. However, for the purposes of this analysis the book fund has been excluded. This does not preclude subsequent decisions to make savings in this area. This decision to exclude it from this analysis reflects a conscious management objective to maintain a high quality library service, albeit centred around fewer buildings than is currently the case. Indeed, the suggestion to maintain some library services in areas where closures are proposed is based on the principle of maintaining a book offer in each neighbourhood. Therefore, significant reductions to the book fund would not be considered consistent with this strategic objective. The options in this report could be amended, if it were so decided, by including savings from the book fund.
  - c. Of the remaining costs (including property costs), 78% are attributable to staffing costs. Plainly, any material savings must therefore focus significantly on these staffing costs.
  - d. The other cost element (except those items set out above) include the operational running costs relating to the Service and would not deliver significant savings.
- 6.4 Buildings and staffing are inter-connected in a service such as libraries. Decisions about the number of premises from which to operate will impact on decisions about the staffing needed to deliver the service.
- 6.5 In terms of presenting options, officers considered two options, namely reducing staffing levels and the number of buildings by five (which is the recommended option) or a second option of reducing staffing levels and maintaining the current number of buildings.
- 6.6 In addition, officers have considered different delivery models including joining up with other library authorities or the outsourcing of the service provision to commercial providers. In relation to the first consideration, it was judged that this approach would not deliver the level of savings required in the timescale available and would possibly incur additional costs. In relation to the second, Lewisham has considered the implications and sufficient information on the market is not available at this time. However, officers will continue to explore these models.

**Option 1: Reducing the number of current buildings by five and reducing staffing levels**

- 6.7 The table below shows that seven libraries will deliver 415 opening hours per week, a reduction of 149 hours on the current 564. To set this in context, the Service offered 417.5 opening hours per week in 2006 – 2007. However, the reduced number of hours excludes the

hours that a developed network of Community Libraries could provide. This could deliver up to 280 additional hours per week, which would make library services available for 695 hours per week, an increase of 23.2% on the current offer.

<b>Library</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Blackheath Village	31.0	0.0
Catford	54.0	54.0
CroftonPark	36.0	0.0
Deptford	53.0	53.0
Downham	80.0	80.0
Forest Hill	66.0	66.0
Grove Park	26.5	0.0
Lewisham	61.0	61.0
Manor House	65.0	65.0
New Cross	25.5	0.0
Sydenham	30.0	0.0
Torridon Road	36.0	36.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>564.0</b>	<b>415.0</b>
Variance on current (%)		-26.4%
Variance on current (hours)		-149.0

- 6.8 Closing any of the Catford, Downham or Wavelengths facilities does not make strategic sense. These are large buildings that include libraries in which the Council has invested significant resources. Closing the library services here would not significantly alter the running costs of the entire facility and would simply leave the Council with vacant space with no particular use to be applied to it. Similar considerations apply to Manor House where the income figure includes hire of rooms.
- 6.9 The central library in Lewisham has a different cost base to those of other buildings and provides additional services such as the reference collection, the Local Studies Service and the Archive. It therefore does not make strategic sense to close this building as these services are ones that the Council would always want and has a legal duty to provide.
- 6.10 The table below shows the combined 2009/10 premises related costs incurred by both Property Service and the Library and Information Service in relation to each library building. These figures exclude staffing and other operational costs and relate solely to premises related expenditure and income. Figures for Catford and Downham libraries do not appear because these libraries are part of larger multi-use buildings and it is not possible to isolate the specific cost of the library.

Library	2009/10 Premises Costs	2009/10 Premises Income	Net cost	Weekly opening hours	Cost per opening hour	Rank
	a	b	a+b			
Blackheath	£119,826	-£1,952	£117,874	31.0	£73.12	1
Crofton Park	£31,314	0	£31,314	36.0	£16.73	8
Grove Park	£30,377	0	£30,377	26.5	£22.04	4
New Cross	£27,542	0	£27,542	25.5	£20.77	5
Sydenham	£30,979	0	£30,979	30.0	£19.86	7
Forest Hill	£50,157	-£878	£49,279	66.0	£14.36	9
Lewisham	£139,135	-£6,550	£132,585	61.0	£41.80	2
Manor House	£72,681	-£42,855	£29,826	65.0	£8.82	10
Torrison	£43,663	0	£43,663	33.5	£25.06	3
Wavelengths	£63,886	-£7,179	£56,707	53.0	£20.58	6

- 6.11 The choice of buildings therefore is reduced to Blackheath, New Cross, Torrison Road, Sydenham, Grove Park, Crofton Park and Forest Hill. Of these, Forest Hill is clearly the cheapest in running costs and performs well, and so has been excluded from further analysis.
- 6.12 Torrison Road is currently subject to major refurbishment and extension to accommodate a Children's Centre and improve the library facilities. For these reasons closure is not proposed.
- 6.13 Taking into account the above analysis including the investment needs of the buildings, the proposal is to close five library buildings (Blackheath, New Cross, Sydenham, Grove Park and Crofton Park) with effect from 31 March 2011 and to model service delivery on the remaining seven buildings.
- 6.14 This option would deliver a saving of £755k within the direct Library and Information Service budget, which will enable further savings of £240k (based on 2009/10 actual costs including building cleaning contract costs) within the Property Services Budget. The total saving for the Council associated with these proposals is therefore £995k.
- 6.15 This option allows the Service to restructure and operate, with a reduced staffing complement, from fewer buildings.
- 6.16 Of these savings £0.205m would be delivered within the head office function, or 27% of the budget in this area, mostly at the more senior grades. Within the central delivery services the savings are £0.350m, or 38% of the current budget. The balance of £0.5m will come from library staff, or 20% of the current budget. Savings here will principally be achieved at the area manager tier of management and the FTE requirement for library assistants and senior library assistants will be almost unchanged. This is consistent with the strategic objective of delivering an enhanced service from seven key locations and consistent with the Council's overall objective of minimising the impact on the front line of service delivery.

6.17 The proposals for this option are laid out as though the community asset transfers set out in section 13 can be achieved and that continued library provision is achieved at each of the current 12 sites. However, it is important to understand that this option is still capable of practical implementation if some or all of these transfers cannot be achieved. The extent to which successful community asset transfers can, or cannot, be achieved under this option does not significantly impact on the ongoing financial appraisal of each option (although it does affect the transitional costs, as more fully set out in section 15 of this report).

Service Delivery Structure

6.18 It is proposed that libraries will be grouped in three distinct areas as follows:

	<b>Hub Libraries</b>	<b>Community Libraries</b>
<b>Area 1</b>	Wavelengths (Deptford)	Pepys New Cross
<b>Area 2</b>	Manor House Lewisham	Blackheath Honor Oak Crofton Park
<b>Area 3</b>	Catford Downham Torridon Road Forest Hill	Bellingham Grove Park Sydenham

6.19 Area 1

Area 1 will include Forest Hill and Wavelengths. Two Community Libraries will be included in Area 1, based in Evelyn and New Cross.

Area 2

Area 2 will include Manor House and Lewisham. Three Community Libraries, based in Blackheath, Honor Oak and Crofton Park, will be included in Area 2.

Area 3

Area 3 will include Catford, Downham, and Torridon Road. Three Community Libraries, based in Bellingham, Grove Park, and Sydenham, will be included in Area 3.

6.20 It is proposed that the number of library buildings will reduce from 12 to 7. However, the number of library service points in the Borough may increase from 12 to 15. Alternative provision can be developed to

service Blackheath Village, Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross and Sydenham.

### Library Area

- 6.21 Each Area will have a similar staffing structure. Area Managers will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the libraries and will be supported by the Librarians who, while directly reporting to a Service Development Manager, will contribute to the staff management and supervision on site. In addition each area will have a number of Senior Library and Library assistants.
- 6.22. The proposed staffing structure is sufficiently flexible to support any combination of the five libraries being successfully developed in line with the community model, since any libraries transferred to the community will be staffed by volunteers, or otherwise provided by community groups with no ongoing responsibility for staffing costs resting with the Council. The ongoing financial costs of option 1 are essentially similar regardless of whether some, none or all of the five transfers take place.
- 6.23 The libraries would be identified in different ways according to their strategic function.
- The Hub Libraries would have direct (shared) responsibility for the area.
  - The Community Library, an extension of the hub into the community, would represent a simple library presence that includes a limited amount of stock and reduced opening hours. It is run by an anchor organisation (of volunteers, residents, or a combination of the two) on a self service basis. Library staff visit at regular intervals to run specific activities and support and promote the usage of the library.
  - Further outreach offer would be based on a peripatetic approach and involves library staff, volunteers and partner organisations.

### Option 2: Maintaining the current number of buildings with reduced staff

- 6.24 Officers have modelled the delivery of library services from 12 buildings with a reduced staffing complement. This would result in a substantial loss of opening hours in the top seven libraries and the loss of access to much improved facilities and resources.
- 6.25 This option would significantly impact on the quality of services. Officers report the following among the highly likely effects of running 12 libraries on reduced staff:
- Increased unplanned closures
  - Much reduced programmes of activity in all libraries

- Substantial closure of well equipped facilities in favour of dilapidated buildings
- Risk of building failure in premises in poor condition
- Increased Health & Safety risks for staff and public
- No savings realised for other departments, including Property Services, Technology & Transformation.
- Increased number of redundancies
- Increased transport costs
- Reduced cover for leave and sickness across 12 branches

6.26 Furthermore, it can be demonstrated that distributing staff across 12 libraries will decrease the total number of opening hours and will demand further flexibility in staff deployment. A fuller reasoning is offered in Annex 2. If the proposed complement can sustain 415 opening hours in the seven libraries, distributing the staff across 12 branches will result in 361 opening hours, a further loss of 54 hours per week (a total reduction of 36% on the current offer).

#### Conclusion from Options

- 6.27 In arriving at the recommended option officers have been mindful that
- a. the Council has invested substantially in seven library buildings that offer exceptional services and which are regarded as models of good practice in library provision.
  - b. some of the five library buildings proposed for closure require substantial attention or carry significant running costs, and at present cannot attract investment and modernisation.
- 6.28 It is recognised that Option 2 maintains a library facility in 12 separate localities. It acknowledges the value that the community places on its local library facility, and how each facility provides a valuable local resource. However, given the need for a reduction in staffing levels to deliver the expected savings, retaining all 12 library facilities would result in a significant reduction in opening hours as detailed in Annex 2.
- 6.29 In order to meet the savings target the Service is therefore proposing to redistribute the staffing resource across 7 buildings rather than 12 which would release additional resources in maintenance and running costs estimated at £240k per year. Additional savings are anticipated through a reduced need for IT support services.
- 6.30 By retaining the longer opening hours at the seven key sites, the Council can focus on delivering a high quality library service from the remodelled sites, ensuring maximum value from its capital investment in the service and ensuring that libraries have the capacity to continue to support and develop alternative forms of service delivery throughout the Borough.

## **7 Property Information regarding the Five Libraries**

- 7.1 The following paragraphs set out the key property information for each of the five libraries where closure is being considered.

### **Blackheath**

- 7.2 The premises costs of the building are relatively high as a result of the lease. This is for a period of 15 years, from 28/01/08, with initial rent of £75k pa, and rent reviews in 2013 and 2018. The lease is on a full repairing and insuring basis which will incur additional expenditure during the term and dilapidations at the end of the lease. Should the Mayor agree to close the library it may be possible to assign the lease to a third party and informal discussion with a local agent indicates that this has some potential. The Council will need to act as guarantor on any assignment.

### **Crofton Park**

- 7.3 This library was designed by the same architect as Sydenham library and built in the early part of the 20th century. The first floor is unused and has been for a number of years and there is evidence of extensive rain water penetration due to the state of the roof which is in need of replacement. Repairs are needed to the first floor and the electrical and heating systems and these are estimated to cost circa £200k. These are based on a visual inspection not on a detailed survey or a specification priced by a construction company. Interest has been expressed from a voluntary and community sector in using the building and, should the Mayor agree to close the library, alternative uses could be explored by officers.

### **Grove Park**

- 7.4 The library is a prefabricated building sited on Metropolitan Open Land. The building is in poor condition and requires significant investment. The flat roof needs to be replaced and other condition-related work is required including improving the heating system that, based on a condition survey carried out in 2008, would cost circa £230k. Voluntary and community sector organisations have expressed an interest in using the building and, should the Mayor agree to close the library, this could be explored by officers. However, the planning conditions relating to this site (Metropolitan Open Land) may make it very difficult for community organisations to raise funds.

### **New Cross**

- 7.5 The building is part of the Lewisham Homes estate, and it is accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account, with the ground floor and basement used by the library service. The basement is used as a store for the Borough's local history collections. The building is dilapidated

but structurally sound. Should the Mayor agree to close the library, it should be possible to lease the building as there has always been interest in this area for premises and it should be easily marketable. The only vacant managed shop in the area is currently under offer.

## **Sydenham**

- 7.6 The library was built in the very early years of the 20th century and has been unsympathetically adapted over time. It is in relatively poor condition, the estimated cost of the repair work required to the building is circa £250k based on a visual inspection only. The roof leaks and is in poor condition as the underlying timbers have rotted. In addition, the plaster work has suffered as a result of rain water penetration. The estimated costs are not based on a detailed survey or a specification priced by a construction company.

## **8 Public Consultation**

- 8.1 Engagement activity is a core part of the Council's business. It is a tool through which policy and decision making can better reflect the priorities and aspirations of citizens. It ensures that services are better positioned to meet the variety of needs that exist in a diverse borough such as Lewisham. Through effective engagement, local citizens and communities can play an active role in determining local agendas.
- 8.2 Consultation related to the budget proposal for the Library and Information Service has comprised a number of different activities. Citizens have made their views known through existing avenues of consultation and engagement, for example through council questions and direct correspondence with the Council. In addition, Lewisham has undertaken specific consultation activity with the wider public and with stakeholders and interested parties from each of the neighbourhoods potentially affected by this proposal. The different sources of activity and information which this report draws upon and the key messages arising from this activity are summarised below. A full copy of the consultation report has been attached as Annex 3 and the notes of each of the public meetings are accessible on the Council's website.
- 8.3 **Public meetings:** The Council conducted two public meetings for each of the libraries proposed for closure as a result of the restructure. The first round of public meetings consisted of a presentation from the Executive Director for Community Services, which set out the financial context, the consultation process, the particular reasons why each library had been put forward as part of the restructure and the timescales and political process by which the decision would ultimately be made. At each second round meeting, the rationale for the restructure of the Library and Information Service was repeated for the benefit of those people who had not attended the first meeting. Question and Answer sessions were conducted and then presentations were invited from organisations or citizens who had expressed ideas as

to what might happen to the facilities if the decision was taken to remove the library services. At each of the second round meetings, attendees were also presented with information on the demographics of that library's users and encouraged to consider the potential equalities impact of the removal of the service.

- 8.4 Key messages, concerns and queries raised at each of the public meetings comprised:
- a) Unanimous support for retaining all 12 library services
  - b) Disagreement with the rationale for selecting library facilities for closure
  - c) The wider impact of closing the library facility on the community needed to be considered
  - d) The Council ought to oppose the cuts in their totality
  - e) Consideration needed to be given to the impact on schools and young people
  - f) Questions as to why the library facilities had not been sufficiently well maintained
  - g) Questions and scepticism around proposals for alternative provision
  - h) Questions regarding the validity of the consultation
  - i) Questions as to whether facilities could be kept open if opening hours across the service were to be cut
  - j) Questions on the impact of the proposal on Library and Information service staff
  - k) Questions with regard to the potential for income generation within the Library and Information Service
  - l) Questions as to whether savings could be found from other services
  - m) Comments that the savings ought to be found by cutting waste, reducing senior management pay and no longer employing consultants.
- 8.5 **Our Lewisham, Our Say:** Overall, more than 2,000 citizens took part in 'Our Lewisham, Our Say', 996 of whom completed the survey. The key messages emerging from 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' were that the Council should protect spending on services to the most vulnerable, that it was OK for the Council to reduce funding in some areas, but only those where the Council spends relatively small sums, that people were prepared to pay more for services, and that businesses could do more and the Council could help people to do more.
- 8.6 The response to the specific question on the Library and Information service showed that:
- 28.99% of respondents felt that the borough does not need as many libraries as it currently has and that a reduction in service was OK
  - 25.78% of respondents would pay more for some of the service provided in libraries in order to maintain the current level of service
  - 21.53% of respondents felt that the Council should continue to provide the current level of service and look for cuts elsewhere

- 10.77% of respondents indicated that they would be prepared to help out in their local library in order to keep it open
- 8.7 **Petitions:** Five public petitions have been received from Grove Park (1076 signatures), Crofton Park (5161 signatures), Blackheath (4467 signatures), Sydenham (3700 signatures) and New Cross (1700 signatures), a total of 16,104 signatures. At the time of writing, 1737 people had responded to electronic petitions. Officers understand that further petitions will be presented on 17 November.
- 8.8 **Council questions:** At the Council meeting on 23 September 2010, 20 questions were made in regard to the restructure of the Library and Information Service. Five of these were made by Councillors and the other 15 by members of the public.
- 8.9 **Letters and e-mails:** As of 28 October 2010, 217 pieces of correspondence had been received by the Council in relation to the library proposal. There were documented replies to all letters and e-mails.
- 8.10 Almost all the correspondence made clear the correspondents' strength of feeling in protesting against the proposed closure of the libraries. The predominant reasons for opposing the closures were concern for the community as a whole, for schools and young people, and for the elderly. Most letters referred to the role that books play in supporting literacy and leisure. Library staff, events for families and IT services were all regularly referenced as areas of good practice. In relation to Sydenham library, a number of pieces of correspondence made reference to the impact the closure of the facility might have on the safety of both the residents and property. In New Cross, themes raised included social inclusion and provision for impoverished residents. A recurrent theme in Sydenham and Crofton Park was the heritage of the building. Many correspondents, especially in Blackheath and Grove Park, mentioned lack of transport to other libraries as a serious concern.
- 8.11 Response to key issues raised in the consultation.

### **Unanimous support for retaining all 12 library services**

The strength of feeling expressed by the local community in support of their local libraries is acknowledged. Having considered different operating models and means of achieving a 25% saving, officers still consider that the closure of the five library facilities is the only way to make the saving while still maintaining an effective and good-quality library service, able to meet the diverse needs of Lewisham's citizens.

### **Disagreement with the rationale for selecting library facilities for closure**

The libraries proposed for closure are those that have not been modernised and now there is not the funding to do so. There has been a programme over the last 5 years of modernising the buildings and modernising the service within the buildings, such as installing self-service, extending opening hours and improving the stock. The programme is three-quarters complete. Torridon Road and Deptford still to follow.

### **The wider impact of closing the library facility on the community needed to be considered**

The closure of library facilities will have an impact upon local communities. The Equalities Impact Assessment (attached as Annex 4) conducted on this saving proposal has identified the possible negative outcomes, as has public consultation activity. Action to mitigate these impacts includes the work underway to develop alternative provision and community libraries.

### **The Council ought to oppose the cuts in their totality**

The Council has a responsibility under law to ensure that it balances its books. Just 10 per cent of the Council's funding comes from Council tax and the rest comes from the Government. The Council needs to plan for possible changes to that funding.

### **Consideration needed to be given to the impact on schools and young people**

The Equalities Impact Assessment conducted on this proposal identifies that the closure of these library facilities may have an adverse impact on young people. The action to develop alternative provision will mitigate this impact to some extent. Schools have been directly involved throughout the consultation process and in the discussions around alternative provision. Specific feedback from discussions with schools is outlined in section 11 of this report.

### **Questions as to why the library facilities had not been sufficiently well maintained**

Funding for building maintenance and repair has to be prioritised, given the number of properties to be maintained and the need to ensure Health and Safety. There is no additional funding available to bring all buildings up to the same high standard. Where library buildings have been modernised, this has been delivered through the Council's capital programme, central government funding, PFI and regeneration development funding.

### **Questions and scepticism around proposals for alternative provision**

The concerns and scepticism expressed around alternative provision, particularly in light of the strong campaign to ensure that all 12 library services remain open, have been recorded. The majority of attendees at the public meetings questioned the role that volunteers would play in any alternative provision and, in general, they felt that the presence of a full time library staff member was essential to the delivery of adequate services.

### **Questions regarding the validity of the consultation**

Officers have conducted a wide-ranging consultation exercise, including two rounds of public meetings, conversations with residents and local assemblies through the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' exercise and feedback from petitions, letters and e-mail correspondence. All correspondence with the Council has received a response. The results of this consultation activity have been summarised in the separate consultation report, to inform the decision by the Mayor. This consultation report is attached as Annex 3.

### **Questions as to whether facilities could be kept open if opening hours across the service were to be cut**

With regard to reducing opening hours across the Service, alternative options have been considered and the conclusion drawn that such an approach would not be able to deliver an effective service for the borough and its citizens and would fail to take advantage or maximise the benefits of the facilities available in the seven library facilities not proposed for closure. The model of all buildings having less than 30 opening hours a week will not allow the Council to realise maximum value from its capital investment in the service.

### **Questions on the impact of the proposal on Library and Information Service staff**

There could be up to 19 staff facing redundancy. In line with the Council's HR procedures, staff are being consulted on the reorganisation. Where possible, compulsory redundancy will be avoided and redeployment opportunities will be sought.

### **Questions with regard to the potential for income generation within the Library and Information Service**

As previously noted in paragraph 6.3, charges could be increased. However, income budgets account for only 6% of the total gross controllable budget and could not reasonably make a sufficient contribution materially to affect the overall strategic choices available.

## **Questions as to whether savings could be found from other services**

As highlighted in section 4.2, all Service budgets have been closely examined to identify opportunities to reduce net costs. The scale of the savings expected from the Council is such that no service can realistically be exempt.

## **Comments that the savings ought to be found by cutting waste, reducing senior management pay and no longer employing consultants**

The Council has made efficiency savings in the last three years of £26 million and will continue to focus on eliminating waste and delivering services more effectively. However, given that the savings expected are more than double this amount in the next three years, efficiency savings will not be enough. All areas, including spend on management, consultancy and agency staff, have been examined for savings.

## **9 Service Restructuring**

9.1 The Service needs to restructure for four reasons:

1. To address the current inconsistencies and historical anomalies in the structure that hamper performance and adversely affect operational practice.
2. To improve strategic capacity at a time of rapid change.
3. To increase and improve front line service capacity.
4. To reduce costs and ensure maximum value from the staffing budget.

9.2 It is expected that the re-engineered Service and the improved structure will deliver a sustainable Library and Information Service for the residents of Lewisham.

9.3 The reorganisation of the Service will improve strategic capacity and front line capacity through two distinct business functions (Development and Delivery). The fundamental principle underpinning the new structure is to build in flexibility and a one service approach.

### Improving Front Line Capacity

9.4 Most of the challenges faced by the Service in the day-to-day running of its operations stem from the inadequate allocation of staff. Currently, staff move from library to library to cover absence. Often the void left needs backfilling which can result in an inefficient use of higher graded

personnel. This in turn creates a void at a more strategic level. This has a negative impact across the whole organisation.

- 9.5 It is essential that each area has the capacity to deliver an effective front line service and it is therefore proposed to refocus resources on the front line by increasing the number of Library Assistants (Sc 2) and Senior Library Assistants (Sc 5) and reducing the number of senior roles within the structure.

#### Improving Strategic Capacity

- 9.6 It is proposed that a Business Development Unit is created to improve the quality and range of products and services available through libraries and better support the diverse audiences that can benefit from the modernised service.
- 9.7 An example of this approach is given by the recent award of government funding (Future Libraries Programme). Lewisham has led a group of seven South East London library authorities to bid for a project to investigate collaborative ways in which libraries can work across the region to increase quality and reduce costs. This is one of ten pilot projects that will inform Government thinking in the area of library services in England.
- 9.8 Lewisham will increasingly develop initiatives that benefit residents and are delivered in partnership with other agencies. The London Requests and eBooks projects are examples of this approach. Working in this way will realise efficiencies that improve the quality of the Service and make the most of Council resources.

### **10 Staff Consultation and Management Response**

- 10.1 The proposed structure builds on work that has been ongoing over the past two years to modernise the Service, and the proposals are intended to ensure that there is strategic and developmental capacity within the structure whilst protecting the front line. The model being proposed is one that has already been introduced in some libraries where refurbishment has taken place. UNISON are not in favour of the model. However, management and many staff in the libraries operating the model have found it to be very effective and management are confident in proposing it as an effective model for the whole service.
- 10.2 UNISON have raised the following issues in their response to the consultation document:
1. They maintain that the banks are to blame for the current budget situation and that the Council should not therefore be making budget savings.
  2. In consequence no libraries should be closed.

3. UNISON object to the proposed structure and to changes in the way that library services are delivered.
  4. UNISON are opposed to the deletion of posts from the current structure.
  5. They believe that the proposed structure makes provision for additional senior management posts at the expense of the front line.
  6. They do not believe that the community libraries can work and that they represent a Health and Safety risk.
  7. They are unhappy about the proposals relating to the remodelling of the Reference Library, the Local History Centre and the Borough Archive Service.
- 10.3 Management discussions are on going and the majority of the outstanding queries have been addressed as part of that process.
- 10.4 UNISON have yet to make any suggestions or recommend alternatives to any part of the structure or its delivery and seem to be opposed to any change. This is not a feasible stance, given the level of savings that have to be made and the expectation that the Council will continue to run an effective and modernised service that meets customer needs.

## **11 Discussions with schools**

- 11.1 The Council has had conversations with the primary schools whose pupils could be affected by the closure of the libraries. Some have voiced their concern at the impact that the proposed closures may have on pupils and their families. Those schools who regularly send classes to their local library feel that the school and its catchment will be directly disadvantaged.
- 11.2 The feedback received from the schools has been carefully considered and a number of measures will be developed that may benefit from the Community Library solution and the development of closer collaborative work with the schools.
- 11.3 None of the schools has space on-site from which to deliver a public library function; however some of them have begun to consider alternative ways in which they could have access to books and information. These include using other nearby public libraries and developing the book collections in the school.
- 11.4 Out of the 21 primary schools in the areas affected, 13 of them have their own school libraries and “book & reading” areas.

### **Blackheath Village Library**

- There are two primary schools in the area, John Ball and All Saints. There are also three private schools nearby and a primary school

based over the border in Greenwich. Three of the schools use Blackheath Village Library - John Ball, All Saints and Heath House.

- All Saints does not have the capacity to consider providing space for any public library services and has its own small school library. John Ball has a space that could be used for some library services although there are issues with DDA and security. The school is continuing to work with the Library and Information Service, including support to improve their book provision and reading areas.

### **Crofton Park Library**

- There are eight primary schools in the area and one special school. Two primary schools use the library regularly – Brockley School and St Mary Magdalen. All the schools were contacted to ascertain the potential for collaboration following the library closures. It was felt that the community library offer that is currently being developed in Honor Oak may provide some opportunities should the library close. Five of the primary schools, namely John Stainer, St Mary Magdalen, Stillness Infants, Stillness Juniors and Turnham, have their own school libraries.
- The Library and Information Service supported Stillness Juniors following the recent fire and opportunities for further collaboration with this school in particular are being discussed.

### **Grove Park Library**

- There are two primary schools in the area - Coopers Lane School and Marvels Lane School. Both visit the library regularly. The Literacy Co-ordinator from Marvels Lane School currently uses the library to borrow books to support classroom teaching and reading. Classes visit the library for special projects such as their school Book Week. Both schools are concerned about the loss of the support that the library provides.
- In meetings with Marvels Lane School, it was clear that any relocation of library services to the school is not viable; however measures to reduce the impact of library closure are under discussion including classes from Marvels Lane School using Downham Library when they visit the Centre for swimming.
- Further discussions about collaboration are ongoing with the Headteacher at Coopers Lane School which has its own school library and the Library and Information Service will support the school in its further development.

### **New Cross Library**

- There are six primary schools in the New Cross area, three of them – Childeric School, St James Hatcham School and Myatt Garden School – visit New Cross Library regularly. There is substantial concern about the loss of the public library by the schools, children, and their families. The option to relocate part of the provision to a school is not viable. St James Hatcham School has its own school library.
- Conversations with the Headteacher at Childeric School indicate that schools will consider using Wavelengths Library if New Cross closes. Other areas for discussion include library staff running book groups after school and supporting the schools to improve their school book stock.

### **Sydenham Library**

- There are four primary schools and a special school in the Sydenham area. Adamsrill School, Our Lady and St Philip Neri and St Michael's visit Sydenham Library regularly. All have school libraries.
- The Council has explored co-location with the schools without success. They are particularly concerned about the loss of the public library in an area of particular need. The development of the community library at Bellingham will offer some additional support to schools and services for children are planned to be part of any future community library offer at Sydenham.

## **12 Options for Future Service Delivery**

- 12.1 The remodelling of the service includes a commitment to maintaining and developing some library services in the areas affected by the proposed closure of the five buildings.
- 12.2 The Library and Information Service has worked with partners to develop a community offer in Pepys and in Bellingham and, based on that experience, has looked at ways of developing the Community Library model and extending it to cover Blackheath, Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross and Sydenham.
- 12.3 The Service has been working with potential partners to develop some community based library services that are sustainable and provide a real alternative to current provision. It is the intention to develop up to eight community libraries using different delivery and partnership models, working on developing strategic and functional links with community organisations and local social enterprise.

- 12.4 As part of the consultation programme, the public were asked to consider how the Council might work with the individual local communities to develop a sustainable means of delivering some library services in the area, should their library close. Many of those present at the public consultation meetings were not prepared to consider any options relating to alternative future provision and remain committed to supporting the campaign to keep the libraries open.
- 12.5 Officers held meetings with representatives of local organisations who had expressed an interest in using the buildings for alternative community purposes including access to a library service. Further meetings were also held with local stakeholders, including schools, to explore the possibility of future partnership. At the second public meeting held for each of the affected library neighbourhoods, these proposals were raised for discussion and comment.

### 13 Expressions of Interest

- 13.1 On 17 November 2010 the Mayor decided to defer consideration of the savings proposal for the libraries service in order to provide an opportunity to test the level of community interest in library buildings.
- 13.2 Officers have now undertaken an informal exercise to determine the level of potential interest in the 5 library buildings scheduled for closure. The exercise involved an advert inviting interest, approaches to individuals and organisations who had previously expressed an interest and the provision of relevant information.
- 13.3 The expression of interest indicated that the Council's likely terms of agreement would include:
- to allow the Council to install electronic library self issue technology
  - to allow library staff reasonable access to the building
  - the Council would grant a long term full repairing lease (rent to reflect building condition) with a commitment to community use or transfer of the freehold (if available) providing this did not remove all barriers to continued community use.
- 13.4 The process was run as follows:

26 November	Invite interest from organisations
10 December 2010	Information pack available
10 January 2011	Deadline for booking face to face meeting with key Council officers
13 January 2011	Responses to questions sent out by the Council
	Deadline for questions to be sent to the Council.
14 January 2011	Meetings between interested parties and key Council officers

20 January 2011	Deadline for expression of interest form to be sent to the Council (5pm)
17 February 2011	Mayor & Cabinet consider position

- 13.5 The information made available to interested parties included the Council's community library expectations, full condition studies of all of the buildings and financial information on their running costs. In addition, there was information on the Council's policy on community asset transfer and links to other key sources of information.
- 13.6 There were 62 requests for information and 13 completed expressions of interest received. The content of these expression of interest have been analysed and the following summarises this work.

#### **Family Services UK: Interest in New Cross Library**

- 13.6.1 A social enterprise that delivers services aimed at improving the mental health and family wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the local community. They currently work with a range of local organisations in Deptford and New Cross.
- 13.6.2 Family Services UK propose to offer a walk-in family mediation service, mental health services, mentoring service, free advice and guidance scheme, family support, and care and training for the long term unemployed or those on benefits. They want to incorporate the services that they currently offer into the educational, learning, recreational and social provision offered by libraries. The library service would be run by local people, mainly volunteers. They would range from people looking to move on to paid work to those looking to be active community participants.

#### **Christ Family Assembly Outreach: Interest in New Cross Library**

- 13.6.3 A charitable organisation which would use the building for a variety of activity, including a youth centre, games, sports, education and training. It will also be used to provide advice, guidance, mentoring and counselling as well as a place for worship. They will involve the local community in a number of ways and will encourage volunteering and job placements, as well as providing employment locally. They plan to maintain a library service as part of their offer.

#### **The Tree House: Interest in New Cross Library**

- 13.6.4 The Tree House would provide a socially engaged library, highlighting environmental-impact awareness. This would include a recycled book loan service, the hosting of a series of community participation activities, children's art workshops and exhibitions, seminars and talks about sustainable living. It would also house a cafe run by professional chefs who would source the food locally, as well as providing space for community groups to meet.

- 13.6.5 The library coordinator would continue to deliver a library service, with particular emphasis being placed on encouraging a more interactive and participatory approach. This project is at a very early stage in its development.

**Exam Success Education Centre Limited: Interest in Blackheath Village Library, New Cross and Sydenham**

- 13.6.6 This company provides tutorial support to children who need help with their school and homework. They would use the library building to host pre- school and after school clubs for children and would employ local residents with the relevant skills and training to work at the centre. A library service would remain within the building sitting alongside the learning environment.

**Eco Computer Systems : Interest in New Cross, Grove Park, Sydenham and Crofton Park Libraries**

- 13.6.7 A social enterprise company which offers IT recycling and refurbishment services, and reinvests profits into the business or uses them to fund other community projects. ECS currently support and run the new community library at Pepys Resource Centre.
- 13.6.8 ECS will ensure continuing library services in all 4 libraries, but will also offer a community café, office space, meeting rooms, IT training and local history centres. The library service will be professionally staffed and additional educational/cultural activities will be offered alongside it. They will work closely in partnership with other local groups and library users to ensure that the facilities are fully utilised and sustainably funded. They are already in contact with a number of local organisations with a view to developing local working partnerships, including Sydenham Community Radio, Healthy Brockley, 170 Club and Grove Park Community Group.

**170 Community Project: Interest in New Cross Library**

- 13.6.9 The 170 Community Project has been working in New Cross for the last 40 years. They work in disadvantaged and impoverished communities and they prioritise anti-poverty work, targeting excluded individuals and groups by providing welfare and legal advice, training & employment advice, volunteering opportunities and regular support groups. 170 work in partnership with several other organisations and would continue to do this and develop additional networks in order to maximise the local impact of the proposed community hub. They would continue providing library facilities and would aim to enhance the service through the development of additional community initiatives such as health related groups, ESOL classes, IT accredited courses and help with access to employment. 170 are working closely with Eco Computer Systems who fully support their involvement.

**The Peckham Settlement: Interest in New Cross and Crofton Park Libraries**

- 13.6.10 The Peckham Settlement is a community anchor organisation working in South London. They provide a range of programmes and activities with the aim of helping local people to develop their own potential, enrich their own lives, and solve their own problems.
- 13.6.11 They are currently supporting small community organisations and groups, running the largest timebank in Southwark and Lewisham, delivering a UK Online Centre and a wide range of adult education courses and programmes and various activities for families, children, young people and older people. In addition they deliver employability and volunteering programmes, youth entrepreneurship courses and intergenerational activities.
- 13.6.12 They propose to develop the building(s) as community resource and learning centres which will continue to include provision of a library service, while providing access to other services provided by themselves and partner organisations co-located within the building. The library service would be managed by a paid centre manager and run by a team of volunteers.
- 13.6.13 They have confirmed partnerships with Hour Bank / My Time Your Time Timebank, Age Concern Lewisham and Southwark, Lewisham Plus Credit Union, Starlight Music Academy and UK Online Centres.

**John Laing Integrated Services Ltd: Interest in Grove Park, Sydenham, Crofton Park and New Cross Libraries**

- 13.6.14 John Laing Integrated Services is a leading support services and facilities management business providing a full suite of operational services to public sector clients, spanning Libraries, local authority, education, rail, police, housing, health, waste and parks.
- 13.6.15 They currently manage and deliver public libraries on behalf of a local authority, together with their leisure and culture portfolio in the London Borough of Hounslow. They want to discuss different building uses provided they benefit the community and attract sufficient revenue through grants or service fees.

**SociaCapita Solutions: Interest in Sydenham, New Cross, Grove Park and Crofton Park Libraries**

- 13.6.16 SociaCapita Solutions is a Community Interest Company which has been set up to carry out a cluster of activities, including bidding for public sector contracts on behalf of private sector and third sector delivery organisations, acquiring and developing residential and commercial properties and unwanted public assets into a

sustainable hub of community, social, cultural and enterprising activities delivering a range of social and community benefits.

- 13.6.17 They propose to develop the buildings into an integrated Community Heritage and Enterprise Development Hub supported by a local community web-based portal and a local digital community radio or television channel. Each building will encompass various functions including cultural resources linked to black and ethnic heritage, construction related training, residential units and a range of enterprise and organisation support activities.
- 13.6.18 They will work with the Library and Information Service to offer access to cultural material in both print and electronic form.

**Lewisham Music Service: Interest in New Cross, Sydenham, Crofton Park, Blackheath and Grove Park Libraries**

- 13.6.19 LMS is a Council service which provides music tuition and participation programmes both in school and out of school for children and young people in Lewisham. They work with over 4,000 children a week and deliver music lessons, run ensembles and choirs and organise a wide variety of special projects and live events. The intention is to use the library buildings to continue with and expand the provision of this work.. They do not see themselves as an anchor organisation but as a potential partner and strand of community based activity.

**Sydenham Community Radio: Interest in Sydenham Library**

- 13.6.20 Sydenham Community Radio station is run by volunteers and as well as providing a voice for the local community, they provide training in radio and communication skills to local people. They are looking to rent a training room from the anchor organisation on an exclusive basis. They will not be responsible for supporting library services and are happy to work with whoever is managing the Sydenham Library building.

**The Chinbrook Surgery: Interest in Grove Park Library**

- 13.6.21 The Chinbrook Surgery provides primary care medical (GP) services in the Grove Park Area. They are looking to move to new premises and would like to provide medical services from the library building. They currently have no plans to support the delivery of library services from the building.
- 13.6.22 This short process has shown that there are a number of organisations, with varying degrees of capacity, that could take forward community-led initiatives in the library buildings.
- 13.6.23 There remain concerns about the capacity of organisations to financially manage these buildings and to deal with the property-

related risks. Given the significant condition backlog on some of the buildings the levels of expenditure required may prove very difficult for smaller organisations to fund.

### **Blackheath Library Service Proposal**

- 13.6.24 The Chair of the Trustees has approached the Council with a view to relocating the village library function to the Reminiscence Centre thereby creating a sustainable and attractive community centre in the heart of Blackheath, guaranteeing a continuing library service and securing the future of the Reminiscence Centre. The centre would be professionally managed by Age Exchange and staffed by trained volunteers. The remaining facilities would be extended and upgraded to include a family centre and upgraded café facilities. Age Exchange have commissioned a feasibility study and drawn up plans for how the building could be developed, and have also undertaken extensive consultation with Blackheath residents and Library supporters from whom there is now firm support for the proposal.
- 13.6.25 Age Exchange have already secured a considerable capital towards the cost of the project and are looking for a contribution from LB Lewisham to support the centre's development.

## **14 Next Steps**

- 14.1 Those organisations that have submitted an expression of interest in becoming the anchor organisation for one or more of the library buildings and taking on full responsibility for the management and maintenance of the buildings will be invited to submit a full business case. An open advert to allow any further interest to be captured will also be undertaken. Each business case will be assessed using the Council's Community Asset Transfer framework that was agreed by Mayor & Cabinet in July 2008. Connections will be brokered between the potential anchor organisations and those organisations that have expressed an interest in renting space within one of the buildings. Subject to agreement of Council to these budget proposals on 1 March, it is proposed to immediately invite firm proposals including a detailed business case (including how proposals meet the Council's Community Assets Transfer framework) for these libraries. These will be evaluated by officers and the outcome reported to Mayor & Cabinet as soon as possible.
- 14.2 The Community Asset Transfer Framework specifies a series of mandatory benefits that an organisation seeking an asset transfer needs to demonstrate. These are empowering local communities and representing value for money. In addition organisations will be asked to meet two of the wider benefits described in the framework:
- Improve and safeguard a service that would otherwise be lost

AND one of the following:

- provide area wide benefits
- promote a sustainable third sector
- encourage economic development and social enterprise

14.3 Organisations will also need to respond to a range of risks listed in the framework and give details of how they would mitigate against them. These include:

- Potential for a negative impact on community cohesion
- Capacity of recipient organisation to manage the asset
- Capacity of recipient to deliver promised services / outcomes
- Risk of the capture of the asset by unrepresentative / extremist minority
- Potential for ongoing Council liability

14.4 It is therefore recommended that, should the Mayor agree to close these 5 libraries, officers be instructed to immediately seek formal expressions from interested organisations and to agree terms with them before 28 May 2011.

## **15 Financial Implications**

15.1 Subject to decisions in respect of the council's overall budget, which are proposed in the main budget report, savings of £755k in the ongoing expenditure on the libraries service are planned over the period 2011/12 to 2012/13. Given the overall financial constraints facing the council it is essential that these savings are delivered in order to comply with the council's fiduciary duties. In addition, savings of £1m are planned to be delivered from the council's property revenue budgets over the period 2012/13 to 2013/14, of which £0.24m are anticipated to be found from within the costs of maintaining library buildings. Therefore this financial appraisal starts from the assumption that these savings will need to be delivered.

15.2 The financial appraisal for option 2 is relatively straightforward. A reorganisation of the staffing structure could, subject to proper consultation processes, be put in place that would deliver the total savings of £755k and still provide staffing for the libraries in a way that would be consistent with this option. This reorganisation could be delivered by 28 May 2011 which would mean that any redundancies incurred as a result would take place on or about 18 April 2011. As a result the ongoing savings of £755k would be delivered, of which £629k would be achieved in 2011/12 and the balance in 2012/13. However, under option 2 the savings in the property budget of £240k could not be delivered, since no libraries would be closed or transferred to other community providers.

- 15.3 The financial appraisal for option 1 is more complex, since it needs to take account of the possibility that some or all, or none, of the hoped for community asset transfers will take place. In terms of staffing costs, the proposal is to close the five libraries cited (possibly transferring them to community ownership) with effect from 28 May 2011. Accordingly, gross savings of £629k, calculated as ten twelfths of the total saving of £755k could be delivered in 2011/12 with the balance to be delivered in 2012/13. However, account needs to be taken of the proposals in respect of the other five library buildings. In the event that no community transfers can be achieved and that closure turns out to be the only realistic option then the savings associated with this proposal will be as set out above except that property savings of £240k would be delivered, which would not be the case in option 2 .
- 15.4 If community asset transfers can be achieved under option 1 then the staffing savings will be as set out above, but more complex financial consequences follow. For each of the five libraries in question a package of one-off investment may be needed to ensure that the building can be handed over in a wind and weather tight condition and, where appropriate, that library equipment such as RFID (self-issue) technology can be installed to facilitate the community asset transfer. The anticipated costs shown in para 4.10 above for these items are £60k per library. Provision in the budget estimates has therefore been made for 1-off costs of £300k in option 1 although a smaller figure may be required if fewer than 5 community libraries can be achieved.
- 15.5 Provision in the budget estimates has therefore been made for 1-off costs of £300k in option 1 in 2011/12, although a smaller figure may be required if fewer than 5 community libraries can be achieved in 2011/12. The savings in 2011/12 are therefore £629k less £300k, i.e. a minimum of £329k – broadly consistent with the figure included in the main budget report; any minor difference can be dealt with in-year. A full year saving of £755k would be achieved in 2012/13.

The summarised savings from options 1 and 2 are as follows:

	Yr1 £000	Yr2 (and ongoing) £000
<b>Option 1</b>		
Staffing saving	629	755
Property saving	200	240
One-off costs	-300	0
Net saving to Council	<u>529</u>	<u>995</u>
 <b>Option 2</b>		
Staffing saving	629	755
Property saving	0	0
One-off costs	0	0 (1)
	<u>629</u>	<u>755</u>

(1) assuming no capital works to 5 libraries, no installation of RFID etc

15.6 Although option 1 gives a smaller saving in 2011/12, it gives a larger saving in 2012/13 and subsequent years. This is true whether all, some or none of the transfers can be achieved. Despite pressures to balance the budget in 2011/12, the decision on which option to pursue must be based on the longer term impact.

15.8 In addition, depending on which specific proposals for community asset transfer are selected there may some additional costs. These cannot be reasonably estimated at this time but will need to be considered in the further report requested in para 2.1.

## **16 Legal Implications**

16.1 The statutory framework for the provision of libraries is set out in the body of the report.

16.2 In making a decision in relation to the proposals, the Mayor is referred to the legal implications set out in the main body of the budget report, all of which are pertinent in this context.

16.3 Having consulted on proposals to close libraries, the Mayor is required to consider the outcome of that consultation carefully before making any decision. He is also reminded of the Council's best value duty

under Section 3 Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- 16.4 The Mayor is reminded that though there are indications of a proposed staffing structure set out in the report, decisions about any new staffing structure will be taken in accordance with the Council's reorganisation procedures. Consultation with staff and unions has been ongoing. Contingent on the Mayor's decision in relation to the proposed closures, any amended staffing structure will be decided upon by officers in accordance with the Council's normal procedures, taking full account of the outcome of that consultation.

## **17 Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 17.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report. However, should the recommendation be agreed there will be the potential for the empty buildings to be vulnerable to anti-social behaviour.

## **18 Equality Implications**

- 18.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment of this budget proposal has been undertaken with due regard to legal requirements. Service users, residents and stakeholders have had the opportunity to directly contribute to the Equality Impact Assessment at each of the second round public meetings by identifying the potential impact of closing a library facility in the local area. A copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment has been included in this report as Annex 4.
- 18.2 The EIA details the legislation, policy, quantitative and qualitative information that have informed the assessment. It presents information on library activity and usage across the borough. It proceeds to assess the specific impact of closing each of the library facilities put forward in the savings proposal.
- 18.3 The EIA recognises the key role that the Library and Information Service can play in promoting equalities and enhancing community cohesion. Lewisham's Library and Information Service undertakes a wide range of activity to encourage participation from under-represented groups, to stock appropriate materials and to publicise equalities events and activities, including Black History Month, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month and a variety of religious festivals.
- 18.4 The assessments contained in the EIA are based upon both qualitative and quantitative information as to how the service is used in Lewisham. By drawing upon a range of statistical and consultation information, the Council is well-placed to assess how the budget savings proposal might affect specific groups in the community. The sources of

information that inform this EIA include data on active borrowers, results of the PLUS survey (2009) and information on the number of visits made to each library facility.

- 18.5 Statistical data on library usage has been complemented by information from previous consultations on library services as well as the current consultation being conducted around the specific restructuring proposals. Consultation relating to the budget proposal for the Library and Information Service has comprised a number of different activities. Two rounds of public meetings were held in each of the areas affected by the proposal. Second round meetings presented attendees with demographic information on the ward and a profile of library usage to allow them to consider the potential equalities impact of closing the library facility. These considerations and observations have been taken into account when assessing the equalities impact. In addition, the borough-wide 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' consultation programme contained a specific question related to libraries.
- 18.6 The overall assessment of the EIA is that the saving proposal will have an adverse impact across equality groups but will not lead to unlawful discrimination. The EIA recognises that the closure of a library facility may make it more difficult for current users to access library services locally. As such the overall impact of the proposed closure has been assessed as having a negative impact across all categories. However, the proposal to close these library facilities does not lead to unlawful discrimination since the closure will not actively discriminate against or have a disproportionate impact on any single equality category.
- 18.7 The EIA acknowledges that full mitigation of the negative impact will not be possible. However, in the event of a decision being taken to close the library facilities, a number of actions will be taken to reduce impacts where possible. Mitigating actions could include:
- Information for current library users as to alternative provision and how to access it.
  - Increased number of outreach library facilities, including small collections and book drops.
  - Increased outreach visits bringing storytelling and other activities to schools and community centres.
- 18.8 It is not possible to conclude the workforce profile EIA until after the decision has been taken, and if agreed, implemented. However, given the specific nature of the proposal and concerns raised by staff, it is important to recognise at this stage what the likely impact will be. It is to be expected that a reduction would potentially produce a different staffing profile.

## **19 Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **20 Conclusion**

- 20.1 In order to meet the Council's agreed savings target the Library and Information Service is proposing a saving of approx £995k. Staffing costs represent 78% of the library budget, so in order to make the saving the Service is proposing a restructuring of the service which will yield a saving of approx £755k. If the Council is to maintain an effective and modernised service and retain extended opening hours, the Service will have to operate from fewer sites. The recommendation is therefore to close five library buildings and to concentrate on running a high quality service from the remaining seven, all of which have been the subject of substantial investment. This will yield an additional £240k saving in the Property Services budget.
- 20.2 In line with the recommendations of the Mayor's Commission, the Library and Information Service is planning to develop community based services in the affected neighbourhoods, working in partnership with local communities and organisations to deliver some library services either from the existing library building or in partnership with another agency.

### **Background Documents**

Mayor's Commission on Libraries and Learning – accessible online at [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk)

If there are any queries on this report please contact Hilary Renwick, Head of Cultural Services on 020 8314 6359.

## Annex 1

### Library Opening Hours

<b>Blackheath Village **</b> 3-4 Blackheath Grove, SE3 0DD			<b>Lewisham</b> 199-201 Lewisham High St, SE13 6LG			<b>Catford</b> Laurence House, Catford Road, SE6 4RU		
Day	Opening Times	Hours Open	Day	Opening Times	Hours Open	Day	Opening Times	Hours Open
Monday	Closed	0	Monday	10am – 8pm	10	Monday	9am – 5pm	8
Tuesday	9am – 8pm	10	Tuesday	9am – 8pm	11	Tuesday	9am – 8pm	11
Wednesday	Closed	0	Wednesday	9am – 6pm	9	Wednesday	9am – 5pm	8
Thursday	9am – 8pm	10	Thursday	9am – 8pm	11	Thursday	9am – 8pm	11
Friday	9am – 1pm	4	Friday	9am – 6pm	9	Friday	9am – 5pm	8
Saturday	9am – 5pm	7	Saturday	9am – 5pm	8	Saturday	9am – 5pm	8
Sunday	Closed	0	Sunday	1pm – 4pm	3	Sunday	Closed	0
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>54</b>

<b>Manor House</b> Old Road, Lee, SE13 5SY			<b>Crofton Park *</b> Brockley Road, SE4 2AF			<b>New Cross *</b> 283-285 New Cross Road, SE14 6AS		
Day	Opening Times	Hours Open	Day	Opening Times	Hours Open	Day	Opening Times	Hours Open
Monday	9am – 7pm	10	Monday	9am – 5pm	7	Monday	Closed	0
Tuesday	9am – 7pm	10	Tuesday	9am – 7pm	9	Tuesday	9.30am – 8pm	9.5
Wednesday	9am – 7pm	10	Wednesday	Closed	0	Wednesday	Closed	0
Thursday	9am – 7pm	10	Thursday	9am – 7pm	9	Thursday	9.30am – 8pm	9.5
Friday	9am – 7pm	10	Friday	9am – 1pm	4	Friday	Closed	0
Saturday	9am – 6pm	9	Saturday	9am – 5pm	7	Saturday	9.30am – 5pm	6.5
Sunday	10am – 4pm	6	Sunday	Closed	0	Sunday	Closed	0

	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>65</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>36</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>25.5</b>
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**Please note:** \* indicates closed for lunch between 1pm – 2pm \*\* indicates closed for lunch between 12.30 – 1.30pm except Friday

## Annex 1

### Library Opening Hours

<b>Downham</b> 7-9 Moorside Road, BR1 5EP			<b>Sydenham *</b> Sydenham Road, SE26 5SE			<b>Forest Hill</b> Dartmouth Road, SE23 3HZ		
<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>
Monday	9am – 10pm	13	Monday	9.30am – 5pm	6.5	Monday	9am – 7pm	10
Tuesday	9am – 10pm	13	Tuesday	9.30am – 7pm	8.5	Tuesday	9am – 8pm	11
Wednesday	9am – 10pm	13	Wednesday	Closed	0	Wednesday	9am – 7pm	10
Thursday	9am – 10pm	13	Thursday	9.30am – 7pm	8.5	Thursday	9am – 8pm	11
Friday	9am – 10pm	13	Friday	Closed	0	Friday	9am – 7pm	10
Saturday	9am – 6pm	9	Saturday	9.30am – 5pm	6.5	Saturday	9am – 5pm	8
Sunday	10am – 4pm	6	Sunday	Closed	0	Sunday	10am – 4pm	6
	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>80</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>66</b>

<b>Torrison Road *</b> Torrison Road, Catford, SE6 1RQ			<b>Grove Park *</b> Somertrees Avenue, SE12 0BX			<b>Wavelengths</b> Giffin Street, Deptford, SE8 4RJ		
<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>
Monday	9.30am – 5pm	6.5	Monday	9am – 1pm	4	Monday	10am – 5pm	7

Tuesday	9.30am – 7pm	8.5	Tuesday	2.30pm – 8pm	5.5	Tuesday	9am – 8pm	11
Wednesday	Closed	0	Wednesday	Closed	0	Wednesday	9am – 5pm	8
Thursday	9.30am – 7pm	8.5	Thursday	9am – 8pm	10	Thursday	9am – 8pm	11
Friday	9.30am – 1pm	3.5	Friday	Closed	0	Friday	9am – 5pm	8
Saturday	9.30am – 5pm	6.5	Saturday	9am – 5pm	7	Saturday	9am – 5pm	8
Sunday	Closed	0	Sunday	Closed	0	Sunday	Closed	0
	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>33.5</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>26.5</b>		<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>53</b>

**Please note:** \* indicates closed for lunch between 1pm – 2pm \*\* indicates closed for lunch between 12.30 – 1.30pm except Friday

# Options appraisal

## Staffing 12 libraries

### Objectives

1. To reduce the Library & Information Service's revenue costs by £755k
2. To deliver the reduction through a reduction in staffing costs.

### Constraints

3. It is recognised that such substantial reduction in revenue expenditure (ca. 20% of the Service's Gross Expenditure) should be achieved mainly through staffing reductions.
4. It is clear that the Service will be challenged to run 12 buildings with its proposed complement.
5. It is known to the Service that the substantial investment to sustain the running costs and, in some instances, the necessary repair to the buildings is not identified.
6. It is unlikely that the Service will be able to attract funding to develop the libraries that in recent years had no specific investment. Nor will it be able to reduce particularly expensive running costs.

### Option 1

7. Therefore, the Service is proposing to close five library buildings (Blackheath, Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross, and Sydenham) and redistribute the staff, following a reorganisation that will downsize the staffing, across the remaining seven libraries.
8. The table below shows that seven libraries will deliver 415 opening hours per week, a reduction of 149 hours on the current 564. To set this in context, it may be useful to remember that the service offered 417.5 opening hours per week in 2006 – 2007. However, the reduced number of hours excludes the hours that a developed network of Community Libraries could provide. This may deliver up to 280 additional hours per week, which would make library services available for 695 hours per week, an increase by 23.2% on the current offer.

### Option 2

9. While it is clear that the reduced staff levels can be distributed across a number of libraries, possibly all 12, the effect this would have on the quality of the service to residents would be noticeable. Officers report the following among the highly likely effects of running 12 libraries on reduced staff:
  - Reduced cover for leave and sickness across 12 branches
  - Increased unplanned closures
  - Much reduced programmes of activity in all libraries
  - Substantial closure of well equipped facilities in favour of dilapidated buildings
  - Risk of building failure in premises in poor condition
  - Increased Health & Safety risks for staff and public
  - No savings realised for other departments, including Property Services, Technology & Transformation.
  - Increased number of redundancies
  - Increased transport costs

Budget Summary		Annual Budget	
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	£3,560,630	79.4%	
Premises	£19,390	0.4%	
Transport	£32,070	0.7%	
Supplies & Services	£874,360	19.5%	
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>£4,486,450</b>		
Ex. non controllable			
<b>Gross Income</b>			
			<b>-£279,040</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>			
			<b>£4,207,410</b>

Source: CIPFA Statistics Actuals 2009-2010

10. Furthermore, it can be demonstrated that distributing staff across 12 libraries will decrease the total number of opening hours and will demand further flexibility in staff deployment.
11. Therefore, if the proposed complement can sustain 415 opening hours in the seven libraries, distributing the staff across 12 branches will result in 361 opening hours, a further loss of 54 hours per week (a total reduction of 36% on the current offer).
12. This is due to the fact that the management element for the five libraries has been deleted in the proposed structure. An element of this (highlighted in the Option 2 Structure Chart) will have to be reinstated to support 5 buildings and the staff working in them. 54 opening hours per week is equivalent to the opening hours of a library such as Wavelengths. So the distribution of staff across 12 buildings would have the net result of closing the equivalent of six libraries rather than five.

## Appraisal

Description	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Comment
Count of libraries	12	7	12	
Opening hours	31	0	14	Blackheath
	54	54	38	Catford
	36	0	14	Crofton Park
	80	80	80	Downham
	66	66	29	Forest Hill
	26.5	0	14	Grove Park
	61	61	61	Lewisham
	65	65	39	Manor House
	25.5	0	14	New Cross
	30	0	12	Sydenham
	36	36	16	Torridon
	53	53	30	Wavelengths
Total opening hours	564	415	361	
		-26%	-36%	

The libraries highlighted in **green** have had (or are about to have) substantial investment in the buildings and / or infrastructure in the last few years. The cells highlighted in **red** show reductions in opening hours at service points that have additional services. The cells highlighted in **yellow** show the beneficiaries of the reduction in opening hours.

Please note that this is an estimate and hours could be allocated in different ways.

maximum three libraries. This offers flexibility within each "area". Increasing the number of libraries will result in staff having to adapt to patterns that may stretch across a larger number of buildings, reducing the efficiency.

14. In order to meet the savings target the Service is therefore proposing to redistribute the staffing resource across 7 buildings rather than 12 which would release additional resources in maintenance and running costs estimated at £240k per year. Additional savings are anticipated through the running of IT services as a result of the new Library Management System which will significantly enhance the business and procurement systems currently delivered by staff and realising total revenue savings in the regions of £1.1m.

13. Furthermore, the proposal has attempted to distribute staff efficiently across a reduced number of buildings. Indeed, the restructuring of the Service proposes to group these in small units allowing staff, particularly the front line, to work from two or

15. By retaining the longer opening hours at the seven key sites, the Council can focus on delivering a high quality library service from the remodelled sites, ensuring maximum value from its capital investment in the service and ensuring that libraries have the capacity to continue to support and develop alternative forms of service delivery throughout the Borough.

#### **The Outreach factor**

16. The Library & Information Service has been working with potential partners to develop a Community Library provision that is sustainable. This may provide a real, sustainable alternative to the current library provision.
17. It is estimated that between 3 and 8 Community Libraries can be developed using different delivery and partnership models. These could increase the library offer from 415 to more than the current 564.
18. For example, the Community Library in Pepys is planning to open ca. 36 hours per week. Honor Oak is expected to deliver a similar number of hours. These two service points alone will increase the opening hours to 487 h/w, reducing the difference between the current and proposed opening hours by 13%. A Community Library in Sydenham and Crofton (30 h/w each), Could further reduce the gap to 3%.

#### **Sustainability**

19. Sustainability one of the main issues that will need to inform the selection process. Option 1 strengthens the Service and maintains a quality provision to residents at a time of great economic uncertainty.

**Budget proposal COM 05 – Library and Information Service  
Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

## **1. Summary**

This document is the Equalities Impact Assessment of the proposal to restructure the Library and Information Service. It considers how the closure of the five library buildings might affect different groups in society differently and assesses whether these effects are positive or negative. It also outlines the activity that the Council will take to ensure that equal opportunities are promoted and that no group is disproportionately discriminated against.

This document is separated into two sections. The first section outlines the legislation, policy, qualitative and quantitative information that the Council has used to inform the assessments contained within this EIA. It presents information on library activity and usage across the borough. The second section considers the specific equalities impact of closing each of the facilities put forward in the savings proposals.

The overall assessment of this EIA is that the saving proposal will have an adverse impact across equality groups but will not lead to unlawful discrimination. The EIA recognises that the closure of a library facility may make it more difficult for current users to access library services locally. As such the overall impact of the proposed closure has been assessed as having a negative impact across all categories. However, the proposal to close these library facilities does not lead to unlawful discrimination and no negative - high impact has been identified, since the closure will not actively discriminate against or have a disproportionate impact on any single equality category.

## **2. Introduction**

The Government is committed to reducing the national deficit, whilst protecting certain services such as health, schools and international development. This means that remaining public services, including local government, are likely to face budget cuts of around 25%.

Over the next three years, Lewisham Council will have to reduce its spending by around £60 million. The Council therefore faces a considerable challenge in reducing expenditure whilst continuing to provide services to meet local needs.

In July 2010, the Mayor considered a number of proposals to save money and reduce public sector spending. Included in the proposals presented to the Mayor was one to restructure the Library and Information Service. A new structure has been proposed that will continue to deliver the Council's Library and Information services following the closure of five library buildings: Blackheath; Crofton Park; Grove Park; New Cross; and Sydenham. The Mayor instructed officers to develop options and to undertake the necessary consultation in relation to this proposal.

## **3. Library services in Lewisham**

The Library and Information Service delivers Lewisham's statutory obligation to provide a public library service under the Public Library and Museums Act (1964). It currently operates from 12 buildings and through an online collection of digital resources. The Library and Information Service offer includes the loan of books, the hire of CDs and DVDs and free access to newspapers, periodicals and reference material. The service also provides free use of computers and access to the internet, facilitating the use of extensive online information resources.

The service undertakes a wide range of developmental and participatory work with citizens and local communities, often in partnership with other organisations. For example, specific activity takes place in conjunction with Children's Centres to engage with children and young people. Library facilities are also used to host other services and activities. Some local Councillors run their surgeries in libraries and other activities and events, from family learning sessions to Black History Month take place in the facilities. All libraries provide IT facilities with access to the internet and to online catalogues and shared resources with other libraries.

## **4. What is an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process of systematically analysing a proposed or existing policy, strategy or service to identify what effect, or likely effect, will follow from its implementation for different groups in the community. Assessments should consider the effect of a service on Race, Gender, Disability, Age, Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief. In addition, EIAs consider whether proposals might contravene human rights. By conducting an EIA, organisations can consider what good practice could be shared or what measures might need to be taken to address any adverse impact.

Lewisham's diversity is one of its strengths and the Council is committed to supporting an inclusive and cohesive local community. EIAs support this intention, by identifying how the Council's services can actively promote equal opportunities and avoid direct and indirect discrimination.

### **Scope and structure of the EIA**

This document considers how libraries are used in Lewisham and who uses them. It draws upon a range of consultation and statistical information to assess what effect the proposal to restructure the Library and Information Service will have on the borough and its citizens.

The EIA provides the answers to the following questions:

1. Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
2. Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
3. Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

This document is separated into two sections. The first section outlines the legislation, policy, qualitative and quantitative information that the Council has used to inform the assessments contained within this EIA. It presents information on library activity and usage across the borough. The second section considers the specific equalities impact of closing each of the facilities put forward in the savings proposals.

## **5. EIA team**

A team of officers developed this EIA and considered these implications. These officers included:

Antonio Rizzo      Library and Information Service Manager, Community

	Services Directorate
Julie Hall	Information & Heritage Manager, Community Services Directorate
Alan Morrison	Service Development Librarian, Community Services Directorate
Cathy Myers	Project Officer, Community Services Directorate
Joanne Moulton	Children and Young Person's Librarian, Community Services Directorate
Joan Redding	Service Development Librarian, Community Services Directorate
Ed Knowles	Service Manager - Strategy, Community Services Directorate
Paul Creech	Policy Officer, Community Services Directorate
Alan Shade	Performance Officer, Community Services Directorate

## 6. Equalities Context

### National context

The Equality Act 2010 is on the statute book but the majority of its provisions have not yet come into effect. However Council practice and this EIA has anticipated the provisions contained in the Act and as such has assessed the potential equalities impact across the six equality strands and associated protected characteristics. This EIA has been undertaken in line with the Council's legal duties in relation to equality.

The Human Rights Act came into effect in the UK in October 2000. It means that people in the UK can take cases about their human rights as defined in the European convention on Human Rights to a UK court. At least 11 Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights have implications for the provision of public services and functions. This EIA assesses whether the proposed changes are in line with duties established by this Act.

### Local context

Lewisham's commitment to promoting equalities is held in partnership and at the highest level. *Shaping our future – Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy* establishes an overarching principle for all activity in the borough of '*Reducing inequality – narrowing the gap in outcomes for citizens.*'

This commitment is reiterated in the Council's corporate priority to ensure that all of its services are delivered in an efficient, effective and equitable manner to meet the needs of the community.

The Comprehensive Equalities Scheme (CES) is Lewisham Council's equality policy. It sets out the Council's commitment to equality and diversity and incorporates the Council's specific equality schemes covering the six strands of Race, Age, Gender, Disability, Religion/belief and Sexual orientation

## 7. Policy Context

### National Policy Context

The Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964) established the duty for local authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service *'for all persons desiring to make use thereof, and for that purpose to employ such officers, to provide and maintain such buildings and equipment, and such books and other materials, and to do such other things, as may be requisite.'*<sup>1</sup>

Nationally, the strategic direction and development of library services is established in the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's (MLA) action plan, *Framework for the Future*.<sup>2</sup> This sets out the Government's vision for public libraries, where *'individuals and communities are entitled to excellent public libraries and are integrated with other local services and responsive to local needs; offering books, information and learning resources on the high street and online for everyone at all times.'*

*Framework for the Future* recognises the key role that libraries can play in contributing to a range of central and local priorities including improvements in individuals' quality of life, raising standards in schools and helping to create safer and stronger communities. It also identifies the need for library services to be cost-effective with more flexible working practices and delivery, as the range of library and learning services increases. One of the key challenges highlighted by the MLA is the need to promote innovation within libraries, with a particular emphasis placed upon sustainable investment, integrated approaches and new models of service delivery. This could include rationalisation and relocation as well as longer and more convenient opening times, where supported by demand.

### Audit Commission - Building Better Library Services

The Audit Commission report published in 2002 looked at the library services provided by councils in England and Wales. It drew on the findings of the first 36 inspections of library services, as well as a range of other research, including nationally collected statistics and findings from consultation with users and non-users of library services.

The report found a growing recognition of the contribution that library services can play in promoting local and national priorities, including social inclusion; education, literacy and lifelong; e-government; community regeneration and local cultural strategies. The report also noted that demographic changes meant that many libraries were now serving very different communities in terms of age, ethnicity and interests than they were even a few years ago<sup>3</sup>.

The report identified four main characteristics that both users and non-users wanted from library services: providing the books and services people want at times that suit them; in convenient locations; with more welcoming and pleasant environments; and with improved marketing of the range of services that libraries have to offer.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1964/cukpga\\_19640075\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1964/cukpga_19640075_en_1)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/strategies/~media/Files/pdf/2008/library\\_action\\_plan](http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/strategies/~media/Files/pdf/2008/library_action_plan)

<sup>3</sup> P8 Building Better Library Services, Audit Commission, 2002

Over one-half of inspection reports analysed to inform the Audit Commission's work made negative comments about library opening times. Most often these concerns link to the impact of cuts in opening hours on the accessibility of services. One-third of the inspection reports analysed, commented on the poor internal environment, layout, atmosphere or condition of library buildings. This viewpoint was confirmed by users and non-users who observed that many services were falling short in this area and creating barriers to participations by the community.

The report recommended that library services needed to be designed with the user at the centre – built around a realisation that people use their services out of choice – and a clear understanding of the services and experience people want.

### **DCMS Modernisation Review of Public Libraries**

In March 2010, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published a policy statement on the Modernisation Review of Public Libraries. This document proposes a 'core offer' of services for all libraries and a 'local offer' to meet specific local needs. The core offer should include membership from birth, free access to a wide range of books and online resources, access to national collections and the internet, links to other public services, flexible and 24 hour opening, supported reading, community spaces and outreach services. The local offer reiterates some community aspects of the core offer and supplements it with book variety, activities and support for young people, learning and partnerships with local schools and children centres, events and family activities, crèche facilities and CD and DVD borrowing.

The Modernisation Review also considers how library services can respond to the challenges presented by limited resources and economic pressures. Suggestions include improved models of delivery, joint-working at regional level and the possibility of commissioning library services and exploring commercial partnerships.

### **DCMS Support and the Future Libraries Programme**

In July 2010, the DCMS announced a new support programme for libraries. Led by the MLA and the Local Government Association, the support programme will assist councils as they adapt to the current economic challenge and help them to deliver key services by reducing costs. Options that may need to be considered include: shared services; merging functions; staffing across authorities; support from volunteers and the use of other community buildings.

In August 2010, Ed Vaizey, the Minister for Culture, announced the first ten areas to participate in the Future Libraries Programme. The Programme, formed from a partnership between national and local government, and driven by councils themselves, aims to help the library service during the current challenging financial situation. The programme promises to spread learning between library authorities regarding how best to achieve cost savings, to develop new partnerships and governance models and to take advantage of digital opportunities. Central to the programme is the vision for library services to have greater connection with other local services and an ambition for services to be designed around the needs of the public, rather than based on organisational boundaries.

### **London Library Change Programme**

At a regional level, the London Library Change Programme is seeking to transform the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of London's library services. It has been signed up to by the London Borough Chief Executives, Chief Leisure Officers and all London's Library services. It forms part of the wider Cultural Improvement Programme for London. London's Improvement and Efficiency

Partnership (RIEP), Capital Ambition, is funding the Library Change Programme, together with contributions from MLA London and London Libraries.

Phase one of the programme has looked at the costs, structures and deployment of the Library workforce in each of the 33 London boroughs and provided options for efficiency savings and improvements as well as a detailed examination of the Inter Library Loans Process. The Phase two report, to be published in December 2010, will outline a number of options for efficiencies and improvements across each of these areas, which can be implemented by individual authorities in the immediate or short-term or by consortia or on a pan-London basis in the mid to longer-term.

## Local Policy Context

The Library and Information Service in Lewisham provides all citizens with access to knowledge, skills and information and carries out the Council's statutory duties, under the Public Library and Museums Act (1964), to provide an effective, efficient and modern library service to local residents. It aims to do this by delivering inclusive services for people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures. The services are delivered through library buildings, outreach activity and increasingly through electronic and on-line resources.

The Library and Information Service plays an important role in allowing the Council to realise its vision that *'Together, we will make Lewisham the best place in London to live work and learn.'* *Shaping our Future – Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy*<sup>4</sup> establishes the six priority areas for activity to deliver this vision.

- Ambitious and achieving - where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential
- Safer - where people feel safe and live free from crime, anti-social behaviour and abuse
- Empowered and responsible - where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities
- Clean, green and liveable - where people live in high quality housing and can care for and enjoy their environment
- Healthy, active and enjoyable - where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing
- Dynamic and prosperous - where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond

The Library and Information Service in Lewisham, working closely with local partners and stakeholders, contributes towards the realisation of each of these outcomes.

The Council's ten corporate priorities establish its contribution towards the delivery of the *Shaping our Future*. Within these priorities, the Library and Information Service supports the commitment to *'Active, healthy citizens: Leisure, sporting, learning and creative activities for everyone.'*

Within the Council, the Library and Information Service sits within the Community Service Directorate under the Head of Cultural Services. The Council's Cultural Strategy establishes how the Library and Information Service, alongside Sports and Leisure and the Arts Service can deliver its vision on *'adding quality of life and enhancing wellbeing'*. The strategy is based around the contribution that each service can make to five key themes: place-making, prosperity, learning, community and health.

## Mayor's Commission on Libraries and Learning

In 2009, Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham established a Mayoral Commission on Libraries and Learning. The Commission's brief was to identify and respond to the challenges in developing the library and adult learning services in Lewisham and to provide strategic recommendations for its future.

The Commission acknowledged the wider role that library services play around a broad range of issues, such as health, education, attainment, adult learning and information and skills

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.lewishamstrategicpartnership.org.uk/docs/SCS.pdf>

development. It also highlighted that the expectations people have for public services are often very different from those of previous generations.

The Commission noted that where services are based in buildings designed in a different era, this can create challenges for service users and managers alike. It highlighted the benefits of new facilities but also that an alternative to new buildings is the ability to co-locate in other community spaces. Particular attention was given to the opportunities presented by local schools, especially those in new buildings, and the activity of the Home Library Service – a community based service which visits 670 adults (and some children) in their homes delivering books and assisting with other information needs for those people unable to get to static libraries. The HLS has recently developed a partnership with Adult Visual Impaired Team integrating the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) talking book service into the mainstream service.

The Commission noted that the global and national economic situation may well exacerbate financial pressures while simultaneously reinforcing the need for, and value of, libraries and adult education. In light of this, the Commission noted that not all library closures were bad but that any proposals would need to take into consideration local and borough needs balanced by equalities considerations. Proposals would also need to be based upon evidence of library use. It noted that consideration could also be given to alternative provision such as community libraries and other types of local partnerships.

A full copy of the Commission's report is available online at: <http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/StrategiesPlans/StrategyDocuments/CommissionLibrariesLearning.htm>

## 8. Current activity within the Library and Information Service

The Library and Information Service sits within the Council's Community Services Directorate. The directorate provides a complementary set of services, including Adult Education and Community & Neighbourhood Development which support cohesive communities and allows individuals to maintain their independence.

Lewisham's Library and Information Service is at the forefront of activity to encourage greater use of library resources. The service is leading on the Future Libraries programme which includes South East London boroughs: Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Croydon, Lambeth and Southwark. The Service has recently joined the London Libraries Consortium, and from March 2011, Lewisham residents, students and workers will have access to over 5 million items across more than 100 London libraries. Established in 2004, the consortium uses joint working to improve innovation and back office efficiencies and to negotiate reduced supplier rates through joint procurement. Membership in the LLC will involve the implementation of a new library management system, which will allow much better customer service, including automated book orders, electronic notices and integration with Lewisham Council services.

Lewisham also recognises the important role that libraries play in introducing people to the internet and providing free access to online resources. It also recognises the role that internet access can play in promoting social inclusion. Lewisham is one of the UK Online Centres and has received over £50k in grant money to improve digital literacy through programmes in four of its libraries: Lewisham Central Library, Catford Library, Wavelengths Library and most recently Downham Library. The programme consists of registering new users on the UK Online MyGuide programme which provides a range of practical, online and self-guided courses aimed at complete beginners. The users are then provided with an email address and step-by-step instructions on using online shopping, downloading digital images and other internet applications.

One of the recommendations made by the Mayor's Commission was that the Council should seek to develop services outside the network of borough buildings, following the community-based models developed in Bellingham, Evelyn and Honor Oak. These models give local people access to books and lending services in ways that do not depend on visiting a library building.

The following community activity is currently in the early stages of partnership development:

- Elfrida School has a Community Centre which is hosting "Books for Bellingham." It will be run by the local community and supported by the Library Service.
- Pepys Resource Centre opened in September 2010, run by EcoComputer Systems in Partnership with Hyde Housing. It hosts a community library with support from Lewisham Library and Information Service and local volunteers.
- Honor Oak Community Centre in Turnham Road will be running a community library from late 2010 with support from Lewisham Library Service and local volunteers.

## **9. What information does this EIA call upon?**

The assessments contained in this EIA are based upon both qualitative and quantitative information as to how the Library and Information service is used in Lewisham. By drawing upon a range of statistical and consultation information, the Council is well-placed to assess how the budget savings proposal might affect specific groups in the community.

The sources of information that inform this EIA include:

### **Active borrowers**

An active borrower is a customer who has borrowed at least one item from any library in the last 12 months. This information can be disaggregated by library and user demographics including age, gender and ethnicity.

### **Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)**

PLUS collects data on users' perceptions of various aspects of the library service including staff, stock and the building. There are two versions of PLUS – adults (aged 16 and over) and children. These surveys take place on alternate years (usually on a 3 year cycle with one year off in between). PLUS collects monitoring information including employment status, religion and sexual identity.

### **Library visits, books issued and ICT use**

The Library Service routinely collects statistics on numbers of physical visits, virtual visits, enquiries, items issued to customers and use of computers. These can all be disaggregated by library. Data is also collected on the use of online resources; hits to the relevant sections of the council's web site, library wikis and blogs; email enquiries; and downloads of e-books.

### **Children & Young People**

Data is collected on take up of the Bookstart programme and Summer Reading Challenge. Bookstart offers free books to all children at three key ages before they start school. The Summer Reading Challenge is aimed at children aged 4-11 years, inspiring them to read in the long summer break when their reading skills can decline without the regular reading activity at school. Numbers attending events aimed at children, young people and families are recorded.

### **Home Library Service (HLS)**

The Home Library Service provides books and other media to over 600 homebound residents. Data is collected on take up of the service and user satisfaction. A survey in 2009/10 revealed exceptionally good satisfaction with the Service: 98% of the respondents said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service. The staff delivering the service were rated 'knowledgeable', 'helpful' and 'friendly' in 99% of the answers.

### **Lewisham Residents' Survey**

The Lewisham Residents' Survey has been carried out since 1992 to measure the concerns of local residents, their feelings towards the borough and their ratings of services provided by the council and other local partners. The last survey was carried out in 2007.

## **Active People Survey**

The Active People Survey was commissioned by Sport England in 2005 to measure participation in sport and active recreation in every local authority in England. It collects data via telephone interviews. In April 2008, the scope of the survey was extended to collect data for the purposes of three National Indicators for culture. NI 9 measures the percentage of respondents that used a public library in the last 12 months. 2010/11 will be the last year of collection for this particular indicator.

## **Census**

The census is a count of all people and households in the country. It provides population statistics from a national to neighbourhood level for government, local authorities, business and communities. The last census for England and Wales was on 29 April 2001. It is the only survey which provides a detailed picture of the entire population, and is unique because it covers everyone at the same time and asks the same core questions everywhere. This makes it easy to compare different parts of the country. The next census will take place on 27 March 2011

## **Service user profiling**

Monitoring data is collected when someone first joins a library – this includes address, gender, age, ethnicity and disability details. New users are linked to the branch where they first joined and active borrower data can be used to explore the make up of active library users. PLUS also collects monitoring data from survey respondents.

The assessment of impact upon different equalities groups rests to a large extent on usage data provided by active borrowers and the PLUS survey. The Council recognises that usage figures alone cannot capture all the activities that take place in a local facility such as a library. However, they do provide a measure that allows for analysis and comparison across the different libraries in the borough and is able to be disaggregated by equalities categories. To ensure as full a picture as possible this information is complemented by consultation and direct feedback from participants at public meetings.

## **10. Consultation information**

Statistical data on library usage is complemented by information from both previous consultations on library services as well as the current consultation being conducted around the specific restructuring proposals.

Consultation conducted as part of the Mayor's Commission on Libraries and Learning consisted of a series of focus groups with library users. This highlighted the value that users placed on the stock of lending and reference material. Members of the focus groups prioritised the quality of the service over the buildings in which the service is offered and supported the idea of co-locating libraries with other services.

The PLUS survey carried out in 2009 showed that:

- 87% of respondents said opening hours for the library service were good or very good.
- 89% said that customer care was good or very good.
- 89% thought that libraries were a safe place to visit.
- 98% thought libraries in Lewisham were easy places to get to.

- 46% of visitors came to the library on the day of the survey intending to borrow a book and 77% of those people actually did.
- 33% of visitors came to the library to use a computer and 86% of those people did.
- 64% of users think the computer facilities in libraries are good or very good.
- Taking everything into account, 85% of people thought libraries were good or very good.

Public consultations have taken place with members of the community whose libraries have been highlighted for potential closure. The consultation has taken a number of forms in order to reach as many members of the community and library users as possible. Meetings have been organised for each of the libraries, online discussion forums have been established and library services are also one of the topics considered as part of the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' consultation on council expenditure.

The first round of public meetings took place throughout July and August. The second round of public meetings took place in October. Information on these meetings including notes on the discussions held and details on the time and venue are available on the Lewisham website – [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk). At each second round meeting, participants were provided with equalities information on library usage, with demographic information for each of the six equality categories and information related to socio-economic outcomes.

A full report on all the consultation activity has been produced to accompany the report to the Mayor and will be available online.

In addition to the public meetings the Council has an online forum where the public can discuss the library issue further.

<http://oursay.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=general&action=display&thread=14>

## 11. Profile of Library users in Lewisham

### Lewisham Borough Profile

- Lewisham has a total population of 264,500 people. 20% are children aged 0-15, 71% are people of working age (16-64) and 9% are older people aged 65 and over.<sup>5</sup>
- 50% of residents are male and 50% are female.<sup>6</sup>
- 55% of Lewisham residents are in the White British ethnic group, 2% are in the White Irish group and a further 8% are from Other White backgrounds. 35% of Lewisham residents have a non-White background.<sup>7</sup>
- 35% of Lewisham residents have a non-White background - this includes 22% Black or Black British, 6% Asian or Asian British, 4% Mixed and 3% Chinese or Other Ethnic Groups.
- 14.2% of working age people in Lewisham are categorised as disabled.<sup>8</sup>
- 61% of Lewisham residents state that they are Christian, 5% Muslim and 4% other religions. 20% of Lewisham residents state they have no religion and a further 10% would rather not say.<sup>4</sup>
- There is not currently a recognised measure of sexual identity in Lewisham. A recent survey showed in London 92.3% of respondents identified as heterosexual/straight, 2.2% as gay/lesbian/bisexual, 0.6% as other, 4.2% said they did not know or refused to answer and 0.6% did not respond at all.<sup>9</sup>
- In the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation, Lewisham's average score was 31.04, making it the 39th most deprived of all Local Authorities (1 being the most deprived, 354 the least). This means that as a local authority, Lewisham is within the 20% most deprived Local Authorities in the country.<sup>10</sup>
- 42.8% of Lewisham households do not have a car.<sup>11</sup>

### Lewisham Library Users Profile

Monitoring information is collected when a service user first joins a library and when they take part in PLUS. This information shows:

- 62% of active borrowers are female and 38% are male. This imbalance is consistent across all libraries. (Fig. 1)

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<sup>5</sup> ONS mid-year population estimates (2009)

<sup>6</sup> Population estimates by ethnic group (2007)

<sup>7</sup> Annual Population Survey (2007)

<sup>8</sup> Census (2001)

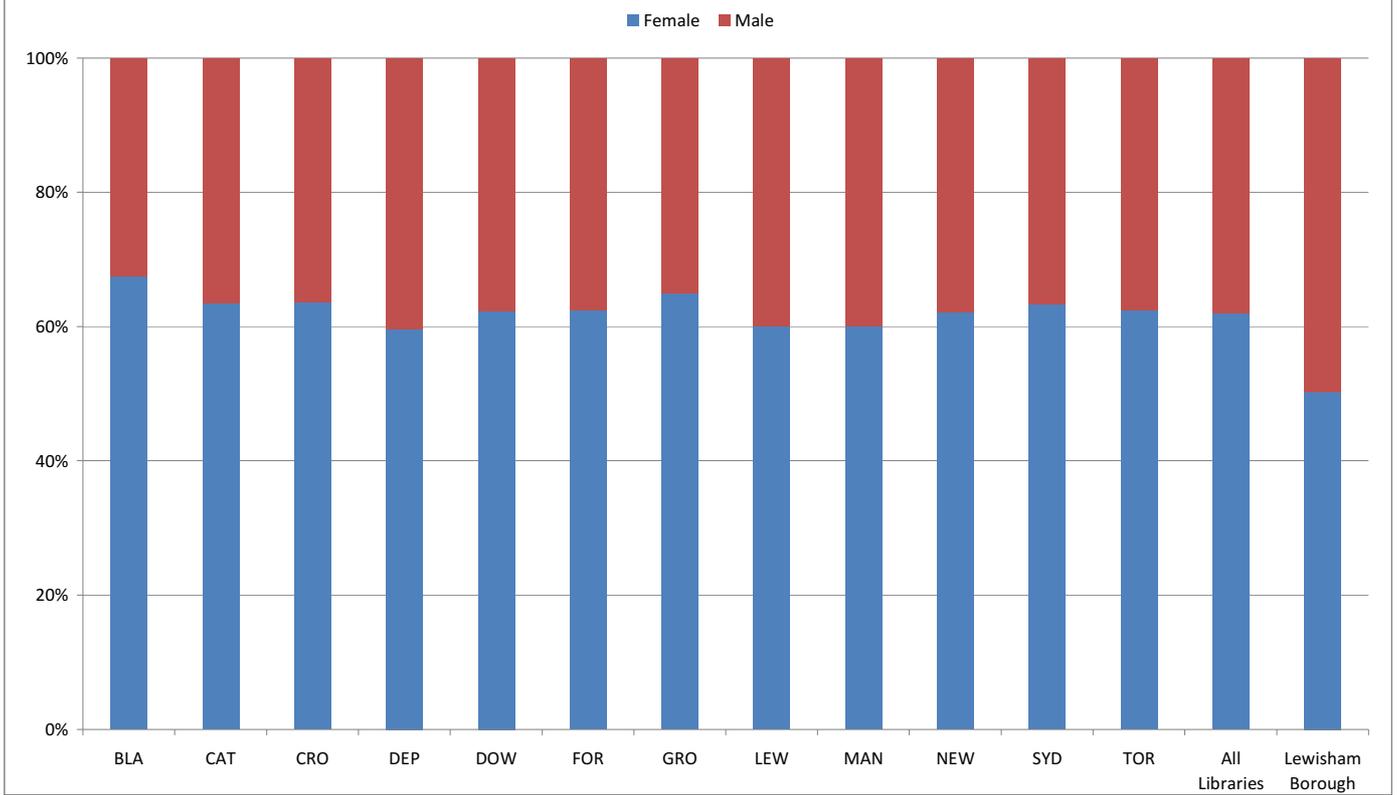
<sup>9</sup> ONS Measuring Sexual Identity: An Evaluation Report (September 2010)

<sup>10</sup> Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2007)

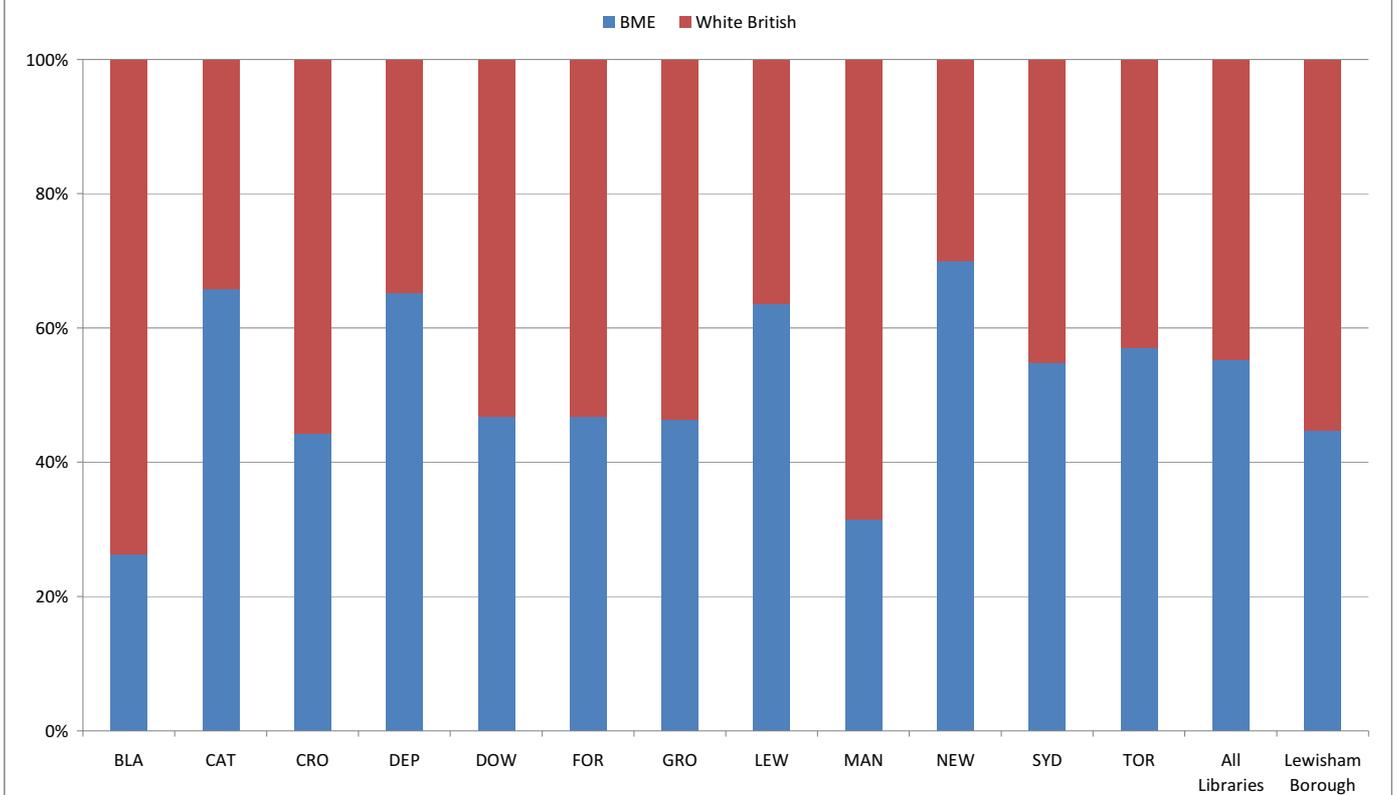
<sup>11</sup> Census (2001)

- 45% of active borrowers describe themselves as White British and 55% from BME communities. Latest ONS figures (2007) suggest that 55% of people in Lewisham are White British and 45% are from BME communities.
- In comparison, Blackheath Village has a low BME figure at 26% while at Wavelengths and New Cross this figure is high at 65% and 70% respectively. (Fig. 2)
- 38% of active borrowers are aged under 18, 55% are 18-64 and 7% are 65 and over. Downham has the highest proportion aged under 18 at 56%, while Blackheath Village has the highest proportion of 65 and over at 13%. (Fig. 3)
- 51% of PLUS respondents state they are either in employment or government supported training, 13% are unemployed but available for work and 13% are wholly retired from work. (Fig. 4)
- 17% of PLUS respondents consider themselves to have a disability. (Fig. 5)
- 71% of PLUS respondents state they have a religion, including 59% Christian, 5% Muslim and 3% Hindu. 29% say they have no religion at all. (Fig. 6)
- 95% of PLUS respondents consider themselves to be heterosexual/straight, 3% gay/lesbian, 1% bisexual and 2% other. The lesbian/gay/bisexual population is largest at Lewisham Central and New Cross (5%). (Fig. 7)
- 12% of active borrowers live outside of Lewisham. 6% come from Greenwich, 2% from Bromley, 2% from Southwark and 2% come from other areas.
- Telegraph Hill Ward has the lowest proportion of active borrowers at 4%, while Lewisham Central has the highest at 7.5%. (Fig. 8)

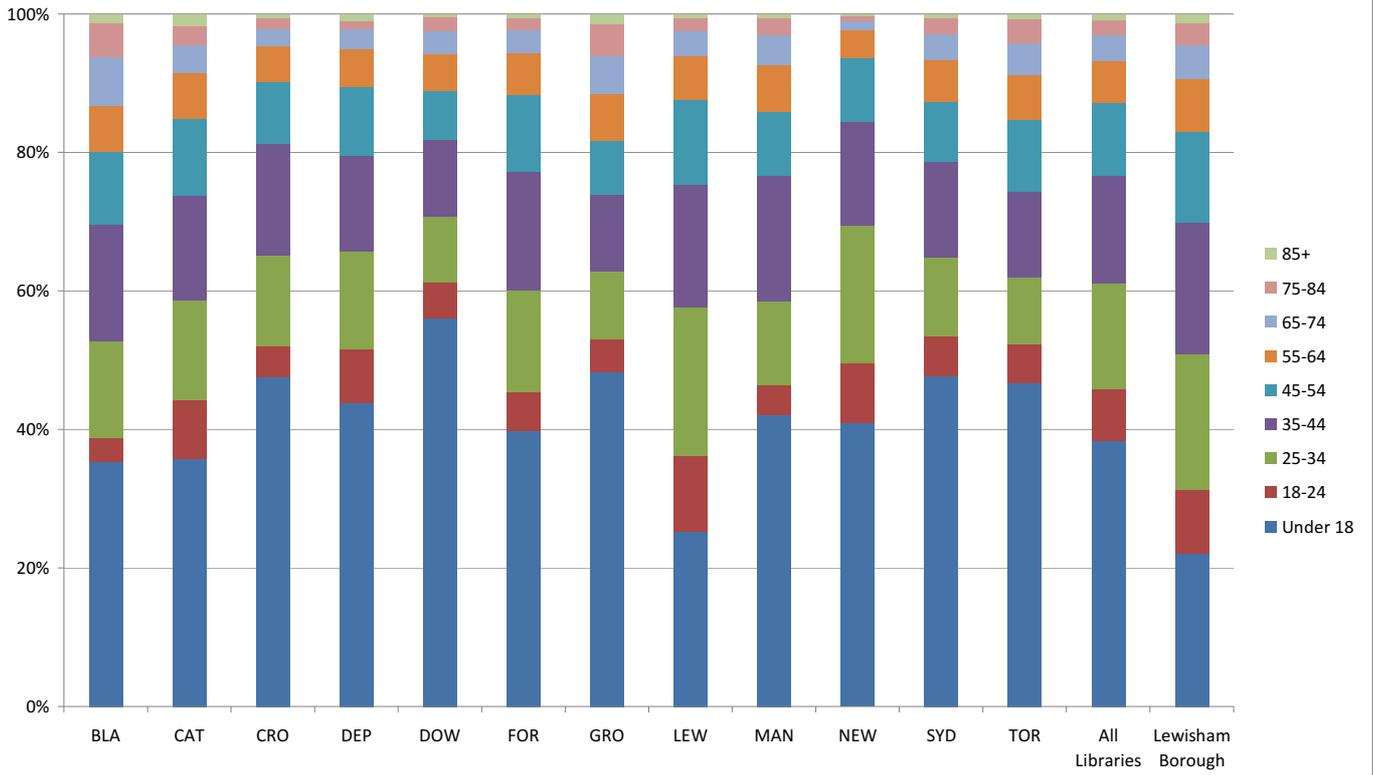
**Fig. 1: Gender** (Source: Active borrowers - September 2010)



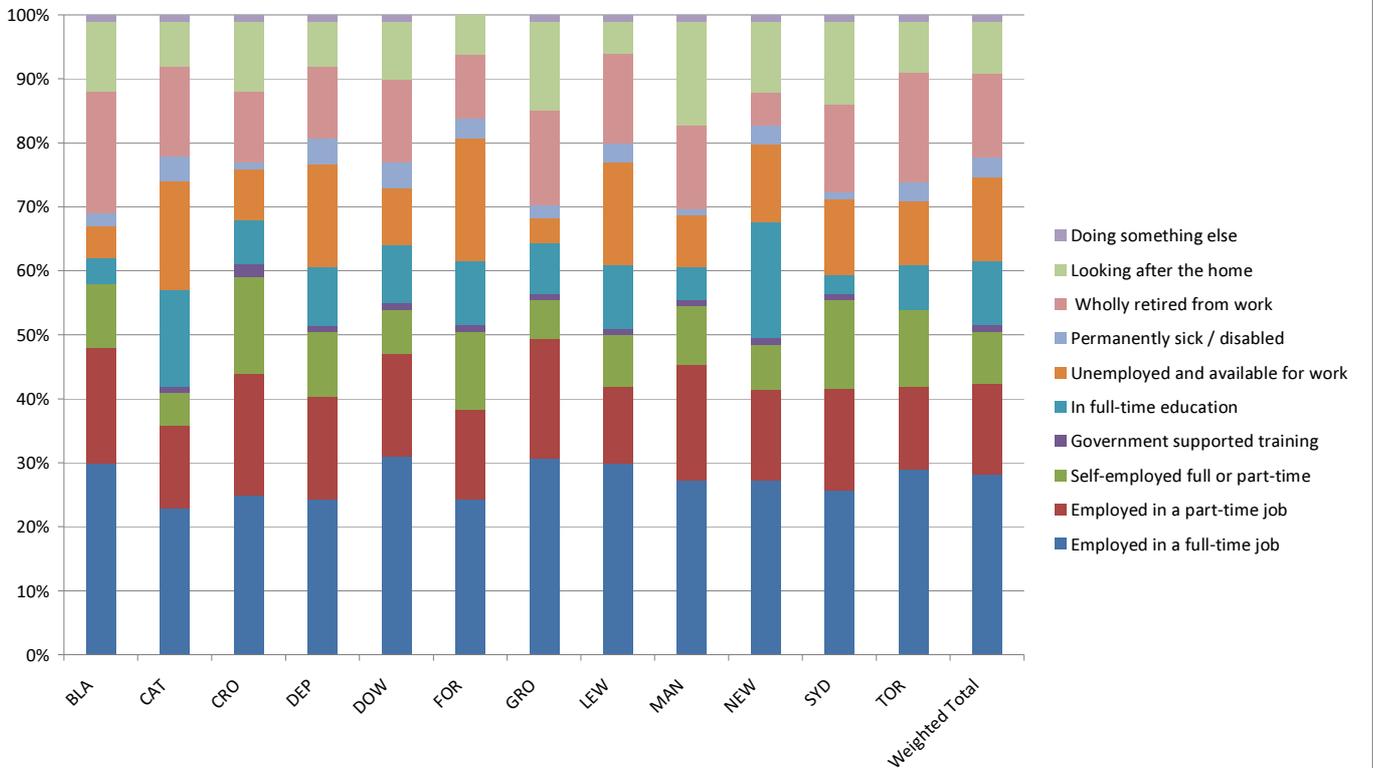
**Fig. 2: Ethnicity** (Source: Active borrowers - September 2010)



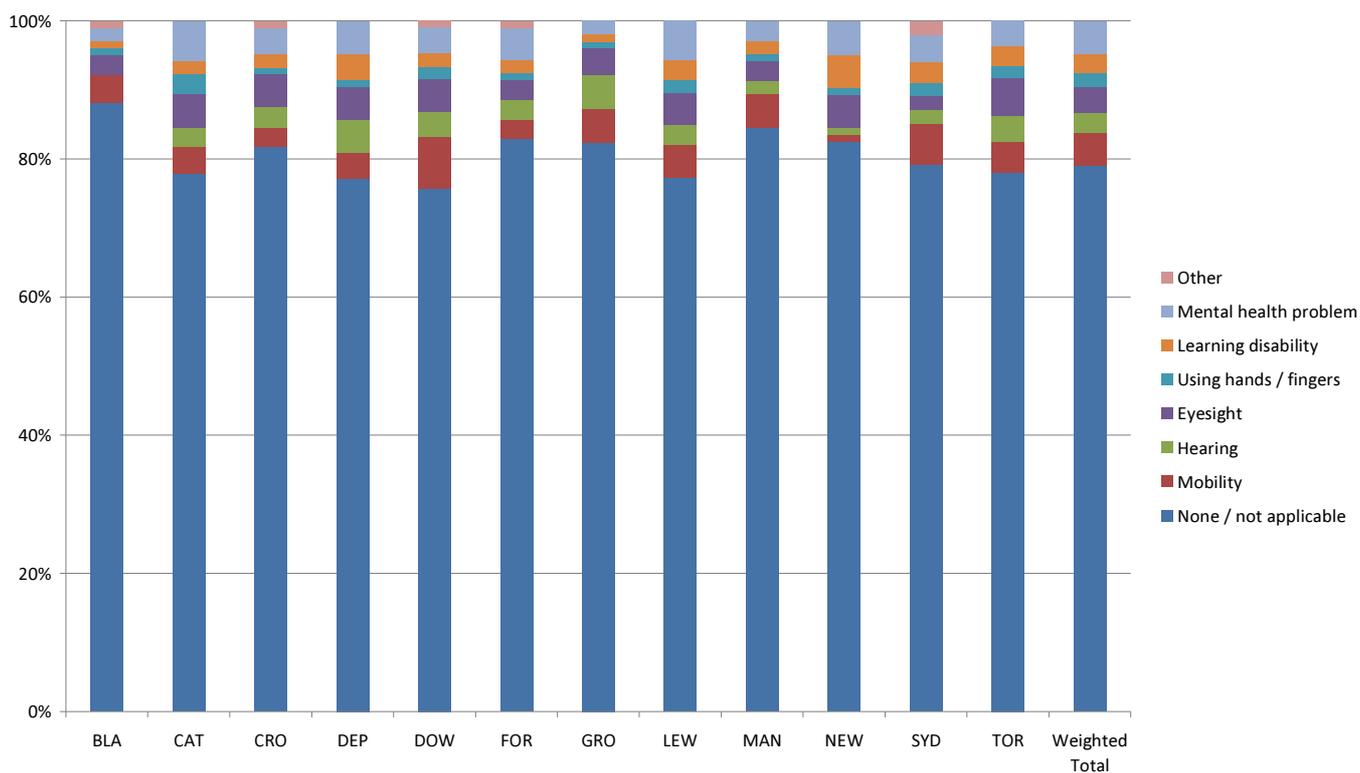
**Fig. 3: Age band** (Source: Active borrowers - September 2010)



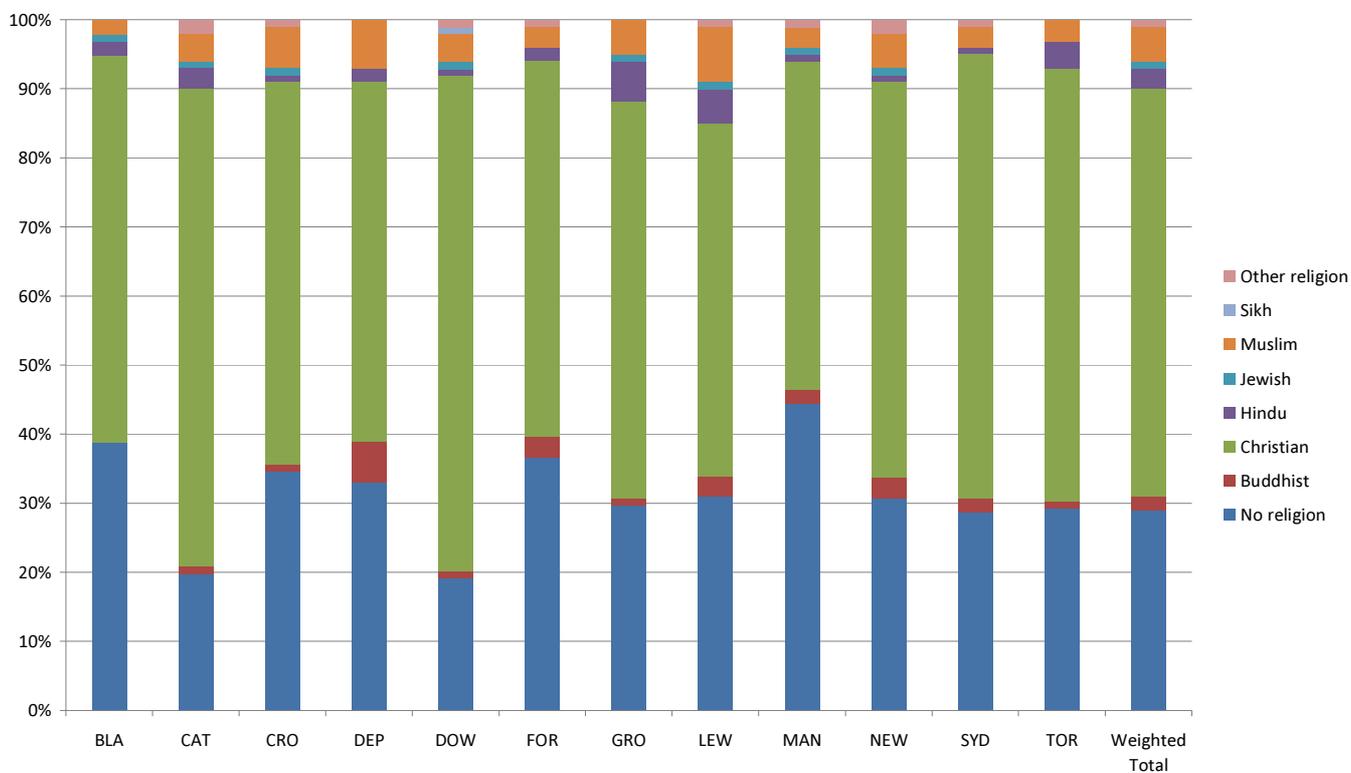
**Fig. 4: Employment** (Source: Public Library Users Survey, 2009)



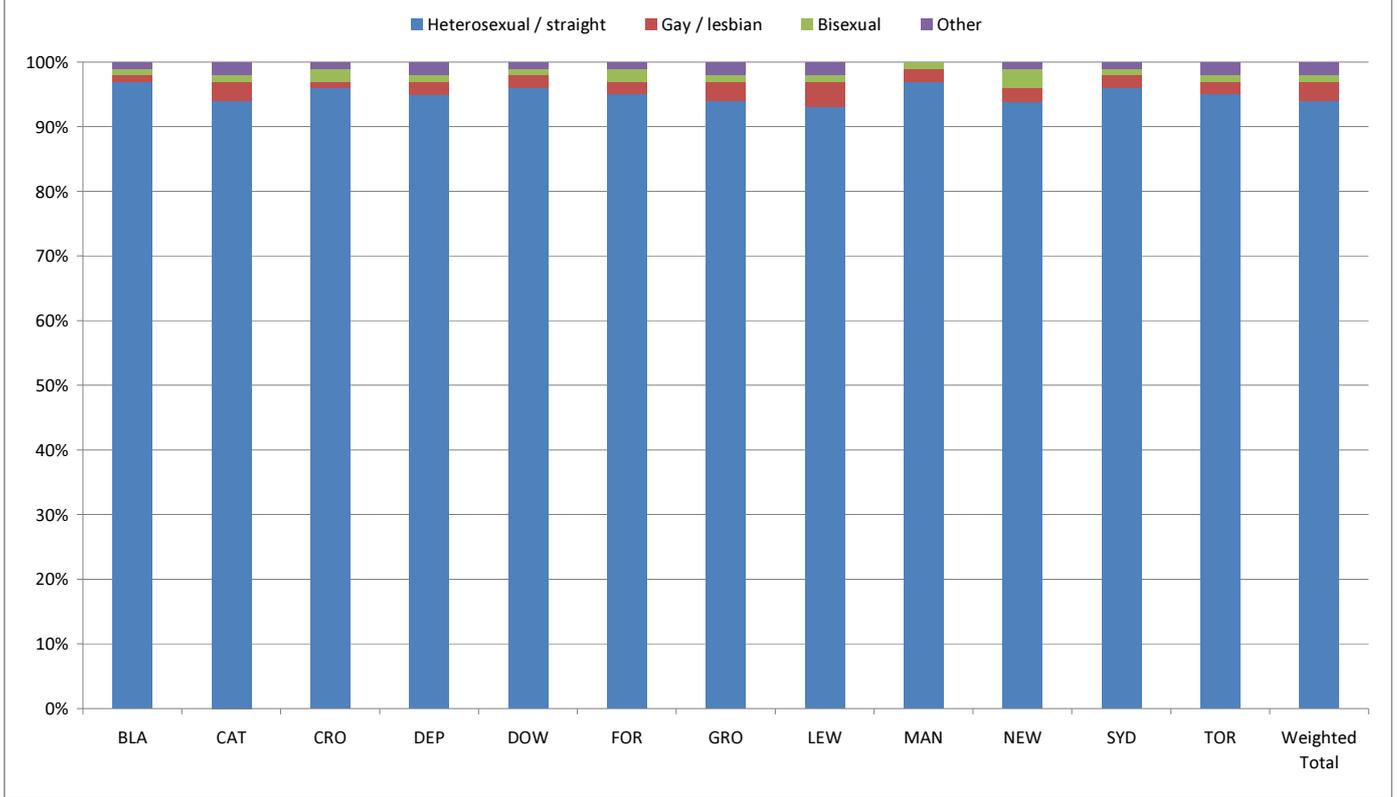
**Fig. 5: Disability** (Source: Public Library Users Survey, 2009)



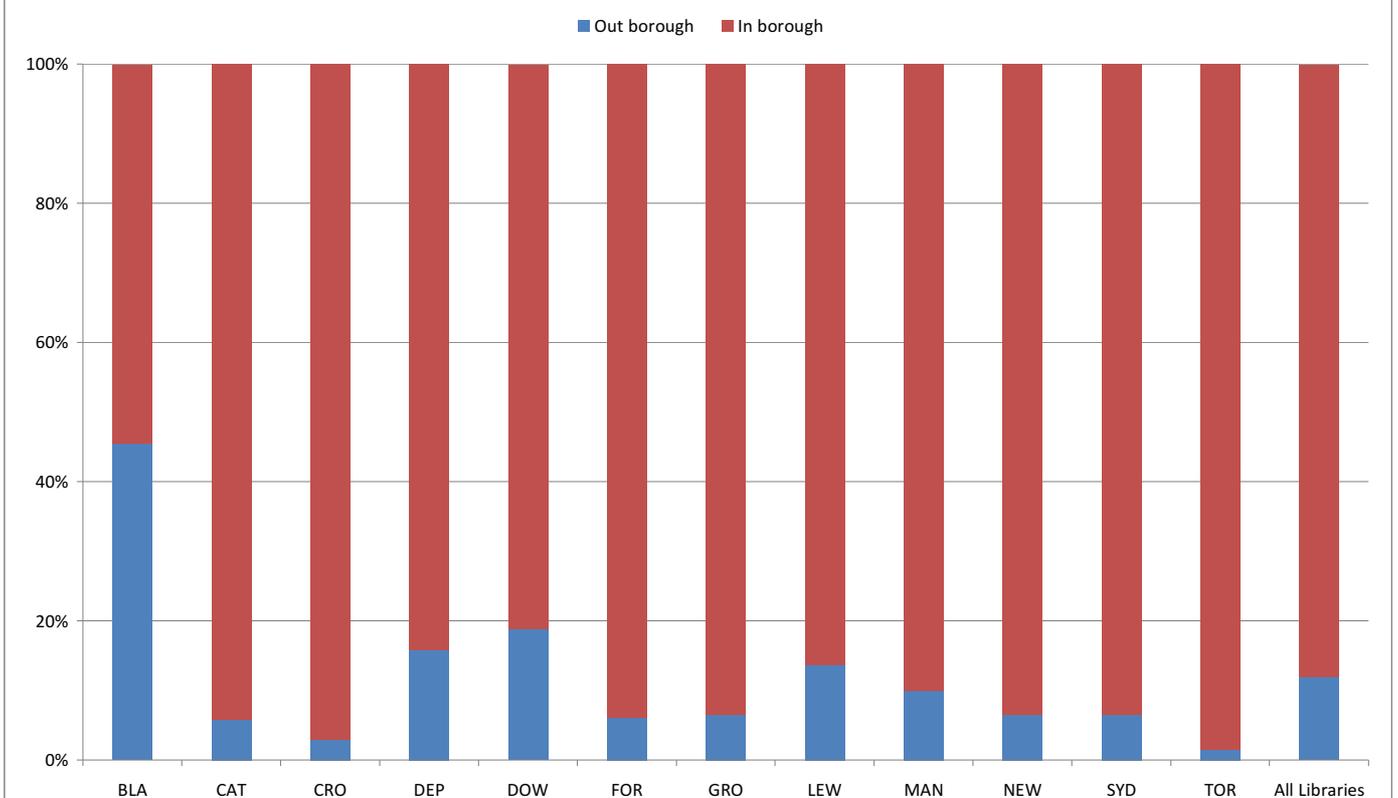
**Fig. 6: Religion** (Source: Public Library Users Survey, 2009)



**Fig. 7: Sexuality** (Source: Public Library Users Survey, 2009)



**Fig. 8: Service user location** (Source: Active borrowers - September 2010)



## 12. Equalities Aspects of the Library and Information Service

Libraries are a universal service, open to the entire community. They represent a non-political, non-denominational public facility and play host to a number of different groups and activities. The service actively promotes equal access and equal opportunities and undertakes specific activity so that some of the most vulnerable in society are able to benefit from the service.

A comparison of the borough profile and the library users profile shows how the Library and Information Service is accessed and used by Lewisham's communities. In general the demographic of users broadly matches the borough profile. For Gender a higher proportion of women use the service than men. This is consistent with national user profile. In terms of ethnicity, the service has a higher proportion of BME users than the borough profile. This may indicate the effective action taken by the Library and Information Service to ensure that its stock and range of activities is relevant and accessible. In terms of Sexual Orientation, Religion/Belief, Age and Disability the user profile closely matches the borough profile, indicating that the service provides no barriers that would make access more difficult for any specific community, group or individual.

In addition to delivering its core functions effectively, the Library and Information Service works to foster community cohesion. The service promotes People's Day, supports reminiscence workshops and publicises cultural events across libraries. The service actively celebrates diversity by mounting displays to mark key events including Black History Month, Diwali, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History month. There has been a strong focus on co-operation with other partners to promote positive images for social cohesion, working with the community to plan more effective service provision.

Previous Equalities Impact Assessments of the Library and Information Service have highlighted the ways in which the service has developed ways to involve Lewisham's different communities. Specific equalities activity undertaken by the Library and Information Service in regard to each of the equalities categories is highlighted below:

### **Age**

The Library and Information Service's overall aim with regard to age is to ensure that its facilities, services and library stock reflect the needs and are appropriate for the full age range of library users in Lewisham. The development and design of Downham library actively involved young people to ensure a space and facility that they felt happy to use.

The Library and Information Service works closely with Lewisham's schools to support raising aspiration and achievement with under-achieving students. This is achieved through school visits and providing materials to support school curriculums. Library staff also make outreach visits to local schools and organise for schools to make use of the library facilities. Another aspect of this work has been to work alongside the Youth Offending Team to target activity with offenders, providing books and information on drugs, alcohol and other relevant issues. Catford Library ran the Teenage Pregnancy SIX Project aimed at increasing access for Young People to information around sexual health.

Links between the Library and Information Service and the Borough's four Children's Centre Areas are strong. Library staff have worked with colleagues from Children's Centres to develop services to parents and families including book collections at Children's Centre locations, song and story

sessions at numerous venues including a shelter for homeless young women, benefits advice in libraries and “Walk and Talk” expeditions from Children’s Centres to libraries to encourage children’s speech and language development.

The stock offer within the service is representative of all age ranges. A review of stock drew upon feedback from consultations with LGBT Young People, Supplementary Schools, BME groups, dual language and visually impaired users so that their needs and specific requirements could be better understood.

For older people the library there are weekly Over 55 events in the larger libraries, including “Tea @ 2” in Lewisham Central Library. These feature talks, advice sessions, social activities, armchair pilates, storytelling, “knit & knitter” and reminiscence. Other activities include Creative Writing and Reading Groups, and regular IT training “Silver Surfer” courses designed for seniors. The IT Suite Earlier this year the Home Library Service with Entelechy Arts brought 50 homebound users to a lunch and tea dance event at the Albany. The Mayor’s Commission on Libraries and Learning identified that many of the existing library buildings were costly to maintain and featured inflexible spaces which could present a challenge to elderly people or disabled people

## **Gender**

Previous work around equalities has shown that young boys are less likely to participate in reading than young girls. The Library and Information Service has initiated the Book Ahead Project and The Boys into Books, both focussing on encouraging boys to read more widely and to read for pleasure. The service has been working with the Pupil Referral Unit to encourage reading and to provide books for every primary school in Lewisham, targeted at boys aged 5-11. White, working class boys were targeted as one of the National Year of Reading targets and the links developed with schools on this have continued.

The Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) continues to be popular with themes aimed at improving participation in the library by young boys. The uptake for the SRC increased by 7% on last year. The number of boys participating has increased by 9% on last year, due to the theme linking into space exploration, the activities run in libraries over the summer and the introduction of Munglers Trumps, which particularly appealed to boys.

Data shows that a higher proportion of women access the Library and Information service than men. To encourage more male usage, the service has worked closely with the Fathers Information Group (FIG) and has had a stall encouraging male carers to read with their children at the FIG Annual Fun Day for the past two years. In response to demand, Catford Library will pilot an Under 5s session on Saturdays, this is particularly marketed at male carers who are often unable to attend the existing weekday sessions.

## **Ethnicity**

The Library and Information Service’s approach to improving representation of BME library users focuses on four key areas: greater understanding of BME communities leading to better access to specialist stock; support for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses; improved stock relating to citizenship for new communities and improved opportunities to foster social cohesion.

To address a knowledge gap in the information about the languages spoken in the borough, the service used community profiles to identify the range of languages spoken across the borough and ensure that local libraries have the right languages for their communities. This work has resulted in

promotion of BME fiction, poetry and narrative non-fiction within local libraries. Activities have included evening events and book group discussion sessions have taken place. These have worked with both widely known published authors like Bernardine Evaristo and Jacqueline Walker; and niche publishers Centerprise and Flipped Eye.

The Library and Information Service has supported local BME communities by providing a showcase for BME talent and achievement in the local area. Audience development and cultural capacity building has taken place with local writing and publishing initiatives working with adult groups from a range of audiences with strong BME representation. Productions continue throughout the year including events leading up to Black History Month (BHM).

Another aspect of support for BME communities has been improved access to the heritage archives and the development of a touring exhibition programme for branch libraries and community centres.

Ongoing consultations with BME groups have resulted in the ESOL reading groups set up at Brockley Rise and Kirkdale CEL centres and the Bellingham ESOL group taking part in the Six Book Challenge. With regards to specialist reading groups, the Afghani Community Group are shadowing the Albany storytelling group, the Indo-Chinese Little Rainbow Nursery have started a storytelling group and joined the Book Crawl; and the Vietnamese Supplementary School have ongoing visits for story telling at the library with new members discussing their views on the library services. Use of the Library and Information Service by community groups includes use by the Somali and Somaliland Lewisham Community Ltd visit the library and the Federation Of Refugees From Vietnam (FORVIL).

The Library and Information Service actively participates in the Lewisham Refugee Network and has developed services for residents applying for UK citizenship.

## **Sexual Orientation**

The Library and Information Service previously identified a lack of stock and information for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people within the current library offering. The response was to explore other services with developed strategies for engaging LGBT groups. Gay and Lesbian Youth (GALLY) was consulted along with other young people on the selection of suitable stock and the type of information available in libraries. In addition the Central Librarian was tasked to attend meetings with other Council officers and community groups on LGBT and other diversity issues affecting the Lewisham community, allowing the service to work with the community in planning more effective service provision. The Library and Information Service actively publicises LGBT History month and regularly has displays of LGBT authors.

## **Disability**

The service has undertaken a number of consultations in partnership with social care teams and disability organisations to deliver a programme of consultation and engagement with disabled and sensory impaired people, their families and carers to improve facilities and services in libraries.

Engagement has included an open evening at Catford Library attended by the Deaf and hard of hearing, and their families, meetings three times a month with signing community outreach worker and visits to Brent Knoll, Meadowgate and Watergate Special Schools.

The service understood that there was an issue around disability awareness amongst library staff. Consequently, a Disability Champion has been designated at the Central Library to carry out a

disability audit and increase staff awareness of disability issues as well as acquire new and relevant materials on disability awareness.

Partnership work to facilitate reading groups engaging with people with a range of special needs has been set up, as have reading groups for Home Library Service customers. The overall proportion of resources allocated to large print and talking books has increased, as has the access to reference material suitable for people with disabilities. All libraries have adaptive technology, big keys keyboards and ergonomic mice to enable people with physical disabilities to access IT. Many Library and Information Service staff are trained in the use of British Sign Language and Catford Library holds a BSL collection which enables BSL users to perfect their reading and writing as well as being useful to BSL students.

A previous EIA identified that stock needed to be more representative of children and young people with disabilities, with a focus on the resources for those with a visual impairment. As a result more large print and talking books have been bought for all branches and this stock is clearly displayed and promoted to children and families. Materials for visually impaired children have been ordered for the Summer Reading Challenges. Work has also started using Bag Books, multi-sensory resources for children and young people with complex needs. A supply has been bought for the borough and staff have received training on using them.

Additionally the Library and Information Service deliver Booktouch and Bookshine packs as part of the Lewisham Bookstart programme. The packs are provided to blind, Deaf or partially sighted children up to and including the age of four. The packs contain two specially chosen touch and feel books and Bookstart have increased the range of Booktouch and Bookshine packs to include two age appropriate packs for each. Information is available through staff at branches along with appropriate sign-posting information. Work has also started with families who have a child under five with a Statement of Educational Needs and those with multiple or complex needs.

## **Religion/Belief**

The Library and Information Service provides a range of books covering various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries. There are annual displays, activities and craft events for children in celebration of the major religious and ethnic festivals, including Diwali, EID, Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year.

## **Equalities considerations raised at the public meetings**

At each second round public meeting, citizens and stakeholders were invited to contribute to the Equalities Impact Assessment process. To facilitate discussion and consideration of equalities issues, library user information was provided. Participants at the meeting had the opportunity to consider this information, ask questions of officers and contribute their thoughts as to the potential equalities impact on flipchart paper.

The specific equalities issues noted through this exercise and through the general discussions and views expressed throughout both public meetings have been included in the relevant library section. However, some of the key issues raised across the five meetings comprised:

- Recognition of the parking and accessibility issues at some libraries.
- Recognition of the use of libraries for extra study by young people with learning and literacy issues

- Recognition of the investment into adapting the service for all users, like the sensory gardens.
- Consideration of the impact of closing the libraries on the wider community and businesses.
- Recognition that schools use the current library service extensively and there are few alternatives
- Recognition that elderly people use the library as a means of staying in touch with each other and with the wider community.
- Consideration of the role of libraries as places where all different sections of the community come together and that to close library facilities might have an effect on community cohesion.
- Consideration of the geographical effect of closing local libraries and the reduced likelihood of users with disabilities or young families travelling to alternatives.
- Recognition that some of the libraries are located in areas of high deprivation and that closure of the library facilities could only exacerbate this situation.
- Consideration of the impact closing libraries will have on facilities available for young people in reducing provisions for them.
- Concern was expressed regarding the geographical spread of the Library and Information Service, if the five libraries were to close.

## 13. Blackheath

Blackheath Village Library is located in the heart of Blackheath Village, close to the border with Greenwich. 52% of users live in Lewisham Borough and 48% of users live in Greenwich Borough. Of the Lewisham residents, 41% live in Blackheath ward and 6% in Lee Green ward. The building comprises two floors, the downstairs houses the library stock and the upper meeting/exhibition space. The ground floor is fully accessible but stairs restrict access to the first floor.

There are four free public terminals, managed via a computerised booking system, providing access to the internet. Microsoft Office software is installed on all computers and the library offers access to a wide range of electronic information resources. The library also runs monthly ICT support sessions.

Within its 31 hours of opening, regular activities include class visits, currently taken up by All Saints CE, John Ball and Heath House. The library hosts a well-attended weekly Under 5s session and monthly Chatterbooks for older children. The library also runs craft activities for children to support specific events like Black History Month and the Summer Reading Challenge. This year, 164 children aged 5-11 took part in the Summer Reading Challenge at Blackheath. The Library also has a well-established adult reading group and hosts literary events like book launches and readings.

The exhibition space hosts regular exhibitions of work by local artists and is also used as a social/meeting space for a number of groups such as the University of the Third Age.

### Libraries Data and Reader Profile

For the period April to March 2009/10, Blackheath recorded 91,797 visitors. The figure for the period April/September 2010 stands at 47,432 visitors.

Active borrowers profile shows 41% of users are from Blackheath ward, 6% from Lee Green ward and 48% from London Borough of Greenwich.

43% of active library users in Blackheath ward use Blackheath Village Library, while 38% use Lewisham Library and 11% use Manor House. 5% of active library users in Lee Green ward use Blackheath Library, while 56% use Manor House Library and 31% use Lewisham Library.

Gender: Blackheath has a slightly higher proportion of female users – 68% compared with a service average of 62%.

Race: 73% of Blackheath library users are White: British, compared with a service average of 45%. The largest BME populations are Black African – 12% and Black Caribbean – 11%

Disability: 88% of Blackheath respondents to the PLUS survey stated having no disability, compared to a service average of 83%. 4% have mobility issues, 3% eyesight problems, 2% mental health and 1% have learning difficulties, coordination problems or other issues.

Age: There is an older profile among library users compared with the service average. 35% of users are under 18 compared with 39% for Lewisham as a whole. There are also fewer 18-24 year olds,

3% compared with a service average of 7%. There are more users in the 65-74 and 75-84 age groups – 7% and 5% compared with 4% and 2% respectively.

### Consultation activity

In July and August 2010, Lewisham Council held public meetings to discuss the possible closure of five libraries in the borough, with a second round being held in October. Information about these was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website and publicised in the local press. Users were encouraged to participate in the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' process and post their comments on the forum. E-mails were received via the [Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk) email address and petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern. A full report on the messages arising from the consultation has been produced.

- Library stakeholder meetings on 20<sup>th</sup> July and 12<sup>th</sup> August 2010
- First public meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010 (98 attended)
- Second public meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October (163 attended)

### Blackheath Scoping Grid

The key questions considered in scoping the assessment were:

- Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
- Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
- Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

Equalities category	Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)	Reason for this assessment
<b>Gender</b>	Negative - Medium	68% of active library users (as at September 2010) are female compared with a service average of 62%.
<b>Race</b>	Negative - Low	Active library user stats from September 2010 show that 73% of users are White British compared to 45% average in the service. The figure is broadly reflective of the demographics for this area with 70% White population compared to 23.2% BME.
<b>Disability</b>	Negative - Low	12% of respondents to the PLUS Survey identified that they had some form of disability, compared to the service average of 22%; and the ward figures which indicate that 3.6% residents are sick or disabled and 14.3% have a limiting long term illness.
<b>Age</b>	Negative - Medium	There is an older profile for this library compared with the service average – 13% aged 65 and over compared with 7% for the service average and 9% for the borough. Overall the percentage of older service user is comparable to the elderly population

Equalities category	Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)	Reason for this assessment
		of Blackheath (60+) which is 15.5%, the eighth highest in Lewisham. Under 18s account for 35% of users, the lowest of all libraries and just under the service average of 38%.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative - Low	According to 2009 PLUS, 4% of respondents identified as LGBT and the remaining 96% as heterosexual. This is consistent with the overall service average of 95% heterosexual and slightly lower than the borough profile of 6% identifying as LGBT.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	Negative - Low	<p>Blackheath respondents to the 2009 PLUS survey show that 55% were Christian, 2% Muslim and Hindu and 1% Jewish. 38% reported themselves as having 'no religion'. This is broadly similar in breakdown to the overall service average of 59% Christian, 29% no religion, 5% Muslim, 3% Hindu and 1% Jewish.</p> <p>Compared to the ward profile in which 59.6% are identified as Christian, 25% no religion and 3% Muslim, the figures are again roughly comparable.</p>

## Assessment of Equalities Impacts

### Gender: Negative - Medium

Female users account for 68% of active users, more than the 62% service average. As such closure may therefore have a higher impact upon women.

### Race: Negative - Low

Although there is a higher number of White British active users compared to the overall Library and Information Service average, the figure is roughly proportionate to the ward profile. Users from the BME community are very low and development of alternative forms of delivery may provide an opportunity to focus on this group to improve participation.

### Disability: Negative - Low

The PLUS survey indicates that the library has less participation from residents with a disability. Currently wheelchair users and people with mobility issues have some difficulty in using the building and in gaining access to the regular exhibitions and activities upstairs on the first floor. Consultation with users and residents identified concerns about parking issues at the current site as well as accessibility for any alternative provision if the library was to close.

### Age: Negative - Medium

The older age profile of active users is higher than the service average. As such the closure of the library may have an impact on these residents. In regard to age, All Saints CE and John Ball and Heath House schools all send classes to visit the library. The library also holds 'Silver Surfer' IT

sessions for older people which are well attended. The close proximity to the Age Exchange in Blackheath Village benefits library use by older clients.

In terms of specific impact upon different age categories, areas of concern raised through consultation included the accessibility of alternative provision by older residents and by local schools if it were to be located outside of the village.

### **Sexual Orientation: Negative Low**

It is very difficult to know how many people in Lewisham are LGBT, however according to the Speak Out survey, the Treasury estimates that 6% of the total population are gay or lesbian. In the Library and Information Service PLUS survey 4% of people responded as being LGBT. There is no evidence that the proposal to close the library will have a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic.

### **Religion and Belief: Negative Low**

There are over 200 different religions in Lewisham. The two most common religions practiced by Lewisham residents are Christianity with 61% and Islam with 4.6%. The Ward profile follows a similar trend with 59.6% Christian, 3.2% Muslim and 24.5% stated having no religion. An average of 1% are stated to be Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish.

The service average is broadly similar to this with 59% of users identified as Christian, 29% having no religion, 5% Muslim, 3% Hindu, 2% Buddhist, 1% Jewish and less than 1% Sikh.

Comparatively, 38% of responders to the PLUS Survey from Blackheath stated that they do not follow a religion, 55% were Christian, 2% Muslim, 3% Hindu. These figures are proportionally similar to both ward and service averages; and there is no evidence that the proposal has a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic. The Library and Information Service provides a range of books and covering various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries.

### **Statement in regard to Human Rights**

The implications of this proposal on Human Rights has been assessed using the flow chart in 'Human rights: human lives: A handbook for public authorities' Department for Constitutional Affairs. This proposal does not interfere with human rights.

### **Socio-Economic conditions specific to Blackheath Library catchment**

According to the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Lewisham is the 39<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. Deprivation in Lewisham is centralised in areas in the north, centre and south of the borough.

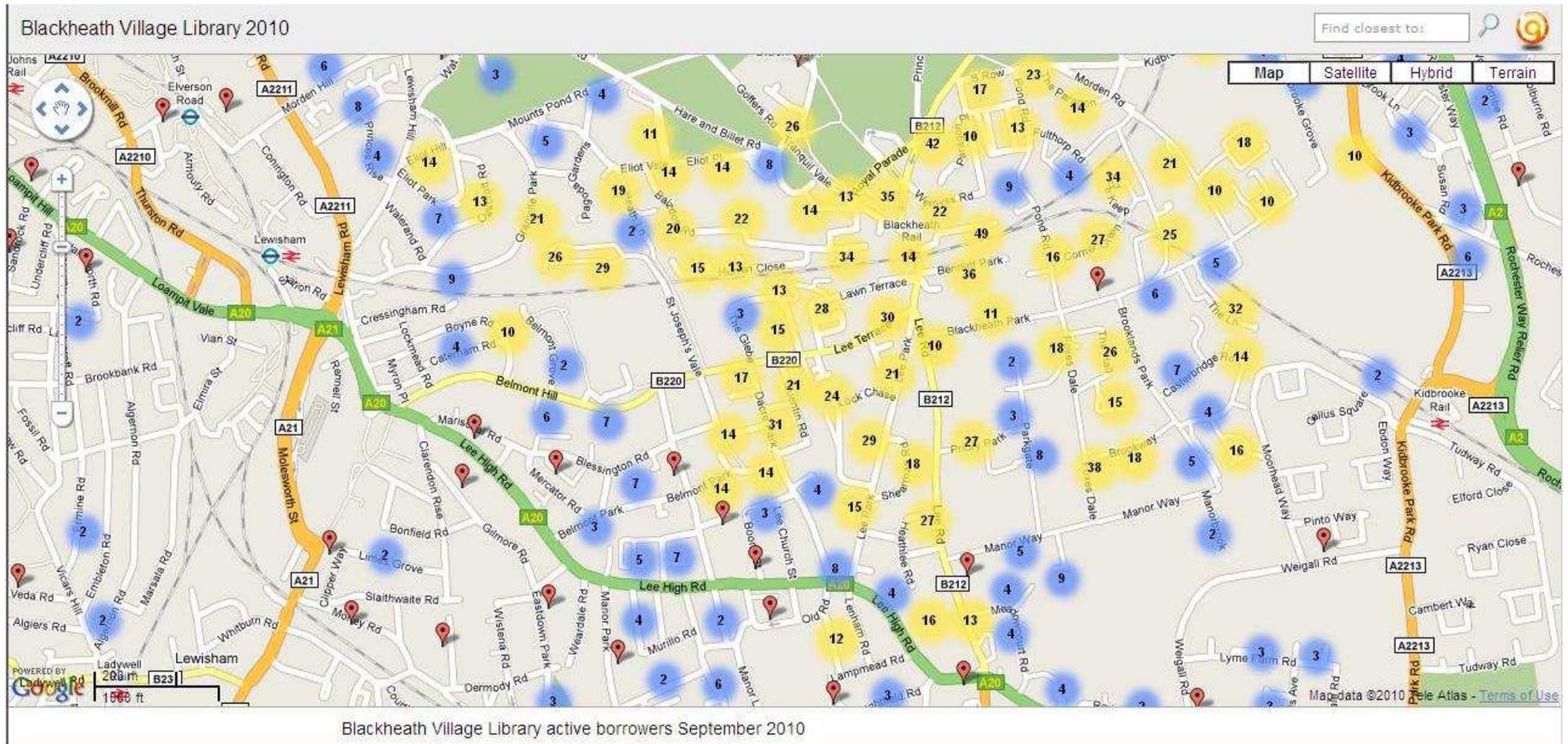
In Blackheath, there is a higher percentage of residents earning above average annual earnings than for the borough as a whole, and higher numbers of economically active residents. The percentage of people with level 4 or higher qualifications is 48% compared with 29.4% for the borough as a whole. There is a slightly higher percentage of over 65s than for the borough as a whole and a lower percentage of under 19s – 18.5% compared to 24.3%

Blackheath has 3.7% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, and 53.4 incapacity benefits claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 17<sup>th</sup> highest in the borough. Blackheath also has 91% of Key Stage

Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Blackheath (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 2.3%. Transport links are good with direct rail links to central London. House prices are almost double the borough average.

According to Census (2001) data, 41.9% of Blackheath households do not own a car, compared to the borough profile of 42.8% of households. The closest alternative Lewisham libraries are Manor House (0.6 miles) and Lewisham (1.2 miles) and are both accessible by public transport.

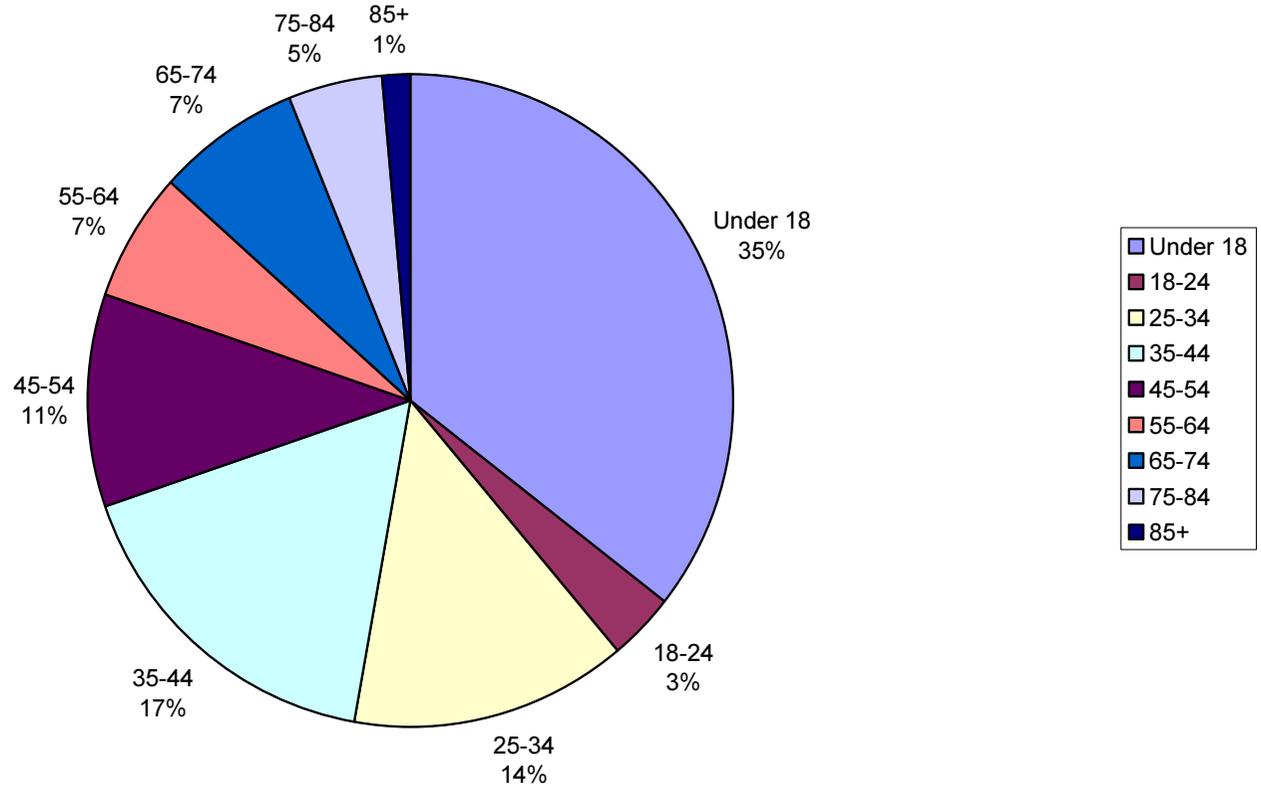
## Blackheath Library Catchment Area



Each number represents the number of users by postcode. (Yellow >10, Blue <10)  
 Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

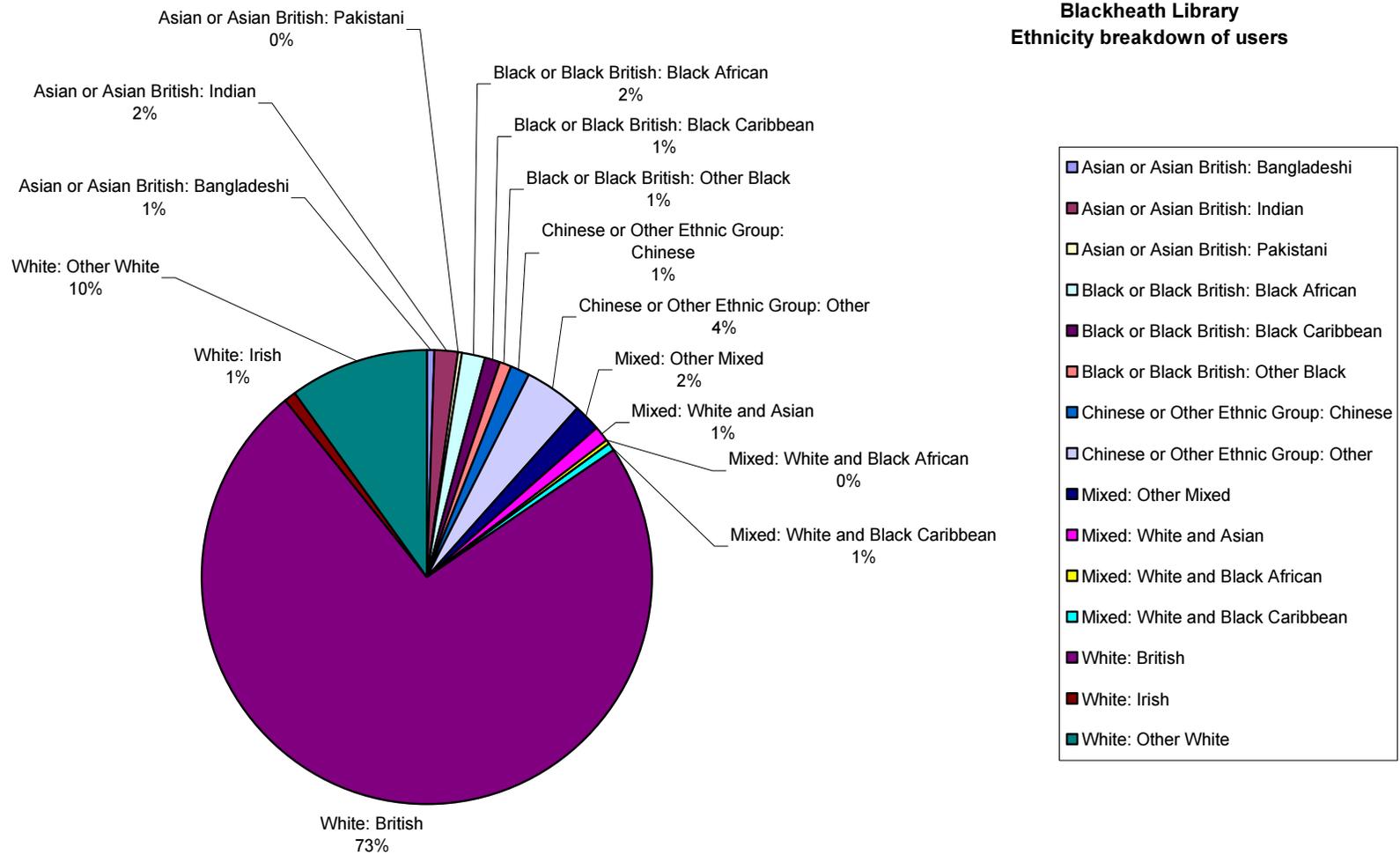
# Blackheath Library User Age Range

Blackheath Library  
Age breakdown of users



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

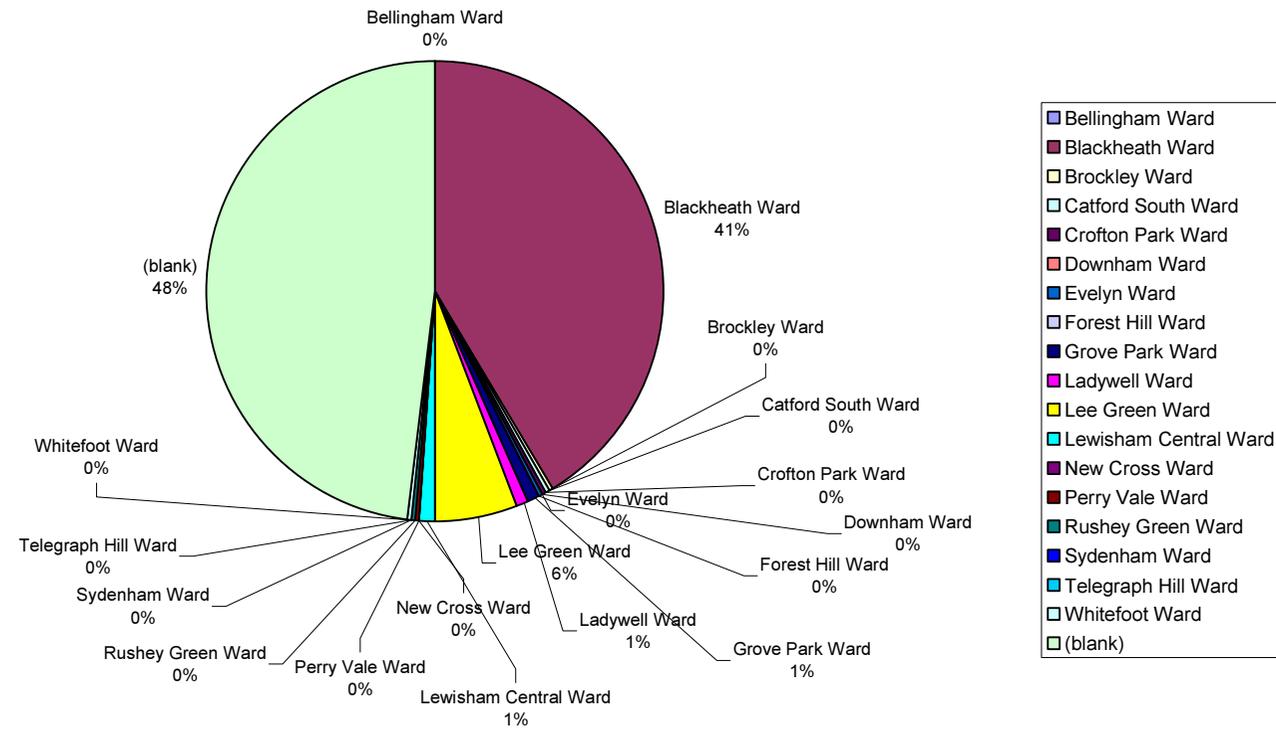
# Blackheath Library User Ethnicity



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

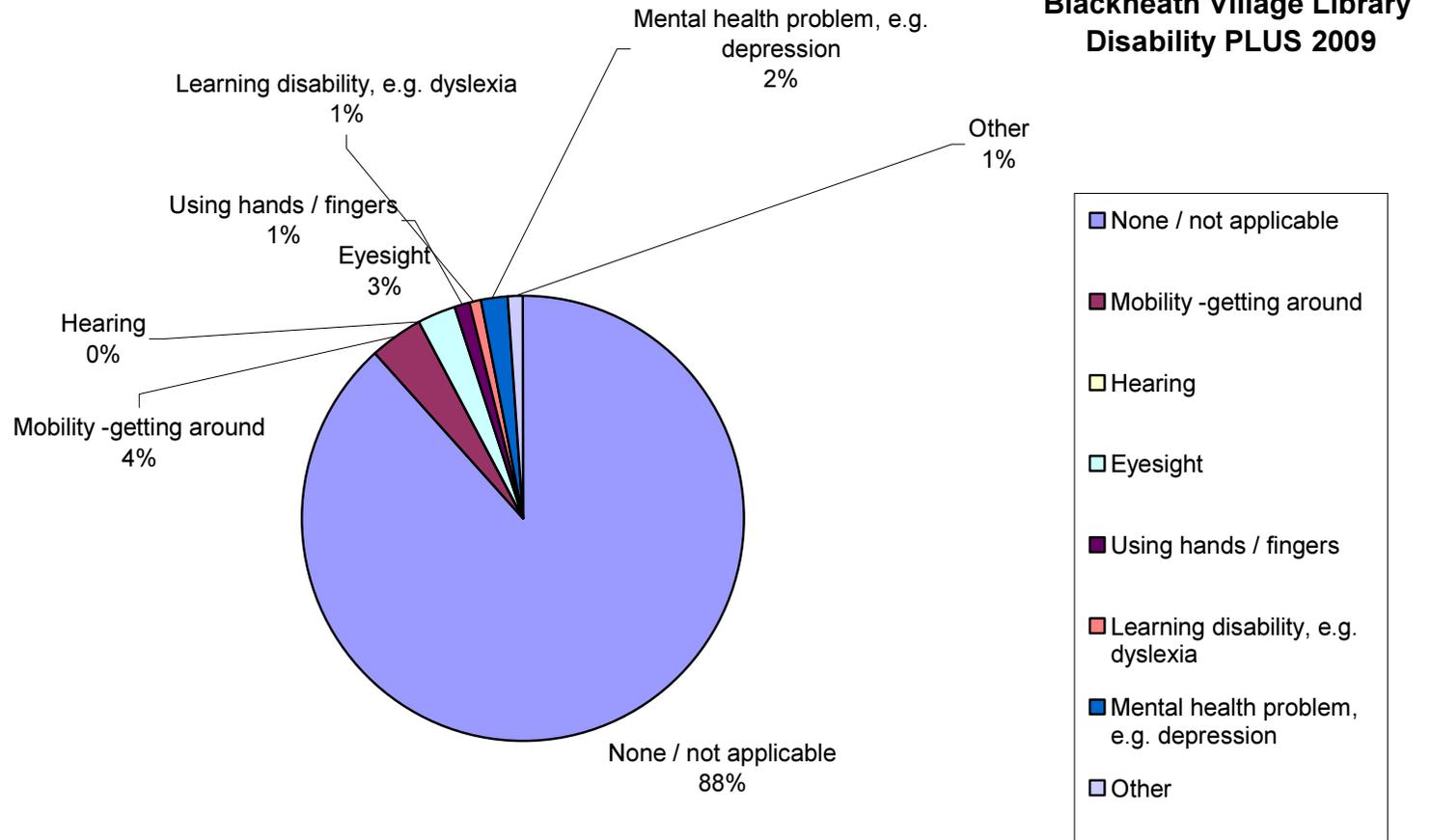
# Blackheath Library Users Origin

**Blackheath Library**  
Where users come from



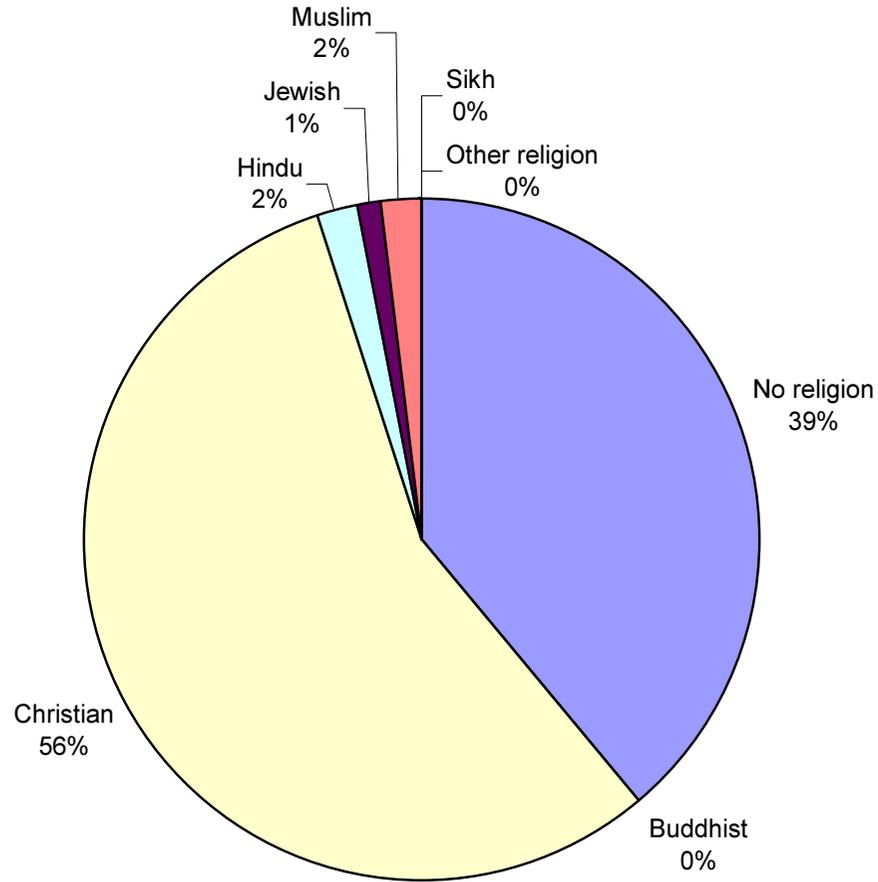
*Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010*

## Blackheath Library User Disability

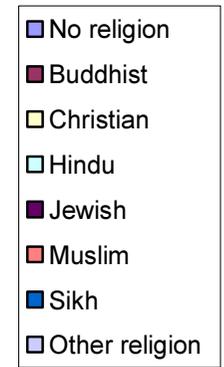


Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

# Blackheath Library User Religion

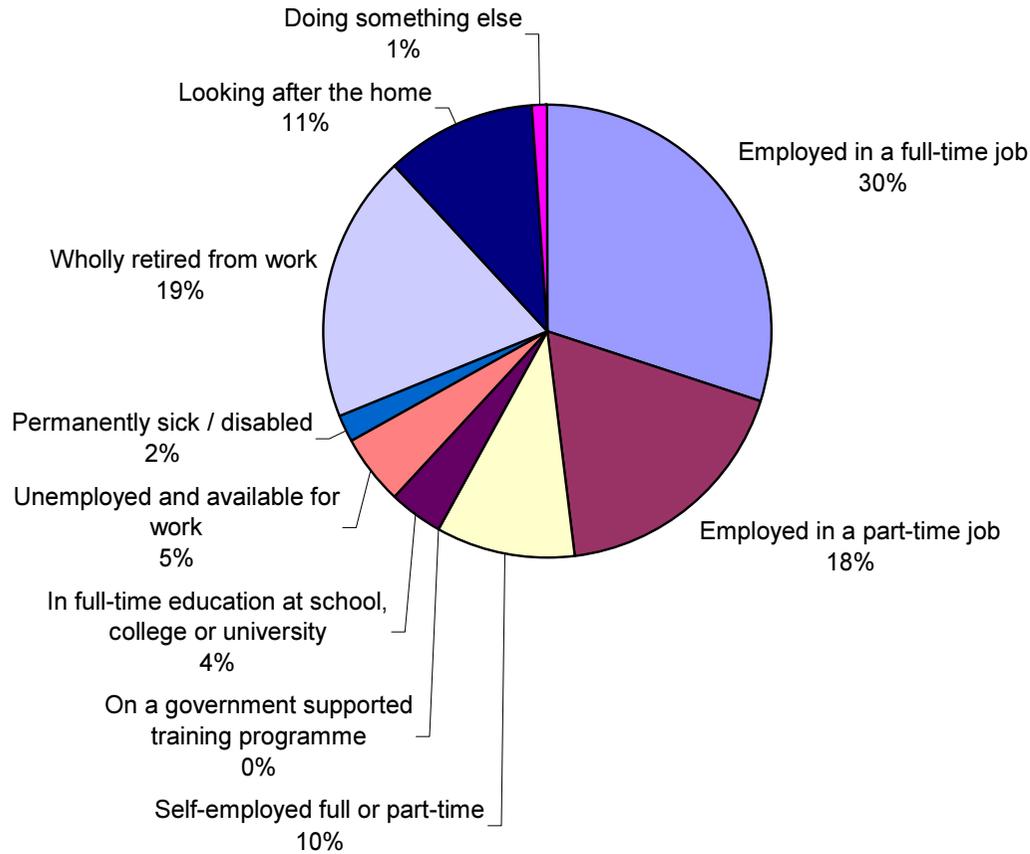


# Blackheath Village Library Religion PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## Blackheath Library User Employment

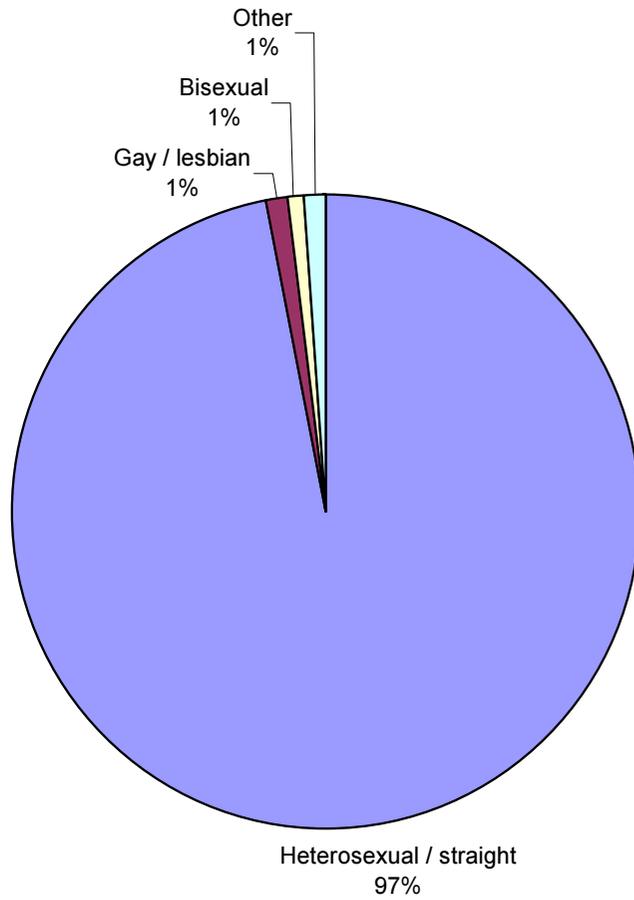


## Blackheath Village Library Employment PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

# Blackheath Library User Sexual Orientation



# Blackheath Village Library LGBT PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## 14. Crofton Park

Crofton Park is a 100 year old Carnegie Library on the edge of Ladywell and Crofton Park wards. 45% of users come from Crofton Park, 16% from Ladywell and 11% from Telegraph Hill wards. The library has full disabled access, but there is no lift access within the building to the upper floors.

There are eight free public terminals, managed via a computerised booking system providing access to the internet. Microsoft Office software is installed on all computers and the library offers access to a wide range of electronic information resources, notably Credo Reference. The library also runs monthly ICT support sessions.

Within its 36 hours of opening, regular activities include class visits currently taken up by Brockley and St Mary Magdalen's RC School. The library hosts a well-attended weekly Under 5s sessions and Baby Bounce, plus a monthly Chatterbooks for older children. This year, 223 children aged 5-11 took part in the Summer Reading Challenge at the library.

Councillors' surgeries take place at Crofton Park Library. The Library has good links with SureStart Honor Oak, now part of Children's Centre Area 1 - and has been the destination for many "Walk and Talk" expeditions. It also hosts a course for families where children have speech and language delay, run jointly with the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

The library has successfully engaged with community partners and led a Nelson Mandela portrait project supported by his UK foundation. It has hosted events like SE4's Got Talent, and SE4 Literary Roots. Prominent authors like Malorie Blackman and Lindsey Davis have done readings. The library is unique amongst Lewisham's libraries in having a sensory garden.

### Libraries Data and Reader Profile

For the period April to March 2009/10, Crofton Park recorded 82,528 visitors. The figure for the period April/September 2010 stands at 41,929 visitors.

Active borrowers profile shows 45% of users are from Crofton Park ward, 16% from Ladywell ward and 11% from Telegraph Hill ward.

50% of active Library users in Crofton Park ward currently use Crofton Park Library, while 17% use Lewisham Library and another 17% use Catford Library. 18% of active library users in Ladywell ward use Crofton Park Library while 66% use Lewisham Library.

Gender: Crofton Park Library has 64% female users and 36% male, compared with a service average of 62% female.

Race: 56% of library users are White: British compared with a service average of 45%. The largest BME populations are Black Caribbean – 11% and Black or Black African – 8%.

Disability: 85% of respondents to the PLUS survey cited they had no disability compared to the service average of 83%. Those with eyesight problems accounted for 4%, mental health for 4%, hearing 3%, learning disabilities 2% and other problems 1%.

Age band – there is a higher proportion of under 18s than is the service average – 47% compared with 39%, although 18-24s are a smaller proportion of users – 5% compared with 7%.

### Consultation activity

In July and August 2010, Lewisham Council held public meetings to discuss the possible closure of five libraries in the borough, with a second round being held in October. Information about these was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website and publicised in the local press. Users were encouraged to participate in the ‘Our Lewisham, Our Say’ process and post their comments on the forum. E-mails were received via the [Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk) e-mail address and petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern

- First public meeting on 23rd August 2010 (111 attended)
- Second public meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October (74 attended)

### Crofton Park Scoping Grid

The key questions considered in scoping the assessment were:

- Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
- Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
- Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

Equalities category	Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)	Reason for this assessment
<b>Gender</b>	Negative - Low	64% of active library users for Crofton Park are female, and 36% male. This is slightly lower than the service average of 38%. The number of female users is slightly higher than the service average of 62%.  Compared to the ward profile of Male 48% and Female 52%, the figures show a higher proportion of female users.
<b>Race</b>	Negative - Low	Active user statistics show that 56% of Crofton Park users are White British which compares with 45% of service users and 56% of ward population. 23% of users are Black British and 21% from other BME and Asian groups, showing that library usage of the local area is below the service average of 55% BME users but broadly representative of the local area which has 40% BME population.
<b>Disability</b>	Negative - Low	19% of active users who responded to the PLUS Survey stated that they have a disability. This roughly compares with the service average of

<b>Equalities category</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)</b>	<b>Reason for this assessment</b>
		22% and is higher than the local figure for those stating they have a long term illness of 14%.
<b>Age</b>	Negative - Medium	There is a higher proportion of under 18s among library users at 47% compared with the service average of 39% and a ward population of 19%. Older people are under represented with only 10% compared to 13% for the service and 14% for the ward.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative - Low	According to the 2009 PLUS, 4% of respondents identified as LGBT. This is just below the overall service average of 5% and slightly lower than the borough estimate of 6%.
<b>Religion and beliefs</b>	Negative - Low	35% of respondents to 2009 PLUS list identified themselves as having 'no religion' higher than the service average of 29% and the ward figure of 22.1%.  Christian service users accounted for 56% which is less than the service average of 59% and the ward figure of 60.3%. Islam accounted for 6% which is comparable to the service average of 5% and the ward average of 5.2%.

## **Assessment of Equalities Impacts**

### **Gender: Negative - Low**

The figures for gender are close to those for the service as whole, coming in at 64% to 36% Female to Male active users. The closure will therefore not have a disproportionate impact on gender.

### **Race: Negative - Low**

Demographically, the area is reasonably representative of the borough and service users as a whole. Use by BME groups is below the service average at 44% compared to 55%. Closure of this facility would not specifically impact on any specific BME community.

Public concern centred on the impact closing the library would have on community, specifically on social cohesion and the work the library has done in this regard. It was recognised that community activities are carried out in the library and proposed asset transfers may jeopardise these.

### **Disability: Negative - Low**

The PLUS survey indicates that the proportion of library users with disabilities is in line with the service average. As such the closure of the library would not have a disproportionate impact on this equalities category.

In discussing the potential equalities impact, participants in the public consultation raised issues about the suitability of travelling to other libraries for the disabled users in terms of travelling and accessibility.

### **Age: Negative - Medium**

The higher proportion of under 18s service users at this library indicates that closure may have a particular effect on this group. The under-representation of older adults indicates that this group is less likely to be affected.

Areas of concern raised through the consultation process were the ability and suitability of using schools as alternative venues due to the restrictions placed on access to schools. Other issues were raised about the potential impact on literacy and the suitability of travelling to other libraries for young people. Additionally it was pointed out that some local schools do not have libraries and will not have access to books should the library close.

### **Sexual Orientation: Negative - Low**

It is difficult to know how many people in Lewisham are LGBT, however according to the Speak Out survey, the Treasury estimates that 6% of the total population are gay or lesbian. In the Library and Information Service PLUS survey 4% of people responded as being LGBT. There is no evidence that the proposal would have a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic.

### **Religion and Belief: Negative - Low**

There are over 200 different religions in Lewisham. The two most common religions practiced by Lewisham residents are Christianity with 61% and Islam with 4.6%.

35% of responders to the PLUS Survey stated that they do not follow a religion which is higher than the service average of 29% and the ward figure of 22.1%. Christianity made up 56% compared 59% and 60.3% for the service and ward figures respectively. Islam accounted for 6% of respondents which compares well to the service average of 5% and the ward profile of 5.2%.

Overall participation in culture by religious groups does not identify a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic. The Library and Information Service provides a range of books which cover various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries.

### **Statement in regard to Human Rights**

The implications of this proposal on Human Rights has been assessed using the flow chart in 'Human rights: human lives: A handbook for public authorities' Department for Constitutional Affairs. This proposal does not interfere with human rights.

### **Socio-Economic conditions specific to Crofton Park Library catchment**

According to the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Lewisham is the 39<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. Deprivation in Lewisham is highest in areas in the north, centre and south of the borough.

Average annual earnings in Crofton Park ward are slightly above the borough average and 72.3% are economically active compared with 68.9% for the borough. The percentage of people with no qualifications is lower than the borough average and the percentage of people with level 4 or higher is above the Lewisham average. In Ladywell ward, this percentage is 37.6% compared with 29.4%.

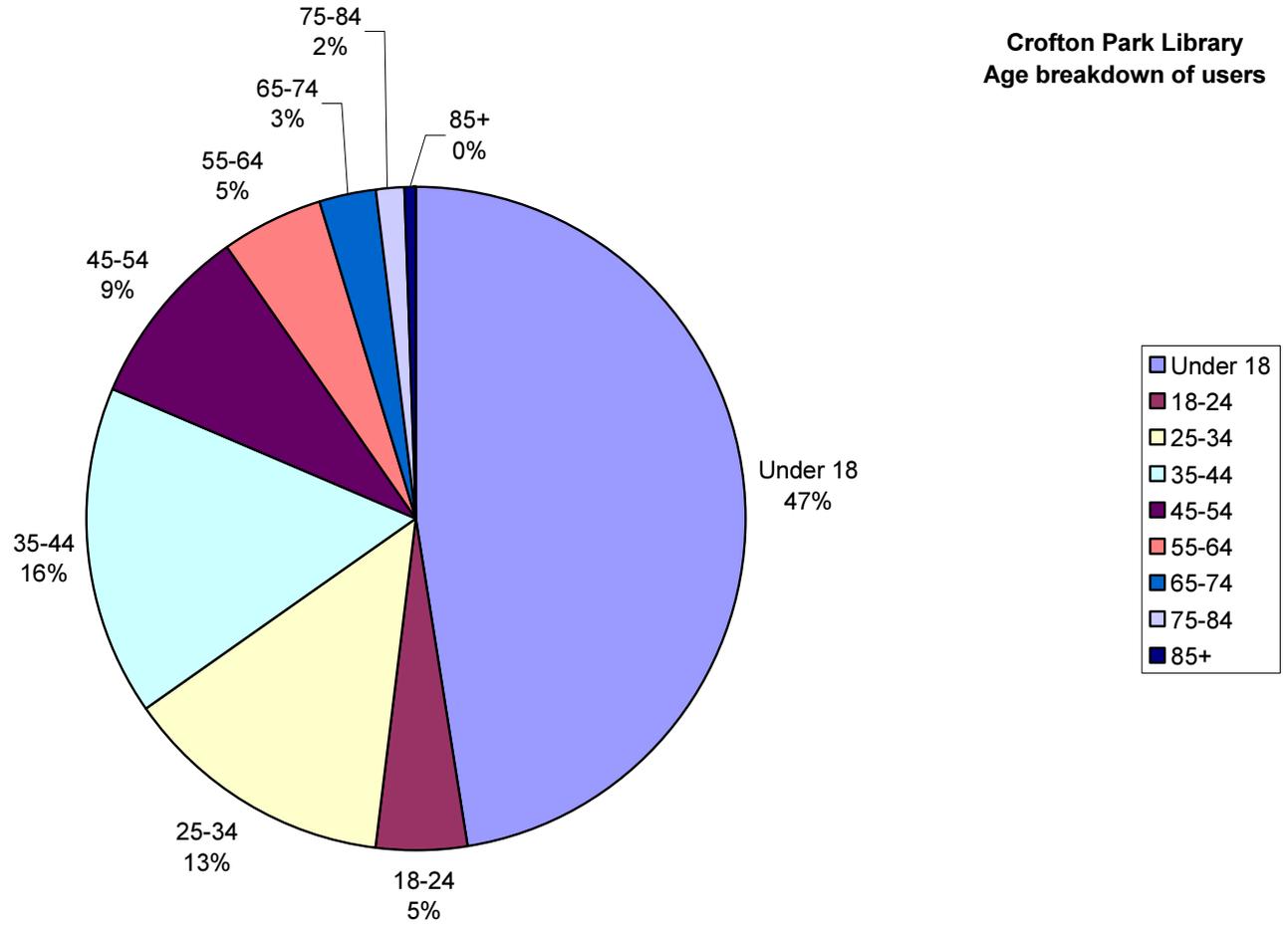
Crofton Park has 4.6% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, and 55.7 incapacity benefit claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 15<sup>th</sup> highest number in the borough. Crofton Park also has 83% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Crofton Park (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 3.4%.

Ladywell has 4.4% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, and 54.5 incapacity benefits claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 16<sup>th</sup> highest in the borough. Ladywell also has 77% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Ladywell (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 5.2%.

According to Census (2001) data, 35.5% of Crofton Park households do not own a car, compared to the borough profile of 42.8% of households. The closest alternative Lewisham libraries are Lewisham (1.2 miles) and Catford (1.3 miles) and are both accessible by public transport.

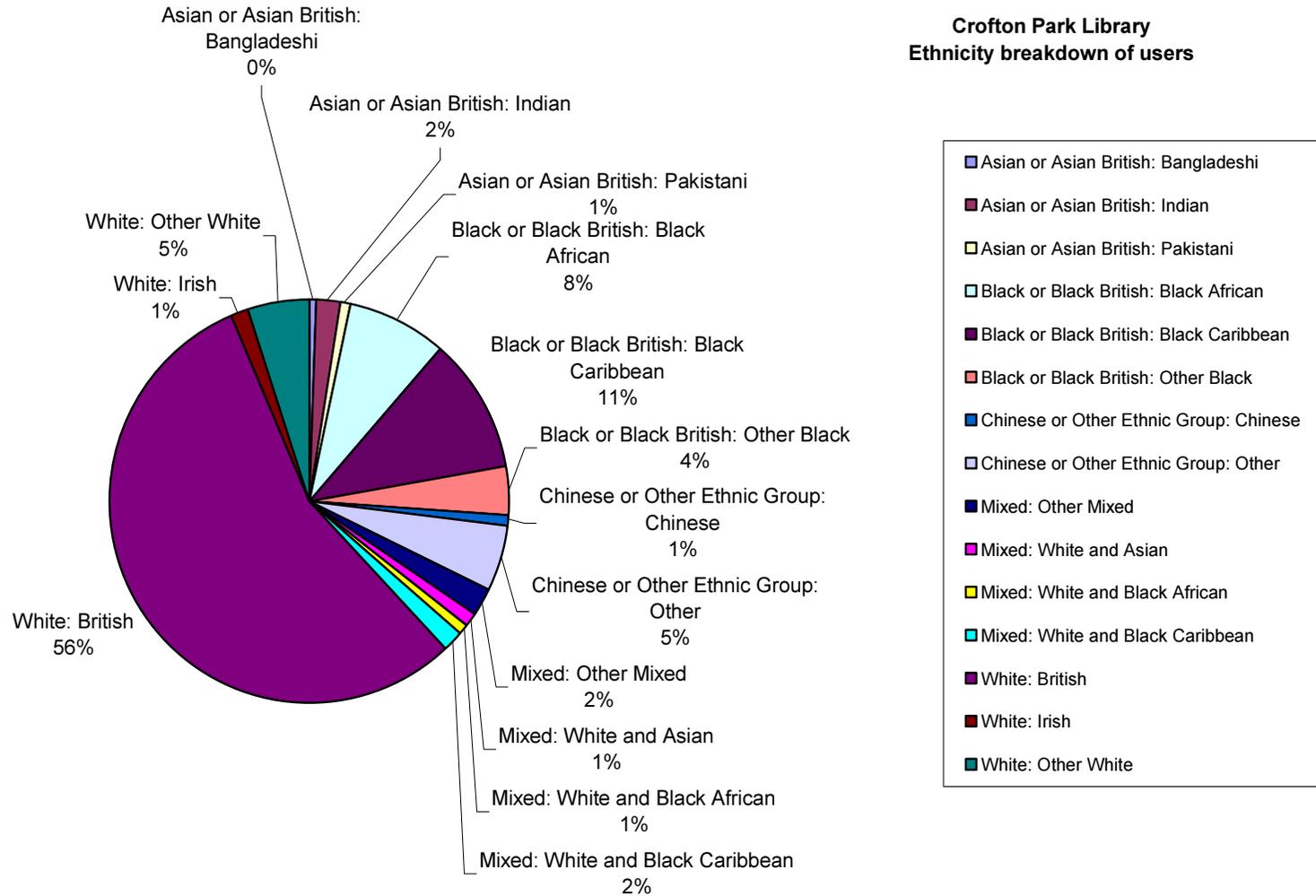


# Crofton Park Library User Age Range



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

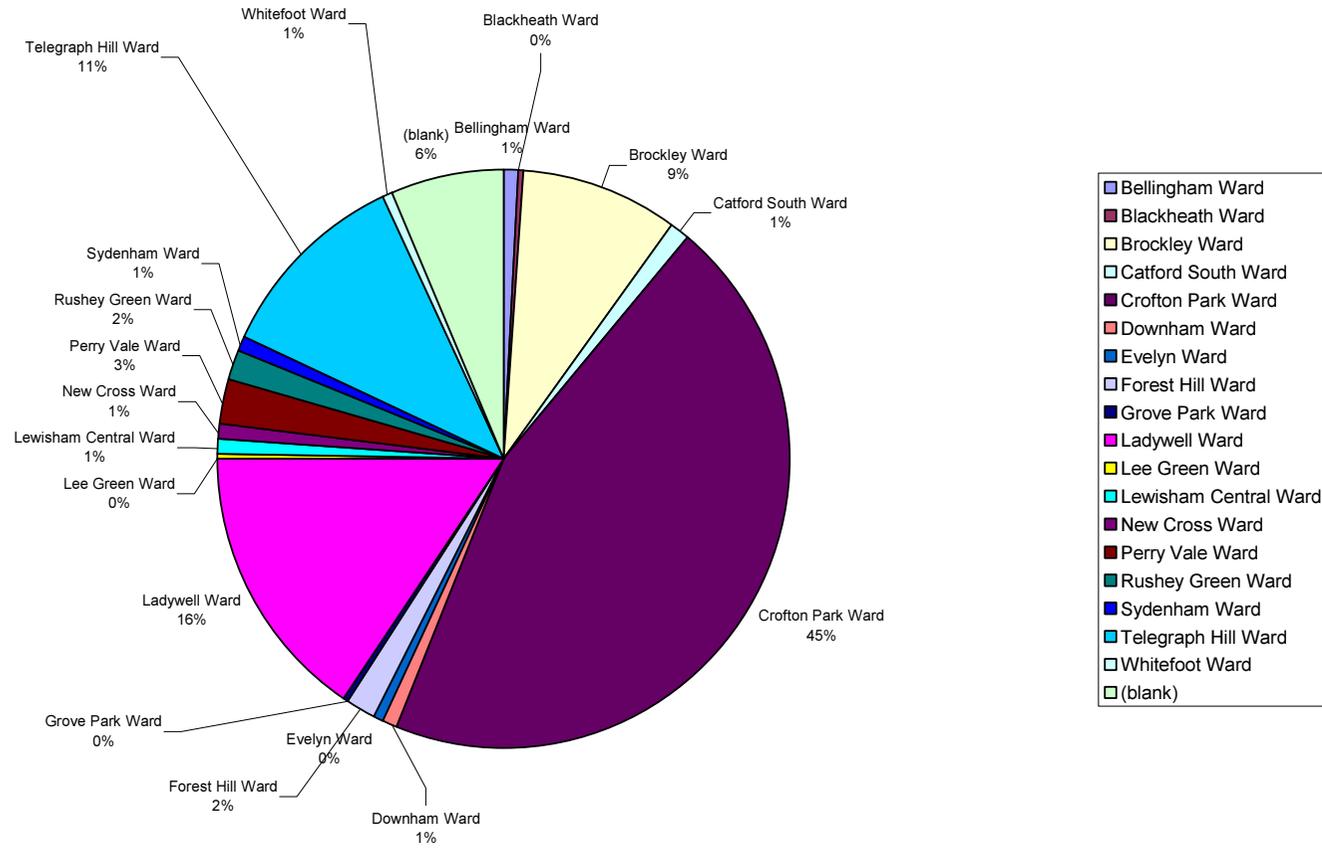
# Crofton Park Library User Ethnicity



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

# Crofton Park Library User Wards Origin

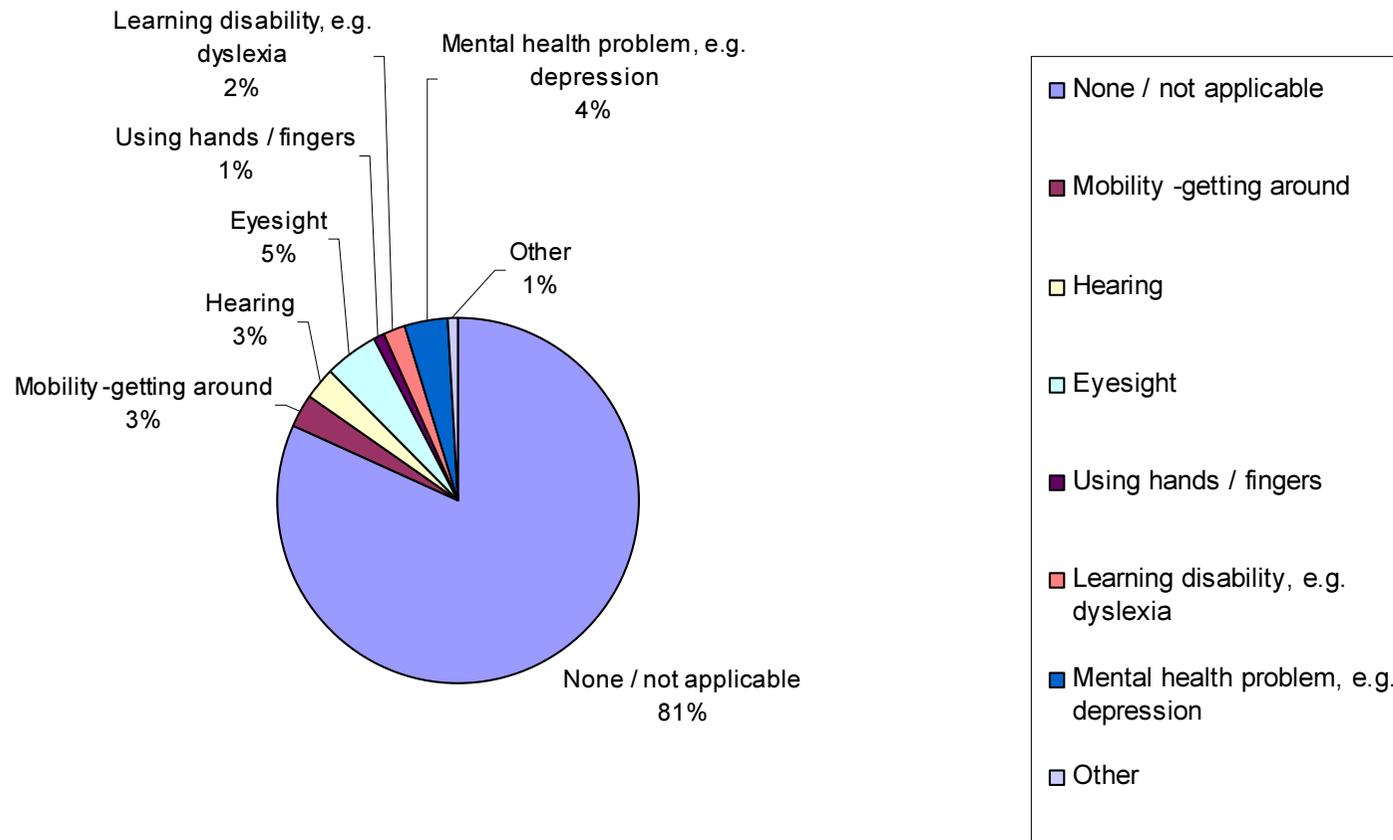
**Crofton Park Library**  
Where users come from



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

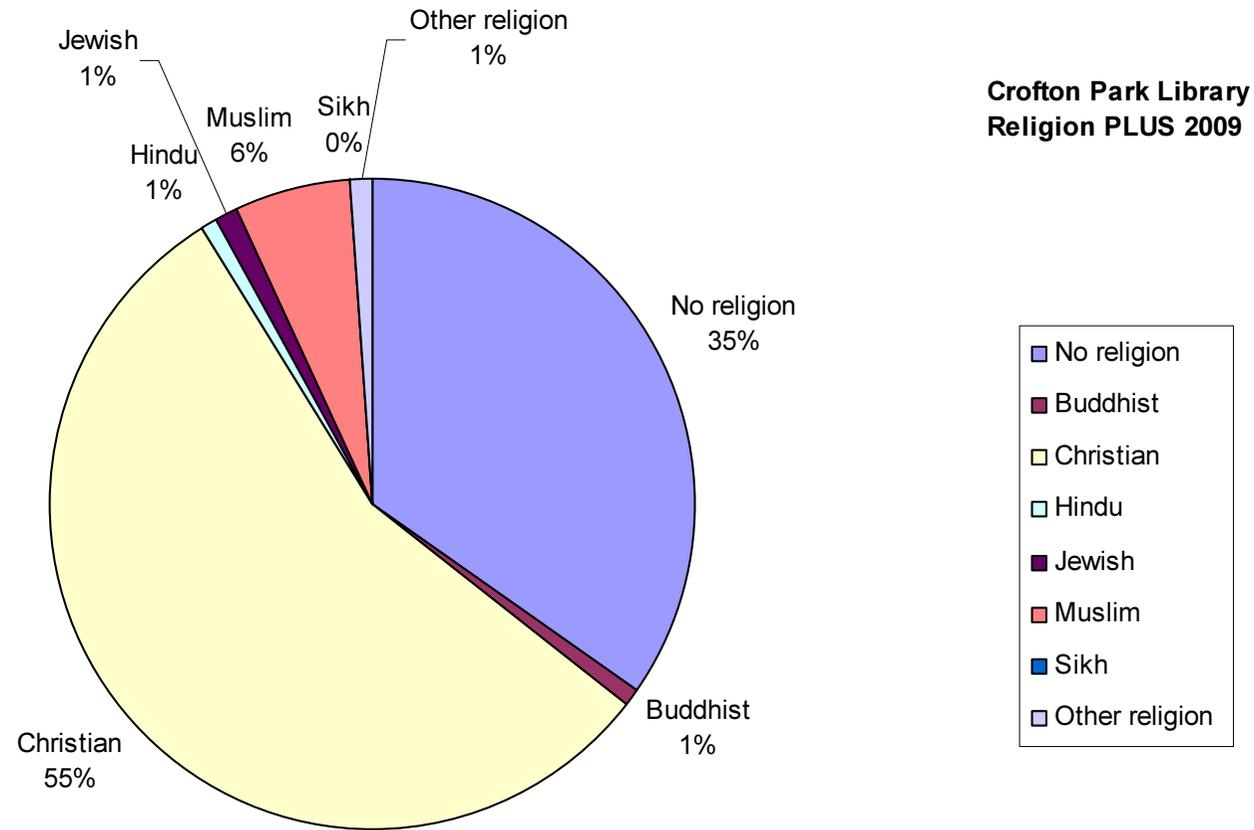
## Crofton Park Library User Disability

### Crofton Park Library Disability PLUS 2009



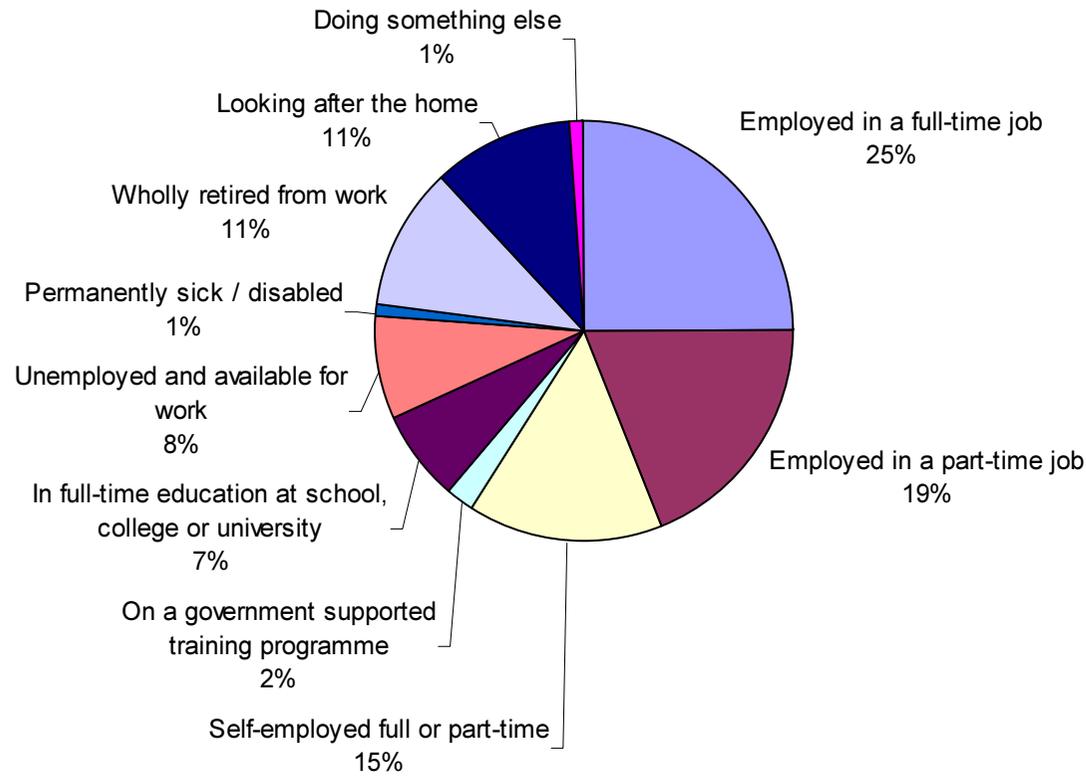
Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

## Crofton Park Library User Religion



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

# Crofton Park Library User Employment

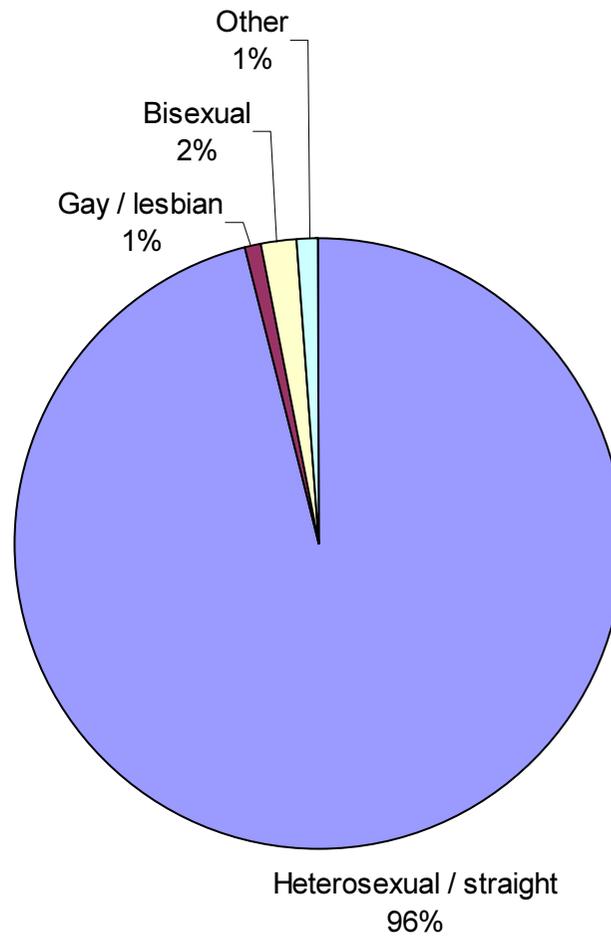


**Crofton Park Library  
Employment PLUS 2009**

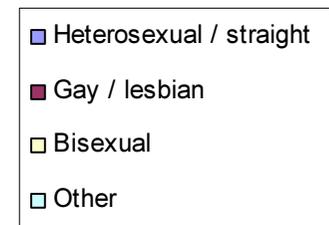


Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## Crofton Park Library User Sexual Orientation



Crofton Park Library  
LGBT PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

## 15. Grove Park

Grove Park library is located in open space on public land next to the Grove Park Under 5s Centre (previously known as Grove Park Generations Playclub). Some 75% of library users come from Grove Park ward. The library was designed as a temporary building 55 years ago, but continues to provide a service for the local community.

The library provides four free public terminals, managed via a computerised booking system, providing access to the internet and subscriptions to several electronic information resources. The library offers monthly staff run ICT support sessions with some specifically aimed at the over 55s.

Within its 31.5 hours of opening, regular activities include class visits currently taken up by both local primary schools, Coopers Lane and Marvels Lane. The library hosts a well-attended weekly Under 5s session and monthly Chatterbooks for older children. This year 76 children aged 5-11 took part in the Summer Reading Challenge at Grove Park Library.

Grove Park Library hosts - and attracts funding for - events that have a whole family audience in mind. The most prominent of these is the now annual, and well-attended Garden Party, which has received locality funding and brings various agencies and local organisations together to run an outdoor celebration using the park at the rear of the library. Grove Park library has also hosted CEL family learning courses, which have been popular. Traditionally the library also has strong links with older residents and particularly with the Homebound Library Service (HLS). Transport is provided for HLS users to attend events at the library, particularly the Garden Party, but also social events.

### Libraries Data and Reader Profile

For the period April/March 2009/10 Grove Park recorded 42,088 visitors. The figure for the period April/September 2010 stands at 22,029 visitors.

Active borrowers profile shows that 75% of users are from Grove Park ward.

42% of active library users in Grove Park ward use Grove Park Library, while 18% use Downham, 15% use Lewisham and 13% use Catford Library.

Gender: Grove Park Library has 65% female and 35% male users, compared with a service average of 62% female.

Race: 53% of library users are White: British compared with a service average of 45%. The largest BME populations are Black or Black British: Black African – 12%, Chinese or other ethnic Group: Other – 7% and Black or Black British: Black Caribbean – 6%. There is a higher proportion of Asian or Asian British: Indian - 5% compared with a service average of 2%

Disability: 84% of respondents to the PLUS survey stated they had no disability compared to the service average of 83%, which is broadly comparable. For those with disabilities, mobility and hearing both responded 5%, eyesight had 4% with the remainder polling at 1%.

Age: Grove Park has a high proportion of under 18s – 48% compared with a service average of 39%. There is also a slightly higher proportion of older users – 5% 65-74 year olds, compared with a service average of 4% and 5% 75-84 year olds compared with 2%.

## Consultation activity

In July and August 2010, Lewisham Council held public meetings to discuss the possible closure of five libraries in the borough, with a second round being held in October. Information about these was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website and publicised in the local press. Users were encouraged to participate in the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' process and post their comments on the forum. E-mails were received via the [Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk) e-mail address and petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern

- Library stakeholder meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010
- First public meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (83 attended)
- Second public meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> October (41 attended)

## Grove Park Scoping Grid

The key questions considered in scoping the assessment were:

- Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
- Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
- Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

Equalities category	Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)	Reason for this assessment
<b>Gender</b>	Negative - Medium	<p>Second highest percentage of women using the library at 65% female and 35% male from the September 2010 active users stats. This compares with the service average of 62% and 38% Female/Male split respectively.</p> <p>Compared to ward figures of 53% and 47% Female/Male residents there is a greater uptake of female users in the ward.</p>
<b>Race</b>	Negative - Low	<p>53% of library users are White British compared with a service average of 45% and a ward profile of 75%.</p> <p>BME representation is 43% compared to the service average of 55% and the ward population of 25%.</p> <p>There is a higher proportion of Asian or British Indian at 5% compared with a service average of 2% but this is comparable to the ward population.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	Negative - Low	<p>16% of respondents to 2009 PLUS describe themselves as having a disability compared to 22% of users from the active borrower figures and 16.2% of the ward population who state</p>

<b>Equalities category</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)</b>	<b>Reason for this assessment</b>
		they have a long term limiting illness.
<b>Age</b>	Negative - Medium	Grove Park ward has higher numbers of retired residents compared to the Lewisham average with 11.2% compared to 8.7% for the borough. There are also higher numbers of those caring for family 7.1% compared to 6.5% for the borough. This translates into user stats showing a slightly higher proportion of over 65s than the service average – 10% compared with 6%. There is also a higher number of under 18s – 48% compared with 39%.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative - Low	6% of respondents to 2009 PLUS identified as LGBT/other which compares exactly to the service average of 6% and the borough estimate of 6%
<b>Religion and beliefs</b>	Negative - Low	30% of 2009 PLUS respondents list themselves as having no religion compared to the service average of 29% and ward average of 17.9%.  Christian respondents represented 58% of the survey compared to 59% for the service average and 64.6% for the ward profile. Other religions were roughly similar with Islam accounting for 5% of the respondents which is the same as the service average and slightly higher than the ward profile of 3.6%.

## **Assessment of Equalities Impacts**

### **Gender: Negative - Low**

Female users account for 65% of active users, more than the 62% service average. As such closure may therefore have a higher impact upon women.

### **Race: Negative - Low**

Latest user stats (September 2010) indicate more ethnically diverse customers than the ward profile from the last census or the service average user numbers. BME users are slightly lower than the service average, at 43% compared to 55% but are higher than the local population average of 25%. White British users are also larger than the service average at 53% compared to 45%.

### **Disability: Negative - Low**

The PLUS survey indicates that library users with disabilities is below the service average but in line with the ward population. As such the closure of the library is not identified as having a disproportionate impact on this equalities category.

At public consultation meetings a concern was raised that children, families and older residents will be affected more than other users as the nearest library is Downham.

### **Age: Negative - Medium**

Classes from local schools visit the library and staff support is provided to Marvels Lane. The library has well attended family orientated activities, such as its annual Garden Party.

The potential impact on the oldest and youngest residents was judged to be negative / medium because 2007 DWP statistics show that there is a higher percentage of residents of pensionable age than for the Borough as a whole and user profiles show a large number of families with young children regularly visiting the library. Transport to alternative library facilities may be a particular issue for older residents and residents with young children in pushchairs.

A question was raised during the public consultation over the impact closing the library would have on school children and other educational groups who use the library. Concern was also raised that removing the current service would reduce the availability of constructive activities for young people. It was recognised that both Coopers Lane, Marvels Lane and sometimes Pendragon schools use the library. It supplements after school homework and some people do not have IT at home. Closing the library would mean that children and adults would lose that resource.

### **Sexual Orientation: Negative - Low**

It is very difficult to know how many people in Lewisham are LGBT, however according to the Speak Out survey the Treasury estimates that 6% of the total population are gay or lesbian. In the Library and Information Service PLUS survey 6% of people responded as being LGBT. There is no evidence that the proposal has a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic.

### **Religion and Belief: Negative - Low**

There are over 200 different religions in Lewisham. The two most common religions practiced by Lewisham residents are Christianity with 61% and Islam with 4.6%. The ward profile is similar with 64.6% identified as Christian, 3.6% as Muslim and 17.9% not religious. Those identified as Hindu are 2% of population and the others are less than 1%.

Comparatively, 35% of responders to the PLUS Survey stated that they do not follow a religion, 58% stated they were Christian and 5% as Muslim. These figures are roughly similar to those for the service average which is 59% Christian, 5% Muslim and 29% no religion. Hindu users were 6% which is one of the highest usages for this group in the Library service and is proportional to the higher number found in the ward profile, which at 2% is above the borough average.

Despite the higher figures for some groups the overall participation in culture by religious groups does not identify a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic. Figures are roughly similar to either the service averages or comparable for the area. In addition, the Library and Information Service provides a range of books and covering various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries.

### **Statement in regard to Human Rights**

The implications of this proposal on Human Rights has been assessed using the flow chart in 'Human rights: human lives: A handbook for public authorities' Department for Constitutional Affairs. This proposal does not interfere with human rights.

## **Socio-Economic conditions specific to Grove Park Library catchment**

According to the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Lewisham is the 39<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. Deprivation in Lewisham is highest in areas in the north, centre and south of the borough.

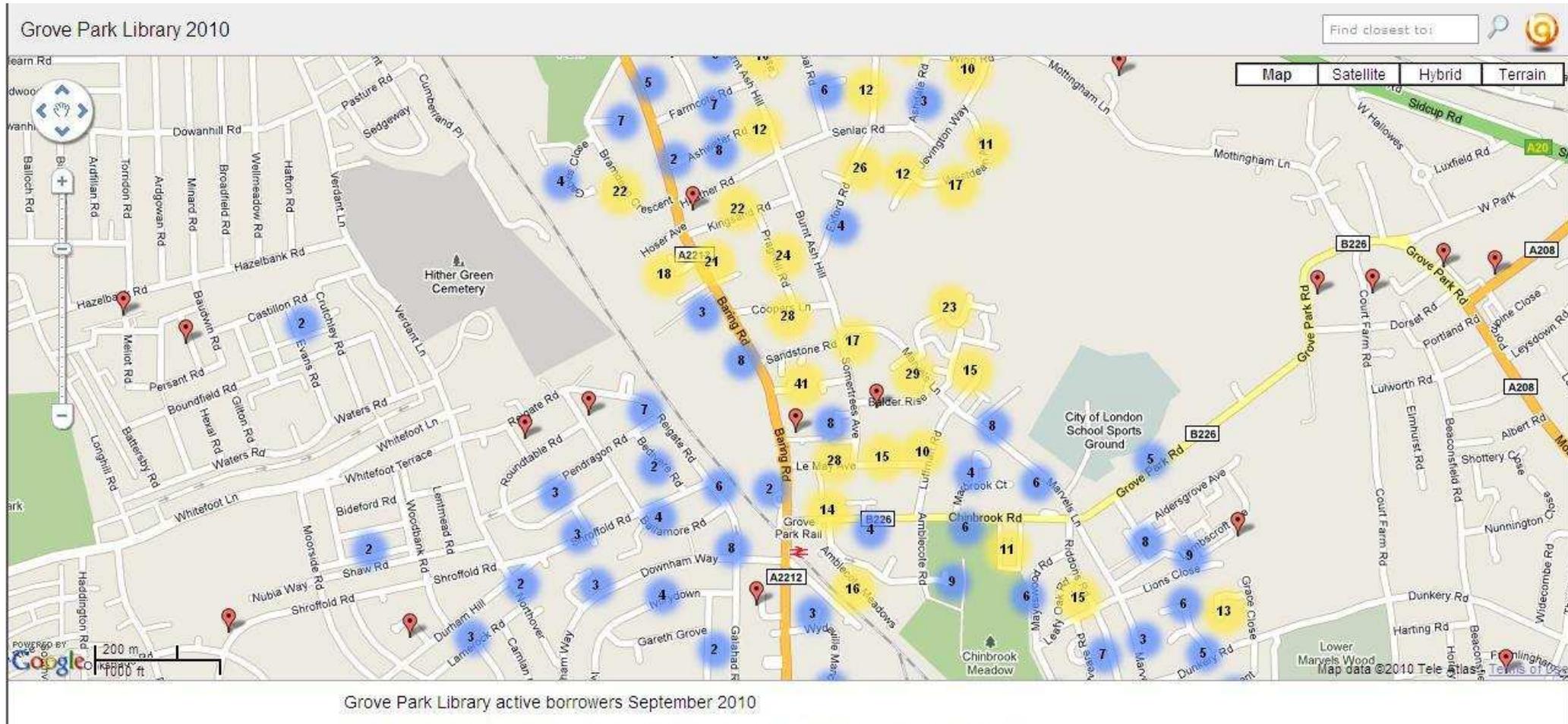
Grove Park has a higher percentage of residents of pensionable age than for the borough as a whole, but numbers of economically inactive residents, including carers and people with disabilities, exactly reflect the borough average. There is a higher proportion of white residents compared with the borough as a whole (80.9% compared to borough average of 65.9% 2001 census data).

In Grove Park ward, the percentage of people without qualifications is higher than the average (27.9% compared to borough average of 24.2%). Grove Park has 4.3% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, and 65.8 incapacity benefits claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 10<sup>th</sup> highest in the borough. Grove Park also has 60% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 17th in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Grove Park (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 1.7%. The ward has higher levels of those with no qualifications (27.9% compared to 24.2% for Lewisham).

At public consultations concerns were raised that libraries and access to books were vital for education, both in young people and adults, and that removing this resource from an already 'poor' area would only make the situation worse. Some users who had used the library stated it was an important source of support in the search for jobs.

According to Census (2001) data, 32.8% of Grove Park households do not own a car, compared to the borough profile of 42.8% of households. The closest alternative Lewisham libraries are Downham (1.3 miles) and when re-opened Torridon Road (1.6 miles) and are both accessible by public transport

## Grove Park Library Catchment Area

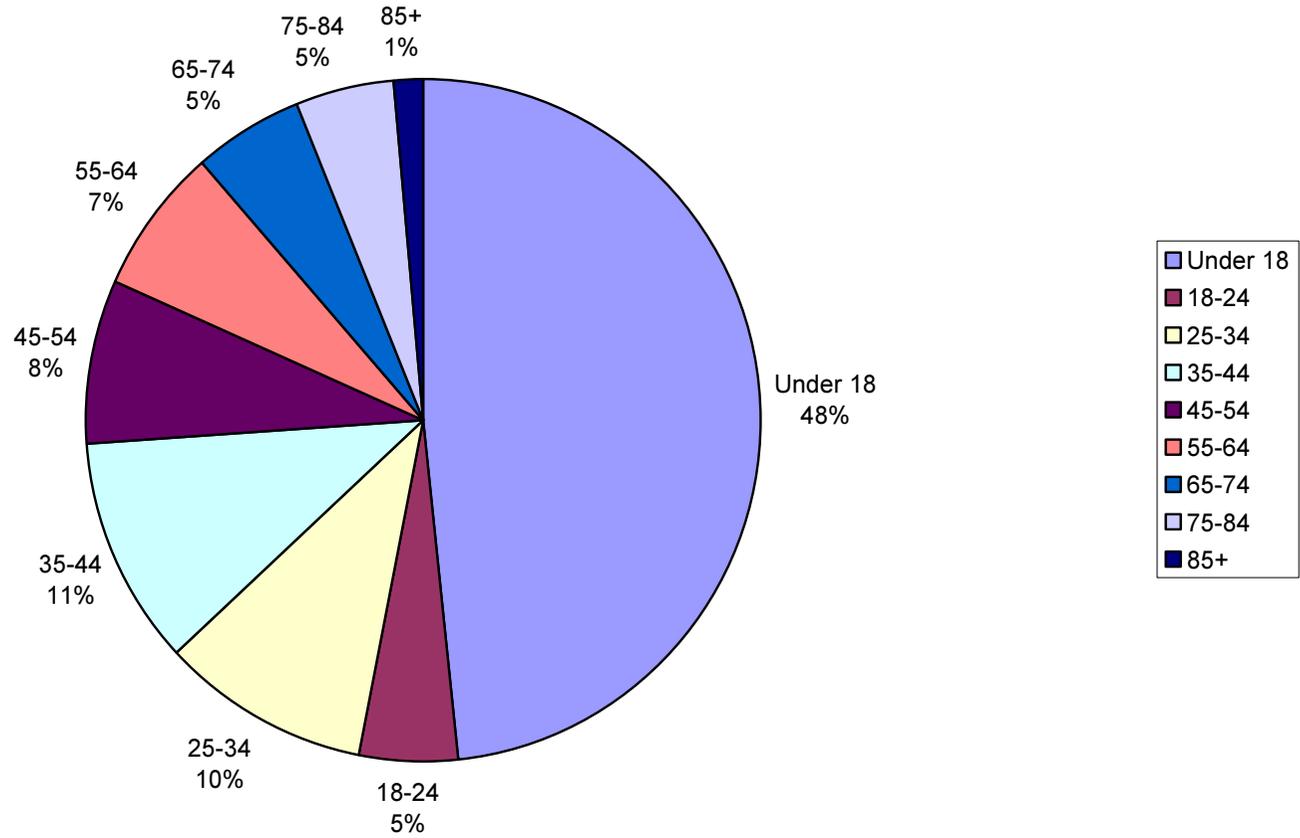


Each number represents the number of users by postcode. (Yellow >10, Blue <10)

Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

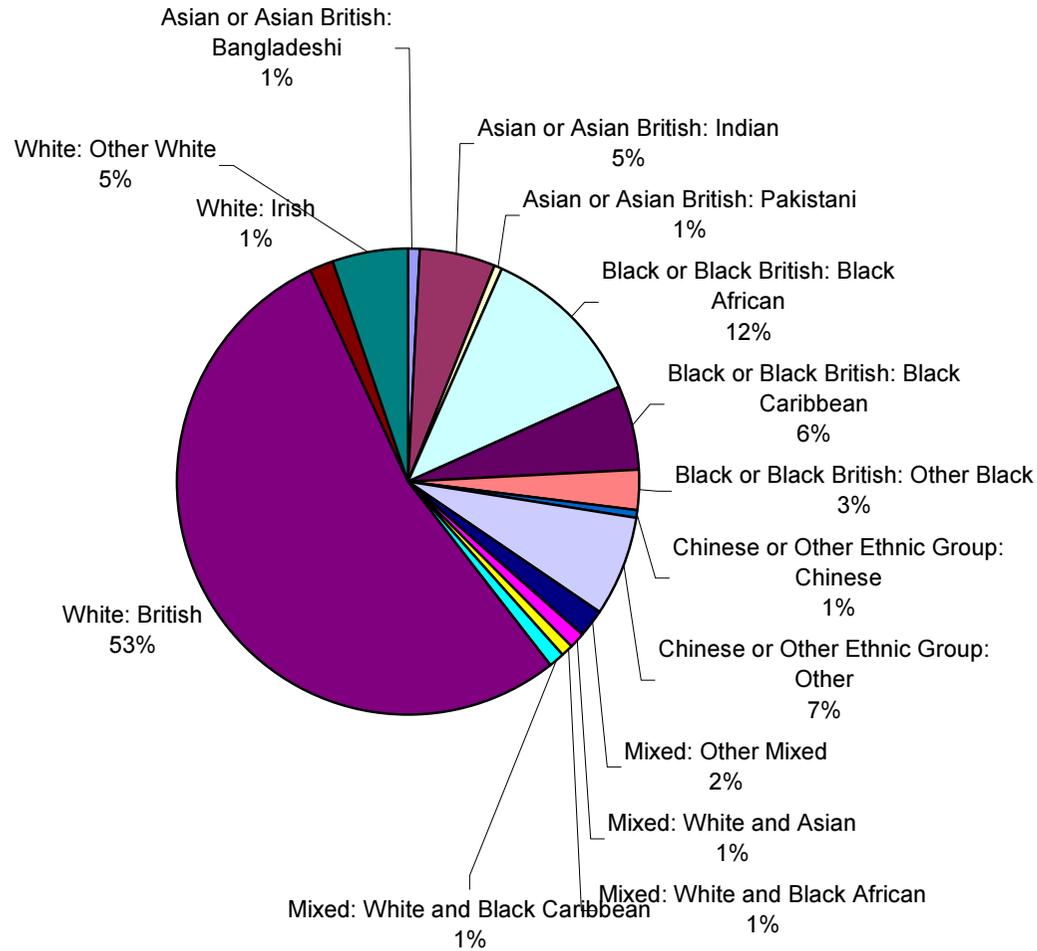
# Grove Park User Age Range

Grove Park Library  
Age breakdown of users

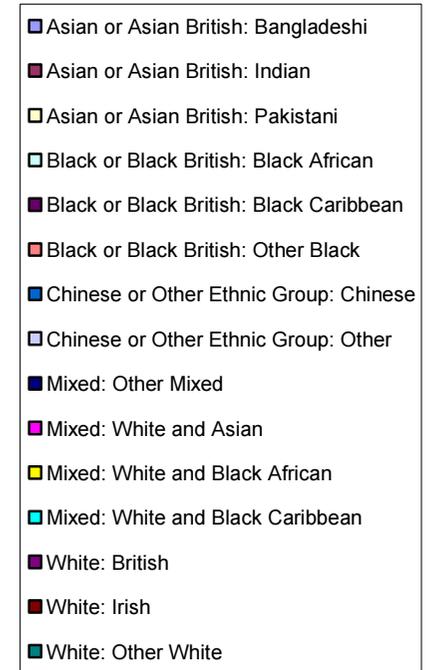


Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

# Grove Park User Ethnicity



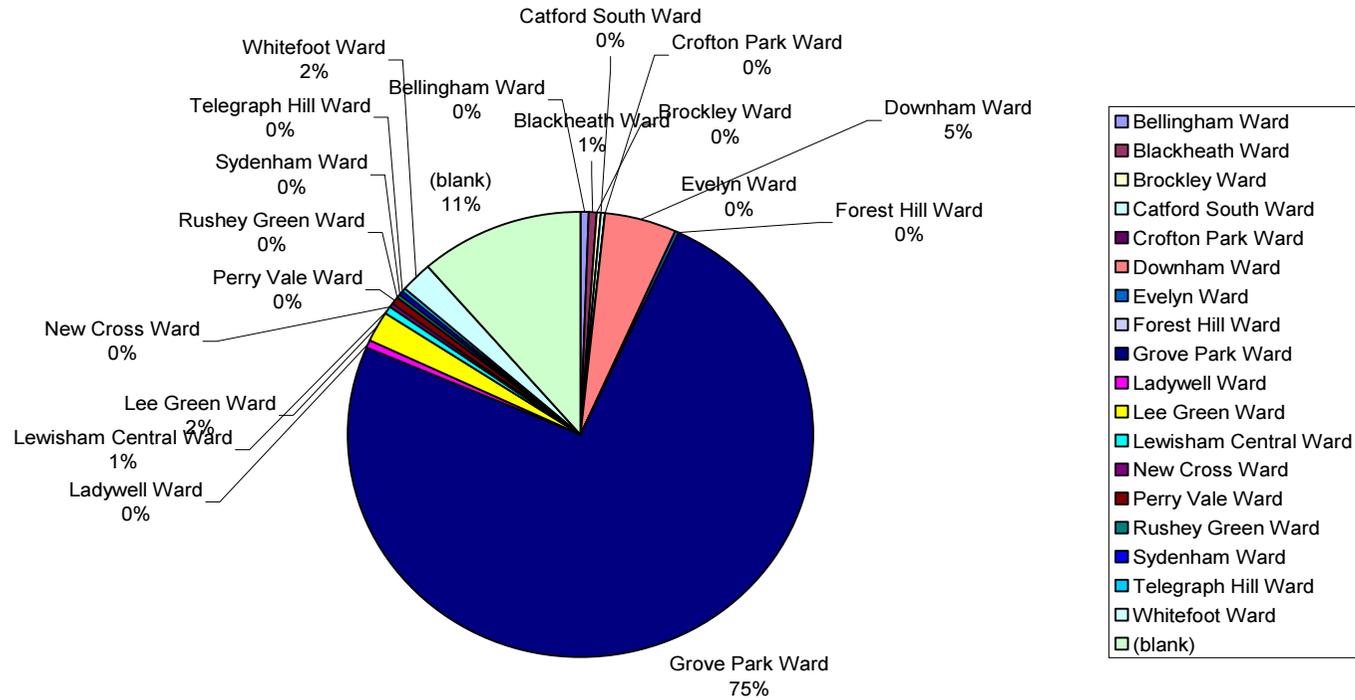
Grove Park Library  
Ethnicity breakdown of users



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

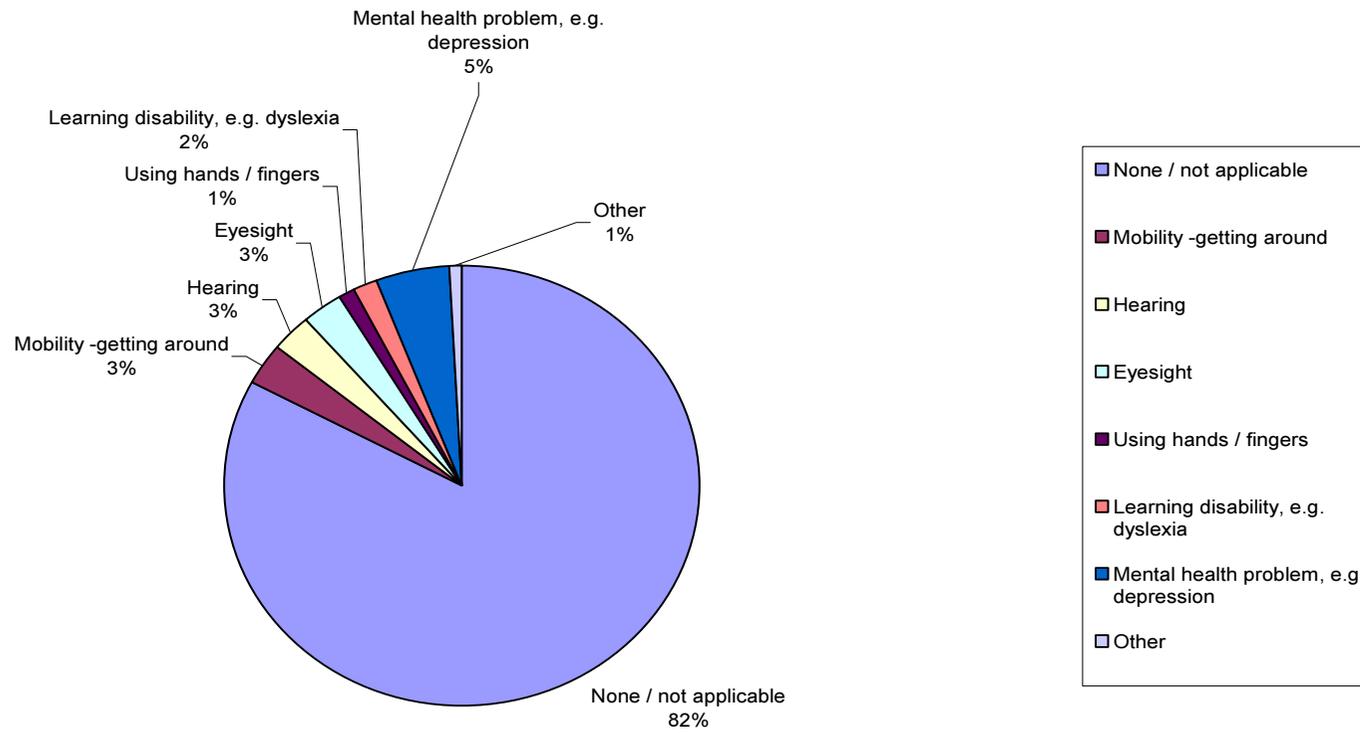
# Grove Park Users Origin

**Grove Park Library**  
Where users come from



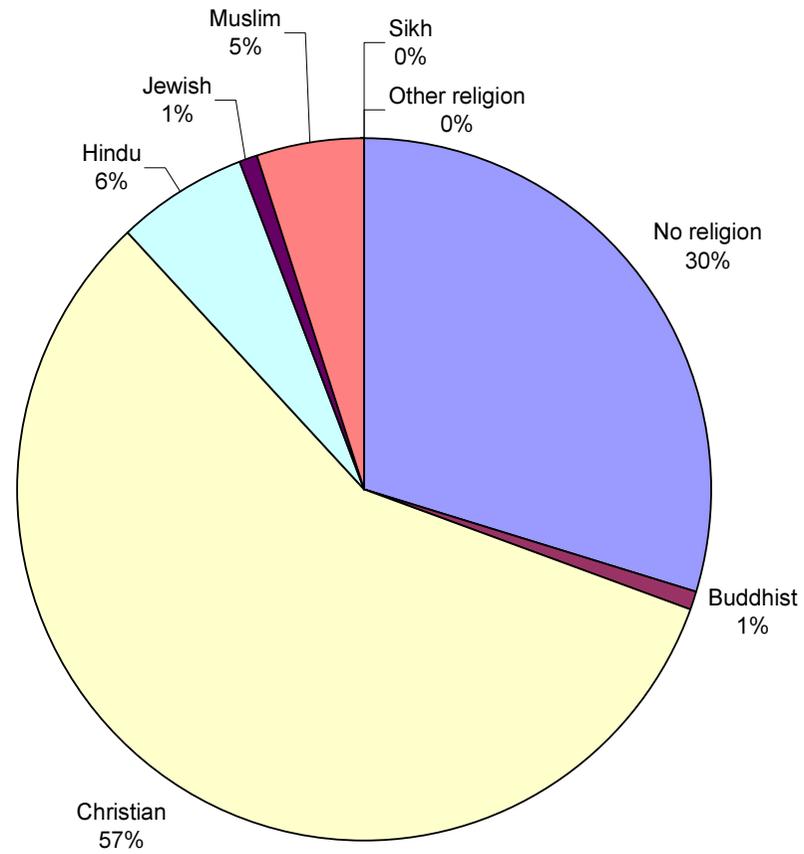
# Gove Park User Disability

## Grove Park Library Disability PLUS 2009

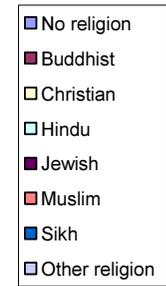


Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

# Grove Park User Religion



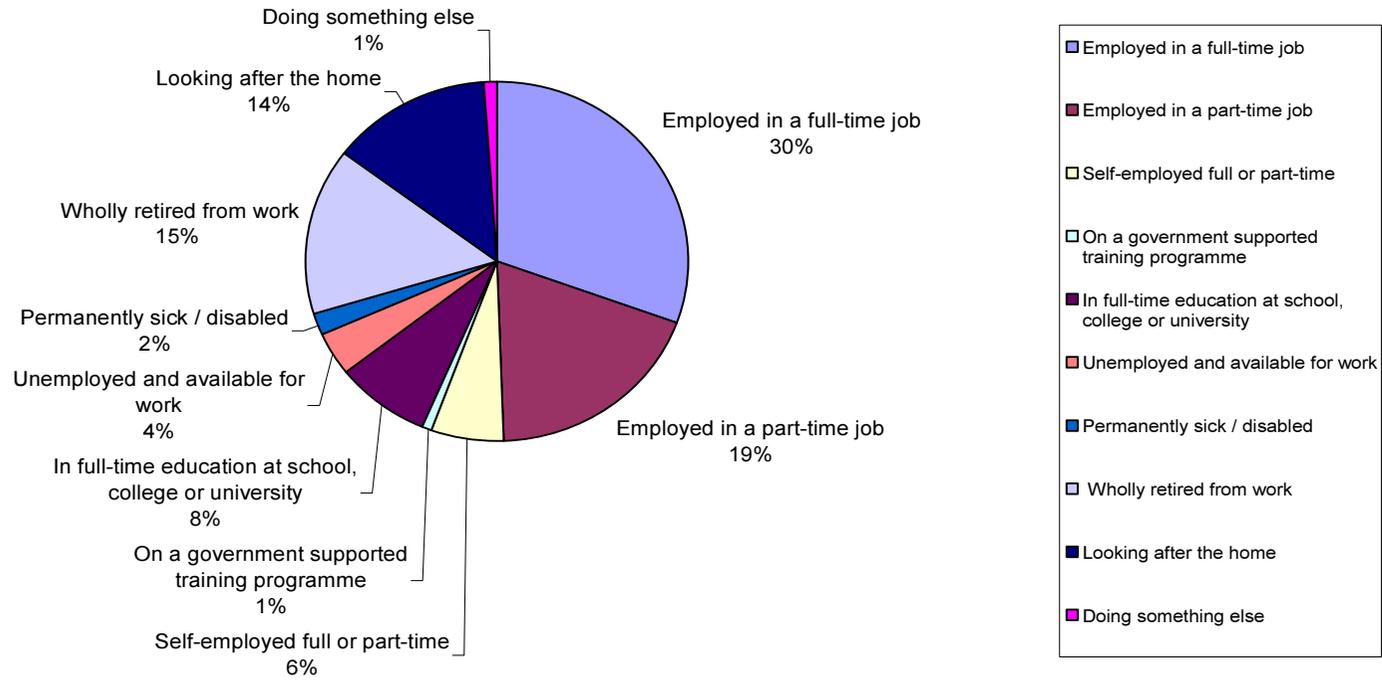
# Grove Park Library Religion PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

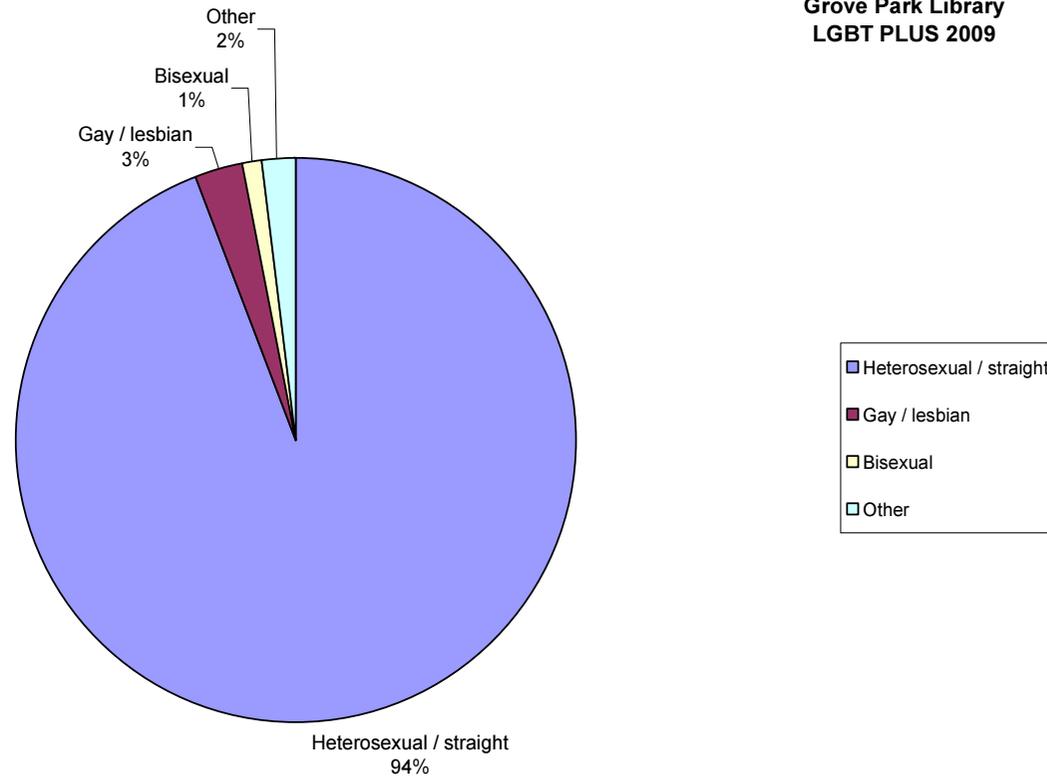
# Grove Park User Employment

## Grove Park Library Employment PLUS 2009



- Employed in a full-time job
- Employed in a part-time job
- Self-employed full or part-time
- On a government supported training programme
- In full-time education at school, college or university
- Unemployed and available for work
- Permanently sick / disabled
- Wholly retired from work
- Looking after the home
- Doing something else

# Grove Park User Sexual Orientation



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## 16. New Cross

New Cross Library is housed in a small shop front building close to Goldsmiths College between New Cross and New Cross Gate stations. It is also home to the Local History Society and various Local History and Archives collections. It attracts users from New Cross ward – 38%, Telegraph Hill ward – 23% and Brockley ward – 15%. There is full disabled access to the library, but not to the basement store.

The library has four free public terminals, managed via computerised booking system, with access to the internet. Microsoft Office software is installed on these terminals along with subscriptions to several electronic information resources. The library offers monthly staff-run ICT support sessions.

Within its 24.5 hours of opening, regular activities include class visits currently taken up by Childeric, who bring four classes every week, Myatt Garden and St James Hatcham. The library hosts a weekly Under 5s session and a thriving adult reading group. This year, 165 children aged 5-11 joined the Summer Reading Challenge at New Cross Library.

The ten-year long New Deal for Communities (NDC) project in the New Cross area, which ends in March 2011, collaborated with the Library and Information Service to run many popular events in the library - including those that brought local schools into contact with authors, the Summer Reading Challenge launch for several years and "A Rich and Colourful Stew" - a storytelling and food festival, which resulted in a recipe - and story - book of the same name being produced. Strong links exist between the library and Goldsmiths College.

### Libraries Data and Reader Profile

For the period April to March 2009/10, New Cross recorded 55,144 visitors. The figure for the period April/September 2010 stands at 27,823 visitors.

Active borrowers profile – 38% from New Cross, 23% from Telegraph Hill and 15% from Brockley wards.

32% of active library users in New Cross ward use New Cross Library, while 47% use Deptford. 25% of active library users in Telegraph Hill ward use New Cross Library, 29% use Lewisham Library and 18% use Crofton Park and 17% use Deptford Libraries.

Gender: 62% of library users are female which exactly matches the service average.

Race: 30% of users are White: British compared with a service average of 45%. This is the lowest proportion in the borough. The largest BME populations are Black African – 18% compared with a service average of 12%, Black Caribbean 12% White other – 11% and Chinese or other ethnic group – 9%.

Disability: 85% of user responded as having no disability, 5% have eyesight, learning and mental health issues; and 1% mobility, hearing or handling problems. This compares with 83% of users having no disability for the service average.

Age: 42% of users are under 18 compared with a service average of 39%. There is a higher proportion of 25-34 year olds – 20% compared with 15%, and a smaller proportion in the 45 and over age groups.

## Consultation activity

In July and August 2010, Lewisham Council held public meetings to discuss the possible closure of five libraries in the borough, with a second round being held in October. Information about these was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website and publicised in the local press. Users were encouraged to participate in the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' process and post their comments on the forum. E-mails were received via the [Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk) e-mail address and petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern

- Library stakeholder meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2010
- First public meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (36 attended)
- Second public meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October (73 attended)

## New Cross Scoping Grid

The key questions considered in scoping the assessment were:

- Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
- Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
- Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

<b>Equalities category</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)</b>	<b>Reason for this assessment</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Negative - Low	62% of active library users (September 2010) are female, which exactly reflects the service average.
<b>Race</b>	Negative - Medium	30% of users are White British compared with a service average of 45% and the ward profile of 37.6%.  BME users account for 70% of active library users which compares to a 45% service average and to 63% of the ward population. This is higher than the service average but broadly comparable to the local population.
<b>Disability</b>	Negative – Low	15% of users identify themselves as having a disability (PLUS 2009) compared with a service average of 17%. This figure matches the ward profile where 15% of the population have a limiting long term illness, 12% of whom are of working age.
<b>Age</b>	Negative - Medium	42% of active library users as of September 2010 are under 18 compared with a service average of 39%. Students account for 14% of the population, with Goldsmiths College, and two Lewisham College sites nearby. The library has lower attendance from under 5s than other libraries.  The area has a notably younger population than the

<b>Equalities category</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)</b>	<b>Reason for this assessment</b>
		rest of Lewisham, with 27.8% aged 0-19 to 24.3% in Lewisham; and 36.6% aged 20-34 compared to 27% in Lewisham.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative - Medium	According to the 2009 PLUS 7% of respondents to the survey for New Cross library described themselves as LGBT, higher than findings for the borough as a whole and the service average at 6%.
<b>Religion and beliefs</b>	Negative - Low	31% of respondents to 2009 PLUS identify themselves as having no religion, 58% were Christian, 5% Muslim and 3% Buddhist. This compares with a service average of 59% for Christian, 29% for no religion, 5% Muslim and 2% Buddhist. These figures are proportional to the ward profile.

## Assessment of Equalities Impacts

### **Gender: Negative - Low**

The proposed closure would have a negative low impact on gender since the usage of the library broadly matches the overall service usage.

### **Race: Negative - Medium**

This part of the borough has high levels of diversity, with those from Black/ Black British ethnic groups greater than for the borough with 36% population compared to 27%. The Chinese or other ethnic groups account for 11% of the local population, again greater than the borough average. This assessment considers that due to the greater proportion of BME users for New Cross Library the impact will be negative medium since the closure may impact more on BME individuals than it might in other areas.

### **Disability: Negative - Low**

The proposed closure would have a negative low impact on disability since the usage of the library broadly matches the overall service usage. The lending library accommodation is fully accessible with toilet facilities appropriate for customers with disabilities.

### **Age: Negative - Medium**

The higher proportion of under 18s service users at this library indicates that closure may have a particular effect on this group. The under-representation of older adults indicates that this group is less likely to be affected.

At the public consultation issues were raised about the proposed outreach service whether it would provide IT access and children's services. Another concern was raised about closing a library facility in one of the more deprived areas of the borough with low literacy rates and few other community facilities. Additionally the area services students from Goldsmith's college who will not have access to the facilities.

### **Sexual Orientation: Negative Medium**

It is very difficult to know how many people in Lewisham are LGBT, however according to the Speak Out survey the Treasury estimates that 6% of the total population are gay or lesbian. In

the Library and Information PLUS survey 7% of people responded as being LGBT. Since this is higher than the service average the closure of the library could impact on a higher number of LGBT people than it might in other areas.

### **Religion and Belief: Negative Low**

There are over 200 different religions in Lewisham. The two most common religions practiced by Lewisham residents are Christianity with 61% and Islam with 4.6%.

31% of responders to the PLUS Survey stated that they do not follow a religion, 58% are Christian, 5% are Muslim, Buddhist account for 3% and Hindu and Judaism 1% each. Compared to the service averages of 29% for no religion, 59% for Christians, 5% for Muslims, 2% for Buddhists, 3% and 1% respectively for Hinduism and Judaism the service is broadly similar in proportion. This includes taking into consideration the ward profile figures which show the population citing Christianity as their religion at 5%, Islam at 7% no religion at 20%, Buddhism at 3.2% and the others at less than 1%.

Overall participation in culture by religious groups does not identify a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic. The Library and Information Service provides a range of books and covering various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries.

### **Statement in regard to Human Rights**

The implications of this proposal on Human Rights has been assessed using the flow chart in 'Human rights: human lives: A handbook for public authorities' Department for Constitutional Affairs. This proposal does not interfere with human rights.

### **Socio-Economic conditions specific to New Cross Library catchment**

According to the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Lewisham is the 39<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. Deprivation in Lewisham is highest in areas of the north, centre and south of the borough.

There is a higher percentage of residents 18 and under than for the borough as a whole for both New Cross and Telegraph Hill wards. 27.8% for New Cross and 26.3% for Telegraph Hill compared with the borough average of 24.3%. There are also higher numbers of economically inactive residents in New Cross ward, including carers and people with disabilities, 33.3% compared with 31.1% for the borough.

Telegraph Hill has a lower number of people without qualifications than the borough average (22.8% compared to borough average of 24.2%).

New Cross has 6.7% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, and 70.3 incapacity benefits claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 8<sup>th</sup> highest in the borough. New Cross also has 73% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in Lewisham. Projected population growth for New Cross (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 18.2%.

Telegraph Hill has 5.9% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, 67.3 incapacity benefit claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 9<sup>th</sup> highest number in the borough. Telegraph Hill also has 89% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%,

and ranks 3rd in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Telegraph Hill (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 7.0%. Transport links are good with rail and tube connections.

Areas of concern raised through the consultation process included the high unemployment in the area and the effect the closure would have on access to further learning and the internet for those seeking work. Another impact included the effect that closing the library would have on the poorest members of the community.

Census figures indicate that New Cross ward contains the highest proportion of households without a car, at 55.8%. The closest alternative Lewisham libraries are Wavelengths (0.7 miles) and Lewisham (1.8 miles) and are both accessible by public transport

New Cross benefits from good public transport links, although parking close to the library is problematic. The Deptford Lounge will be fully accessible to all users. At the public consultations issues were raised about travelling to another library for people who need the library and its resources. The concern was that travelling to another library would be too much for them or too expensive.

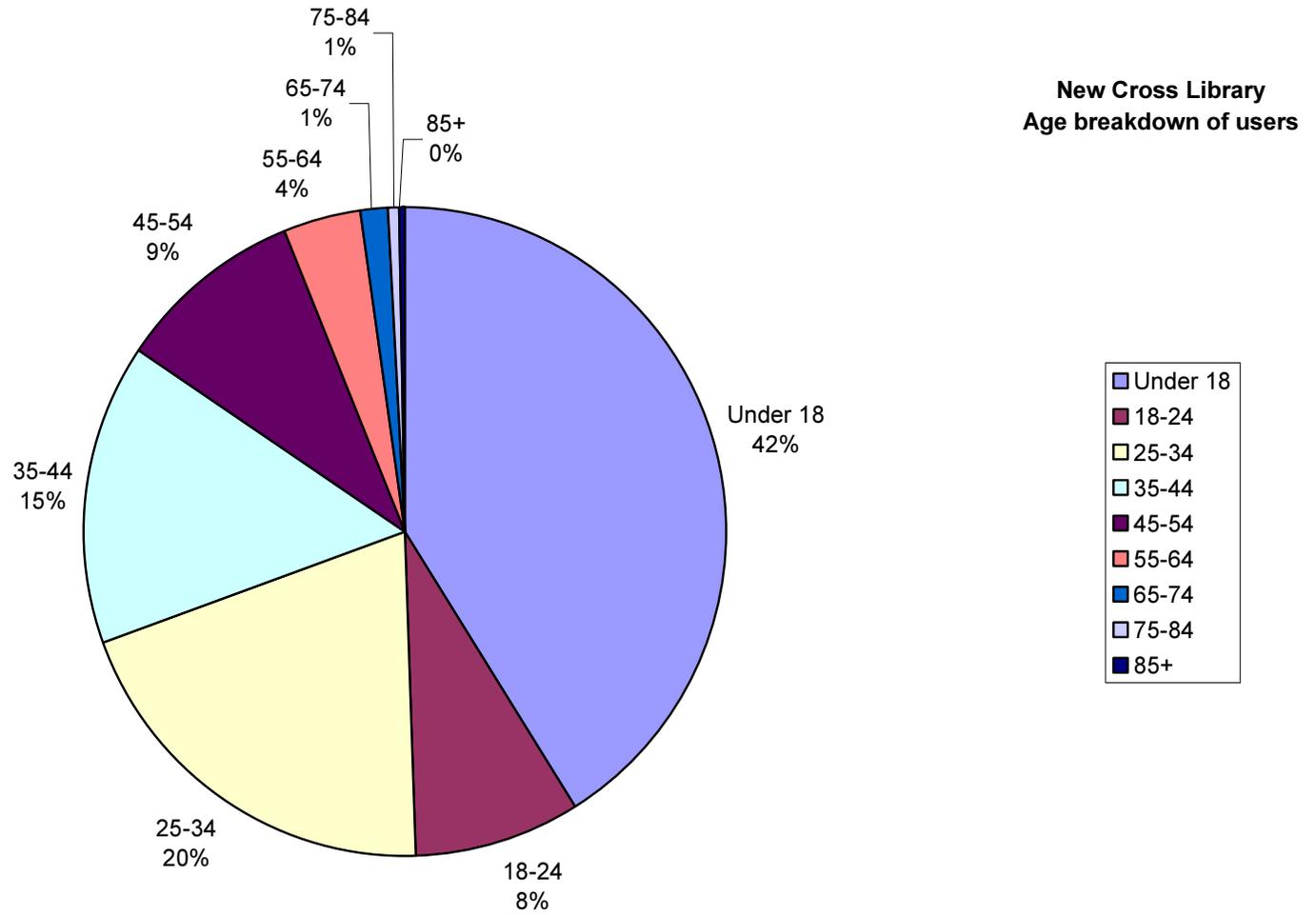
# New Cross Library Catchment Area



Each number represents the number of users by postcode. (Yellow >10, Blue <10)

Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

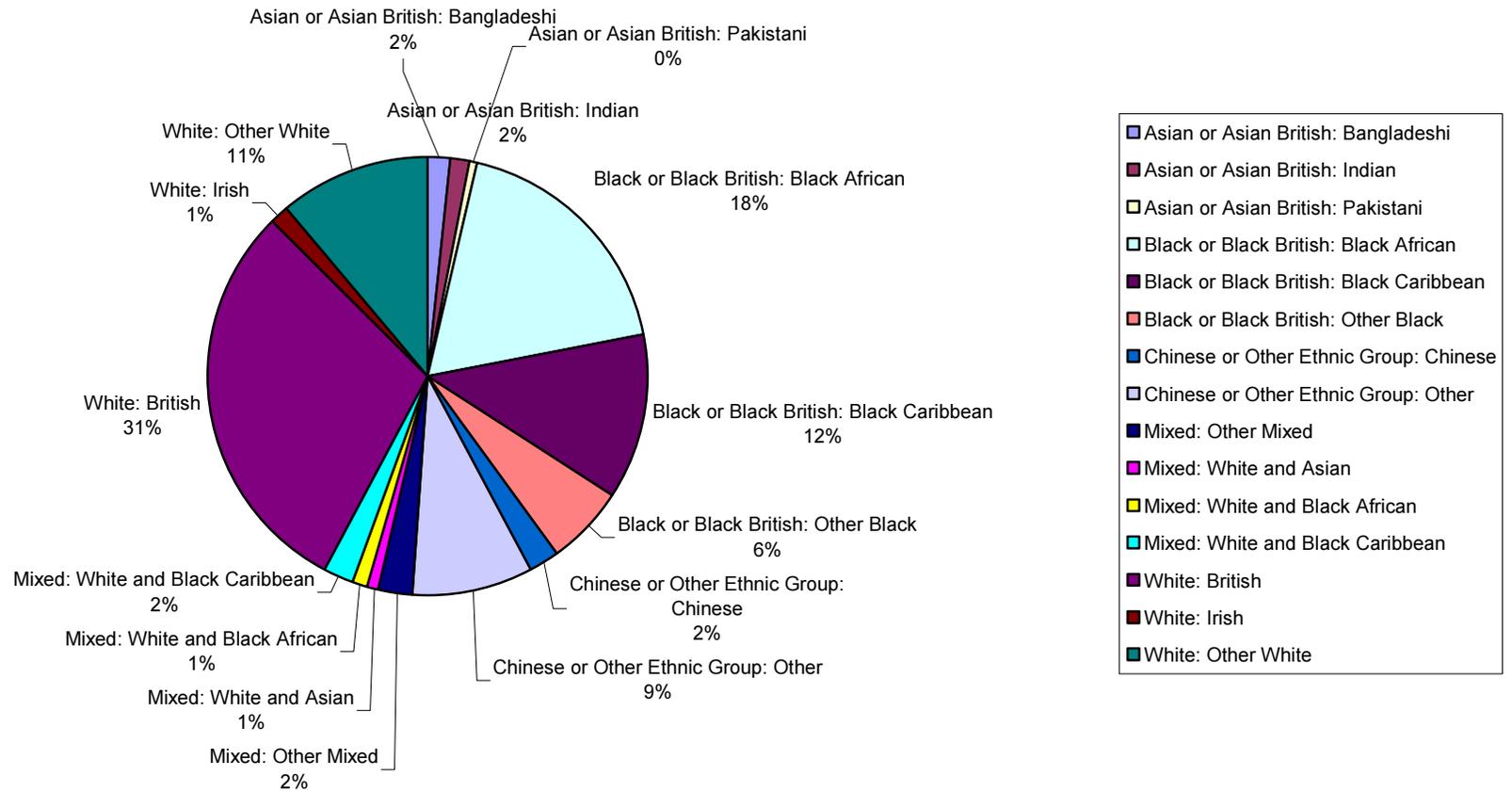
# New Cross User Age Range



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

## New Cross User Ethnicity

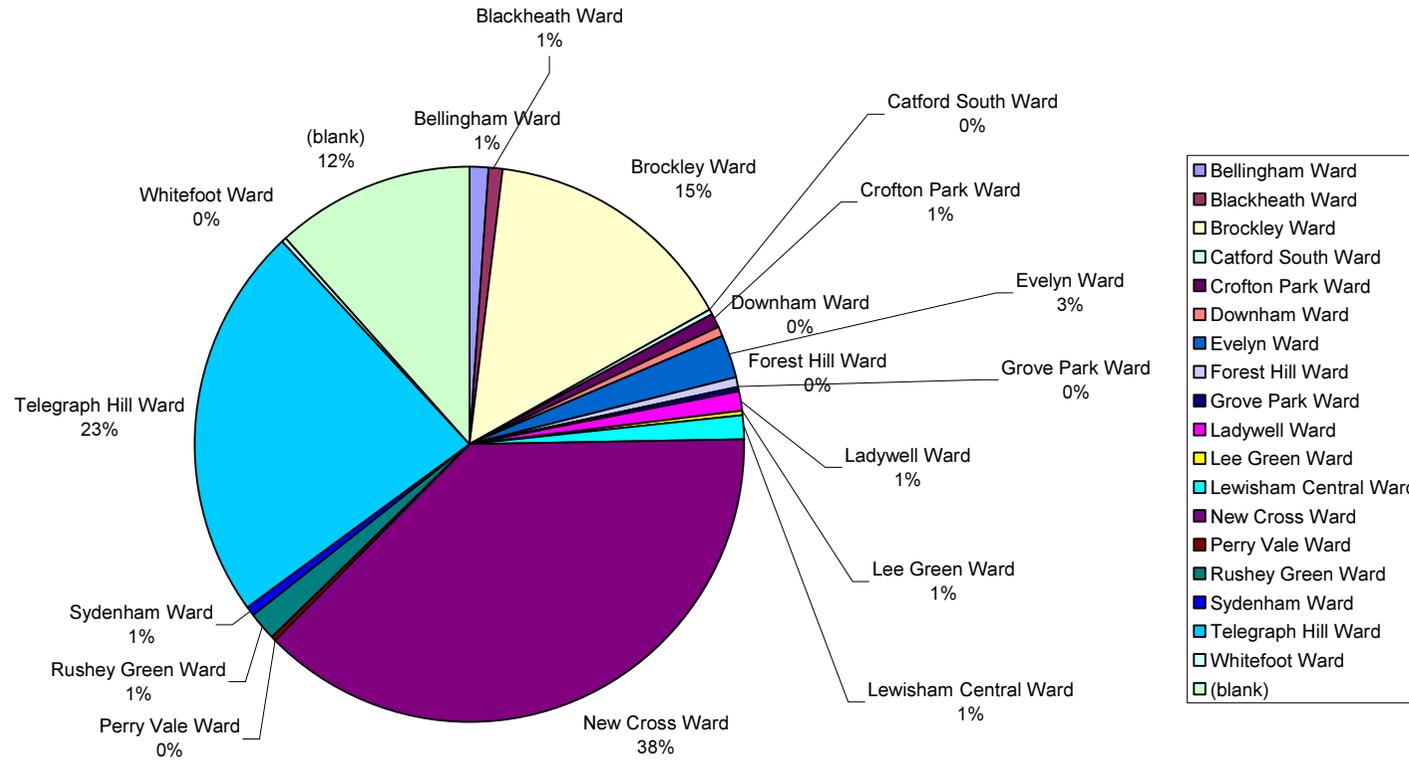
## New Cross Library Ethnicity breakdown of users



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

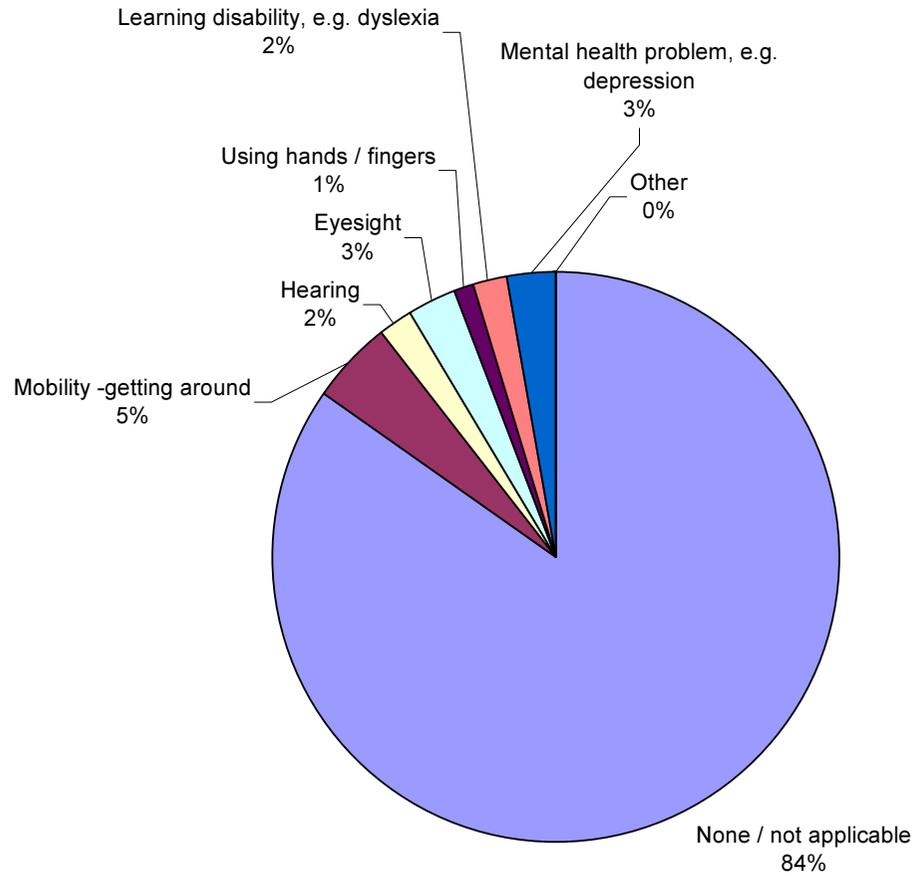
# New Cross Users Origin

**New Cross Library**  
Where users come from

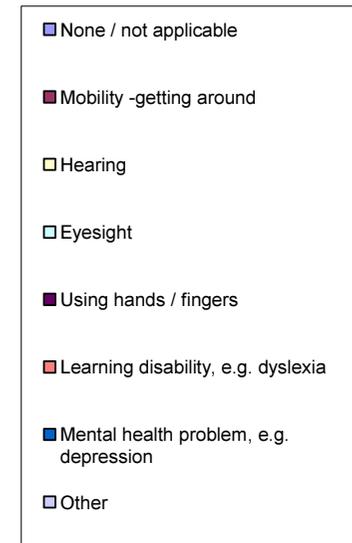


Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

## New Cross User Disability

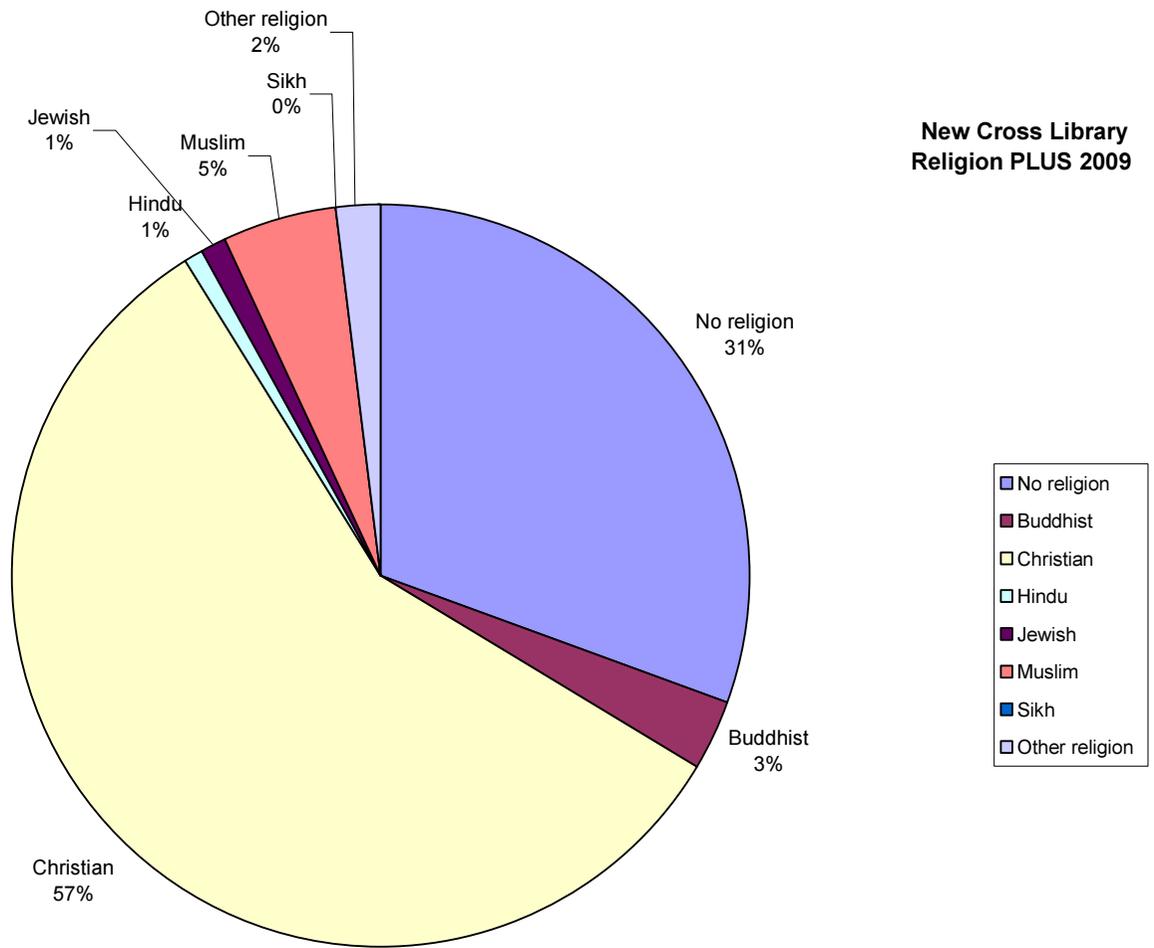


## New Cross Library Disability PLUS 2009



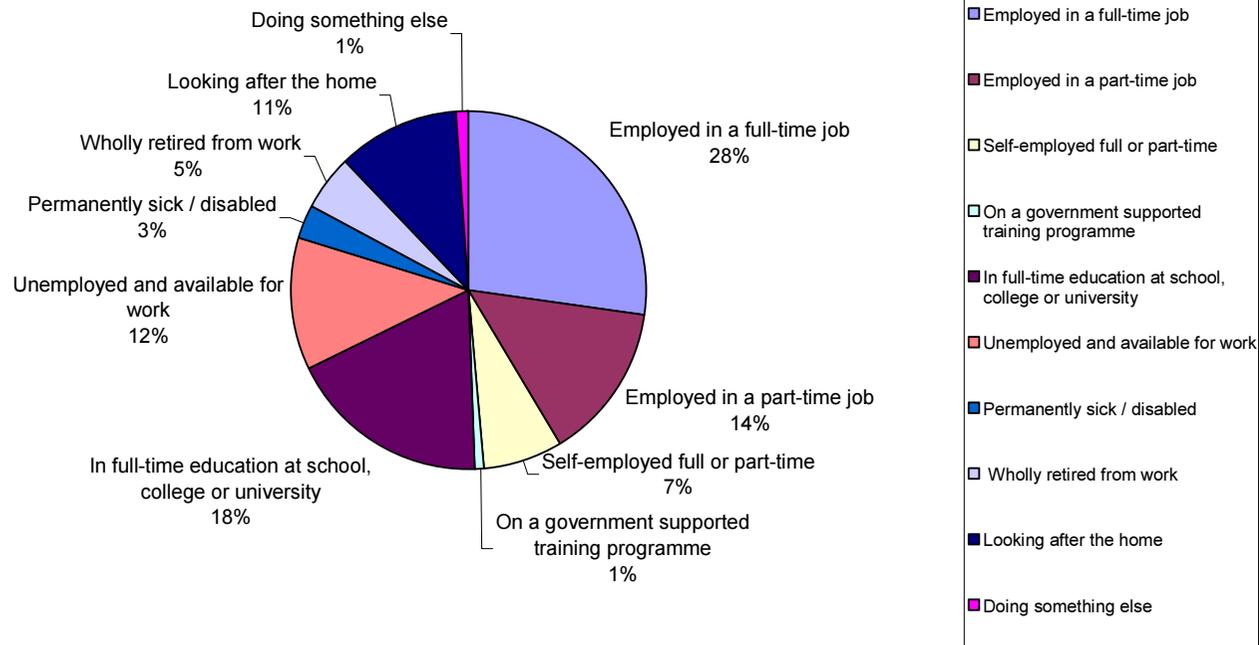
Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

# New Cross User Religion



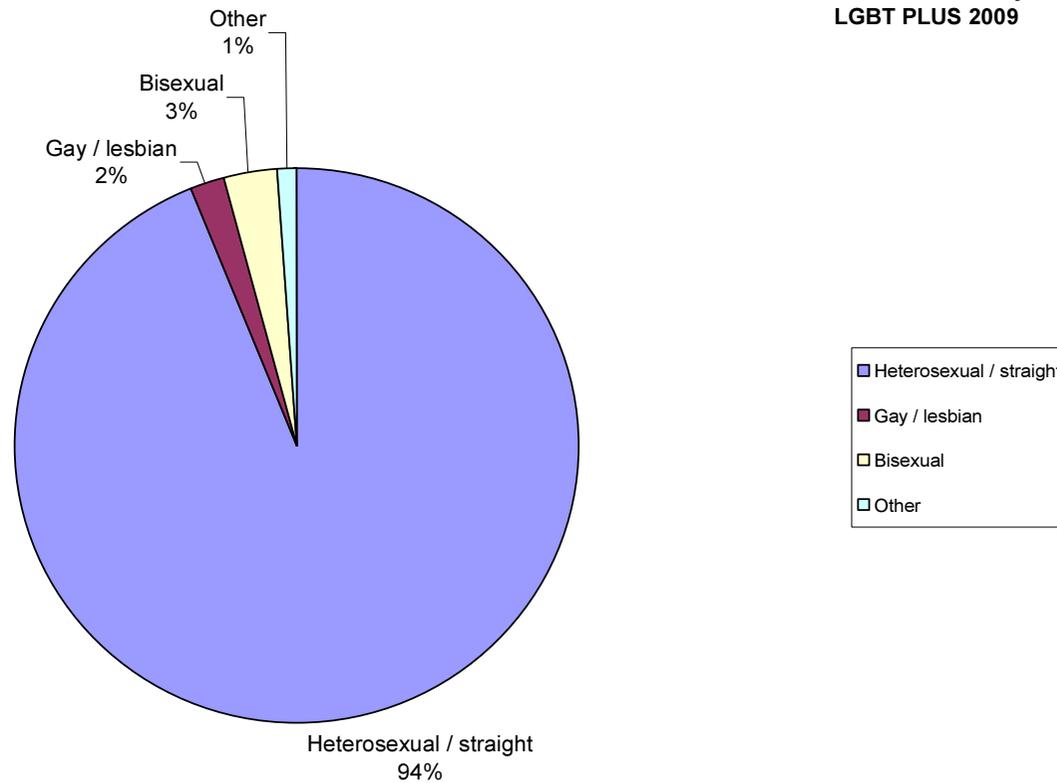
## New Cross User Employment

## New Cross Library Employment PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

## New Cross User Sexual Orientation



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## 17. Sydenham Library

Sydenham Library is a Carnegie building bordering on to Home Park. Its position at the Bell Green end of Sydenham Road places it in Sydenham ward. However, much of its catchment includes Bellingham and Perry Vale wards, whose residents comprise 21% and 13% respectively of the active customer base, while 44% come from Sydenham ward.

Within its 30 hours of opening, regular activities include class visits currently taken up by Adamsrill, Our Lady and St Philip Neri and St Michael's CE schools.

In addition to the public access computer catalogue, the library has eight free public terminals with access to the internet. Microsoft Office software is installed on these computers along with and subscriptions to several electronic information resources.

The library hosts a well-attended weekly Under 5s session and monthly Chatterbooks for older children. This summer 193 children aged 5-11 registered to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge at Sydenham Library. It has a well-established monthly Over 55s advice and activity session and an adult reading group with a notably diverse membership.

Branch staff currently service two English as a Second Language (ESOL) Reading Groups and Books for Bellingham initiatives. The library liaises with and supports local cultural festivals (Sydenham Arts Festival, Sydenham Music Festival) as a venue and liaises with a range of local nurseries and community groups, including the Friends of Home Park. The library is presently co-located with Opening Doors advice and training services for job seekers, the closure of which is the subject of a separate budget proposal.

### Libraries Data and Reader Profile

For the period April/March 2009/10 Sydenham recorded 66,182 visitors. The figure for April/September 2010 stands at 32,742 visitors.

Active borrowers profile – 44% from Sydenham ward, 21% from Bellingham and 13% from Perry Vale.

43% of active library users in Sydenham ward use Sydenham Library, while 46% use Forest Hill Library. 23% of active library users in Bellingham ward use Sydenham Library, while 49% use Catford Library. 11% of active library users in Perry Vale ward use Sydenham Library, while 44% use Forest Hill and 27% use Catford Libraries.

Gender: 63% of library users are female compared with a service average of 62%.

Race: 46% of library users are White: British compared with a service average of 45%. The largest BME populations are Black or Black British: Black African – 12%, Black or Black British: Black Caribbean – 11% and Chinese or other ethnic group: Other – 8%.

Disability: 80% of library users state they have no disability with 6% having mobility issues, 4% mental health issues, 3% learning difficulties and 2% each for hearing, eyesight and dexterity problems. This is less than the service average of 83%.

Age band: 47% of users are under 18 compared with a service average of 39%. There is a smaller proportion of users in the 18-24, 25-34 and 35-44 age groups. The over 55s exactly match the service average.

### Consultation activity

In July and August 2010, Lewisham Council held public meetings to discuss the possible closure of five libraries in the borough, with a second round being held in October. Information about these was posted in the libraries, on the Libraries section of the Council website and publicised in the local press. Users were encouraged to participate in the 'Our Lewisham, Our Say' process and post their comments on the forum. E-mails were received via the [Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Libraries@lewisham.gov.uk) e-mail address and petitions were handed in from local interested parties. Steps were taken to monitor activity and comments on the web to ensure awareness of the main areas of concern

- Library stakeholder meetings on 29<sup>th</sup> July and 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010
- First public meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (87 attended)
- Second public meeting on 11 October (58 attended)

### Sydenham Scoping Grid

The key questions considered in scoping the assessment were:

- Could the proposed changes to this service and the way it is delivered affect some groups in society differently?
- Will the proposed changes disproportionately affect some groups more than others?
- Will the proposed revisions to the service and the way it is delivered promote equal opportunities?

Equalities category	Assessment of potential impact – (positive/negative - High, Medium, Low, Nil)	Reason for this assessment
<b>Gender</b>	Negative - Low	<p>According to the active user statistics as of September 2010, 63% of library users are female, compared to 37% male. This is broadly in line with the service average of 62% and 38% respectively.</p> <p>In general across the LIS there is a greater take up of services by women compared to the ward profile of 53.1% and 46.9% for men.</p>
<b>Race</b>	Negative - Medium	<p>Current users statistics from September 2010 show that 45% of library users are White: British compared with a service average of 45% and a ward population of 61%. Another 8% are from Other White background, 28% are Black or Black British and 9% Chinese or other ethnic group.</p> <p>Overall 55% of users are from a BME group which compares to 45% for the service average and 38% for the ward population.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	Negative - Low	20% of users identify themselves as having a disability compared with a service average of 22%.

		Users with mobility issues were the highest with 6% followed by mental health issues at 4% and learning difficulties at 3%.
<b>Age</b>	Negative - Medium	47% of users are under 18 compared with a service average of 39% (September 2010). The over 55s match the service average of 12%.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Negative - Low	2009 PLUS data shows majority of respondents (95%) reporting as heterosexual and 5% as LGBT, marginally lower than findings for the borough as a whole and the service average at 6%.
<b>Religion and beliefs</b>	Negative / Low	29% of respondents to the 2009 PLUS identify themselves as having no religion, the same as the service average. 65% stated being Christian, 3% Muslim, 4% Hindu and 1% Buddhist. Compared to the service average of 59% Christian, 5% Muslim, 3% Hindu and 2% Buddhist. These figures are roughly proportional to the service average and close to the ward profile of 62% Christian, 3.9% Muslim, 2% Hindu and 1% Buddhist.

## Assessment of Equalities Impacts

### Gender: Negative - Low

The proposed closure would have a negative low impact on gender since the usage of the library broadly matches the overall service usage.

The use of Sydenham library by women and young families was reiterated during consultation with service users and stakeholders such as the Friends of Home Park.

### Race: Negative - Medium

The higher proportion of BME service users at this library compared with the service average indicates that closing the facility may impact more on this community than it might in other parts of the borough. This library services Sydenham, Perry Vale and Bellingham wards, which appear less diverse compared to the rest of the borough in terms of population figures.

During the consultation, feedback was received highlighting the use of the library as a 'safe space' and one which celebrates diversity through its stock, promotions and activities. Those consulted highlighted a particular need for positive activities in the area immediately around the library and park. A point was raised about the library's support with acculturation as well as education across ethnic groups. The library reflects the cultural diversity of the area and provides a quiet study space which otherwise might not be available in Sydenham.

### Disability: Negative - Low

Concern was raised at the public consultation about the ability of those with mobility issues travelling to another library in the borough. This would relate to the 6% of users who cited they have mobility issues, compared to the service average of 5%. Sydenham has good transport links, especially with the extension of the East London line to Sydenham.

Overall the proposed closure would have a negative low impact on disability since the usage of the library broadly matches the overall service usage and would not disproportionately affect one group.

### **Age: Negative - Medium**

The higher proportion of younger service users at this library compared with the service average indicates that closing the facility may impact more on this category than it might in other parts of the borough.

In addition the Community profile data indicates higher percentage of residents of pensionable age than the borough average with 16.2% to 14.5% respectively. By comparison library usage figures for this age range are similar to the service average with 6.7% and 6.8% respectively.

At the public consultation on these proposals concern was raised that the library represented an important network for parents and an equally important resource for school children, with the brunt of the impact being on deprived families who may face difficulties getting to other libraries. It was felt there would be a severe impact on child literacy in the area.

### **Sexual Orientation: Negative - Low**

It is very difficult to know how many people in Lewisham are LGBT, however according to the Speak Out survey the Treasury estimates that 6% of the total population are gay or lesbian. In the PLUS survey 5% of people responded as being LGBT. There is no evidence that the proposal has a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic.

### **Religion and Belief: Negative - Low**

There are over 200 different religions in Lewisham. The two most common religions practiced by Lewisham residents are Christianity with 61% and Islam with 4.6%.

29% of respondents to the 2009 PLUS identify themselves as having no religion which is the same as the service average. 65% stated being Christian, 3% Muslim, 4% Hindu and 1% Buddhist. These compare to the service averages of 59% Christian, 5% Muslim, 3% Hindu and 2% Buddhist. These figures are roughly proportional to the service average and close to the ward profile of 62% Christian, 4% Muslim, 2% Hindu and 1% Buddhist.

Overall participation in libraries by religious groups does not identify a disproportionate impact on this protected characteristic. The Library and Information Service provides a range of books and covering various religions, faiths and belief systems as well as secular material on life and living, which are available at all libraries.

### **Statement in regard to Human Rights**

The implications of this proposal on Human Rights has been assessed using the flow chart in 'Human rights: human lives: A handbook for public authorities' Department for Constitutional Affairs. This proposal does not interfere with human rights.

### **Socio-Economic conditions specific to Sydenham Library catchment**

According to the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Lewisham is the 39<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. Deprivation in Lewisham is highest in areas of the north, centre and south of the borough. Concerns around the proposals were raised at the public consultations. The main issue was that Sydenham and the surrounding area in Bellingham had high deprivation levels and would these be taken into account when considering closing the library.

Sydenham has 5.2% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, 72.0 incapacity benefit claimants per 1,000 working age population, the 7<sup>th</sup> highest number in the borough. Sydenham also has 93% of Key Stage

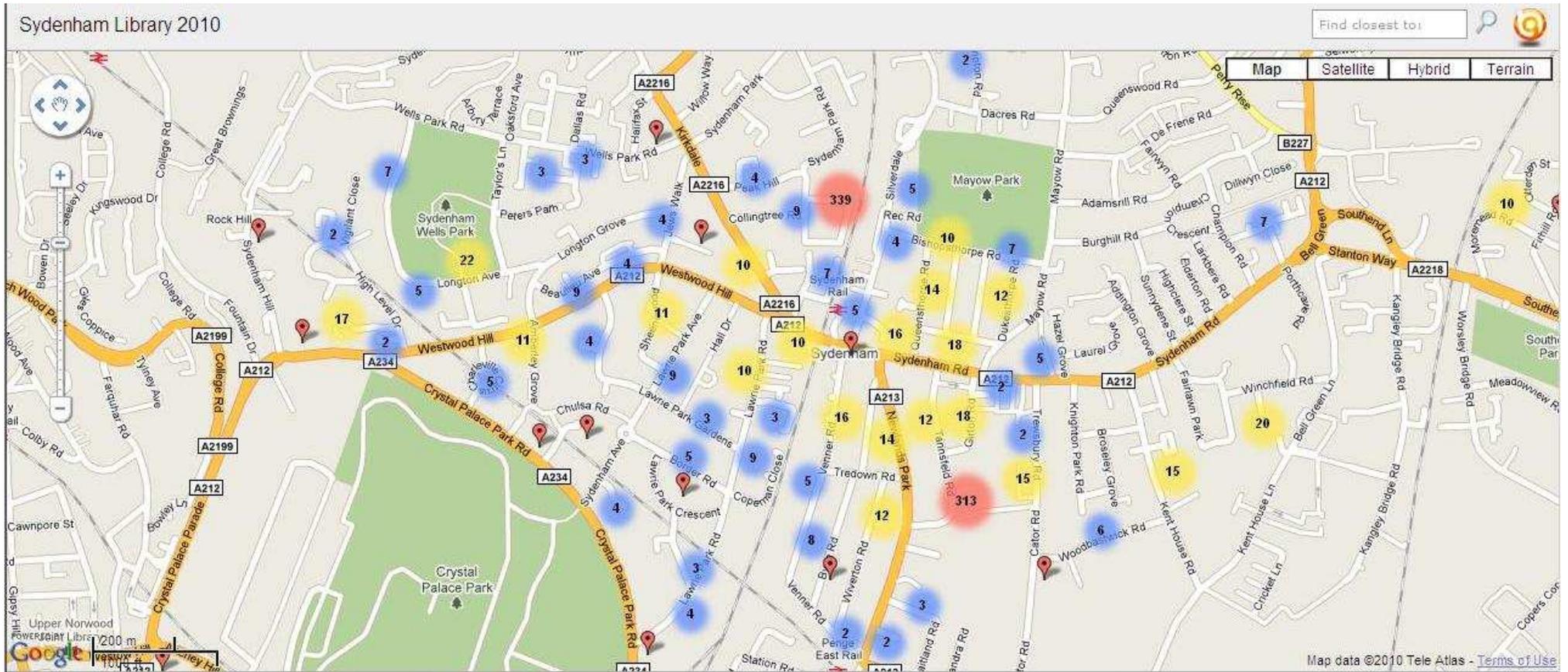
Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 1<sup>st</sup> Lewisham. Projected population growth for Bellingham (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 6.8%.

There is a higher percentage of residents of pensionable age than for the borough as a whole, and higher numbers economically inactive residents, including carers and people with disabilities, notably in the Bellingham area. In Bellingham ward, the percentage of people without qualifications is conspicuously high (32.2% compared to borough average of 24.2%). Bellingham has 7.0% of the working age population claiming jobseekers allowance (2007) compared with a borough average of 5.4%, 89.5 incapacity benefit claimants per 1,000 working age population, the highest number in the borough. Bellingham also has 64% of Key Stage Two: Pupils Achieving Level Four + in English compared with a borough average of 71%, and ranks 16<sup>th</sup> in Lewisham. Projected population growth for Bellingham (2001-2026 GLA projections) is 11.3%.

At public consultations concern was raised that deprived families cannot move around Lewisham seeking relevant information for adults and their children. Removing local libraries would impact on their ability to use the services available elsewhere. Adult learners benefit enormously from the free internet access in the local area opening up opportunities for information training and learning. This access will be affected.

Census figures indicate that 42.2% of households in Sydenham ward do not have a car. The closest alternative Lewisham libraries are Forest Hill (1.4 miles) and Catford (1.9 miles) and are both accessible by public transport

# Sydenham Library Catchment Area



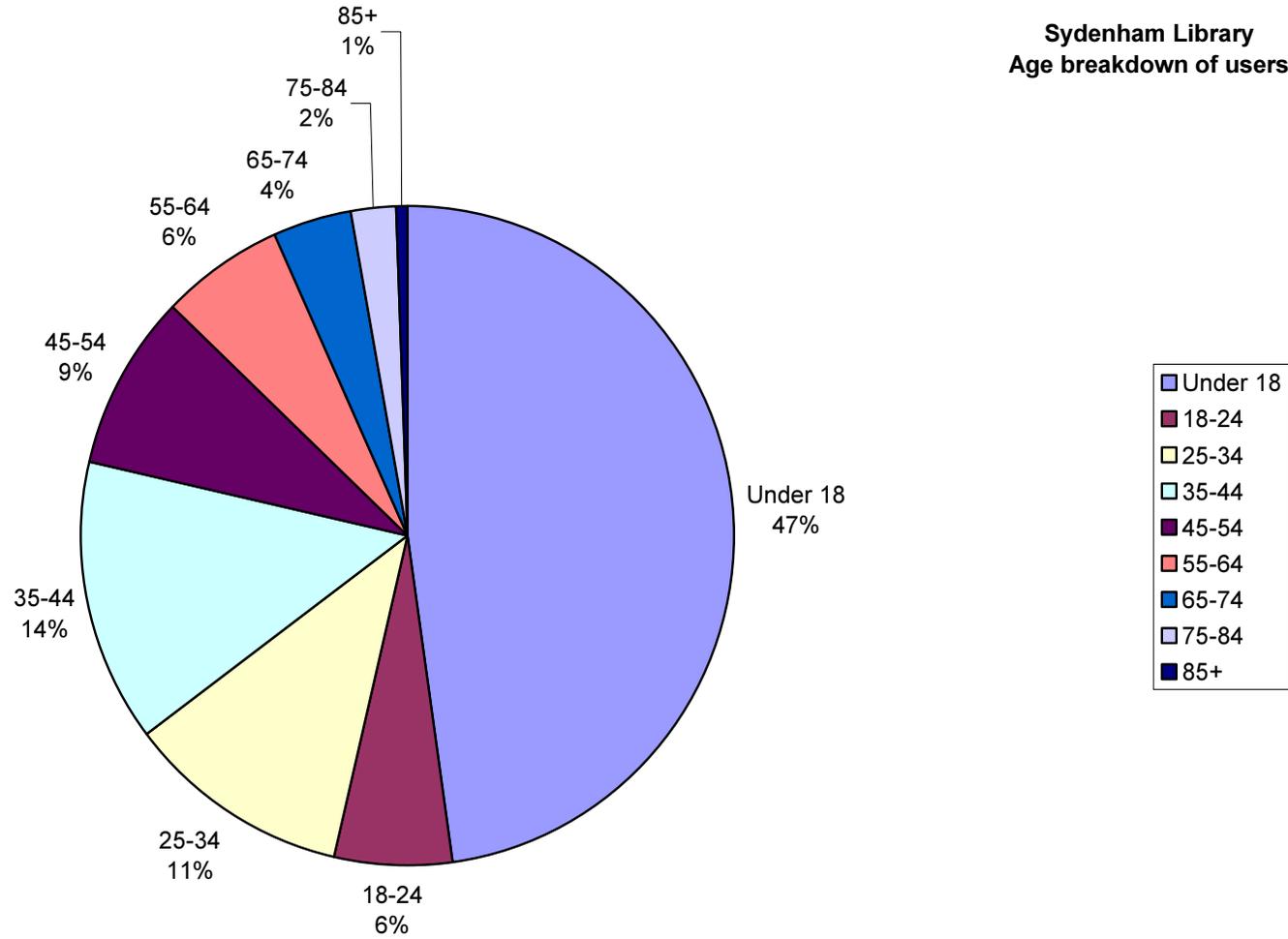
Sydenham Library active borrowers September 2010

Each number represents the number of users by postcode. (Yellow >10, Blue <10)

Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

# Sydenham User Age Range

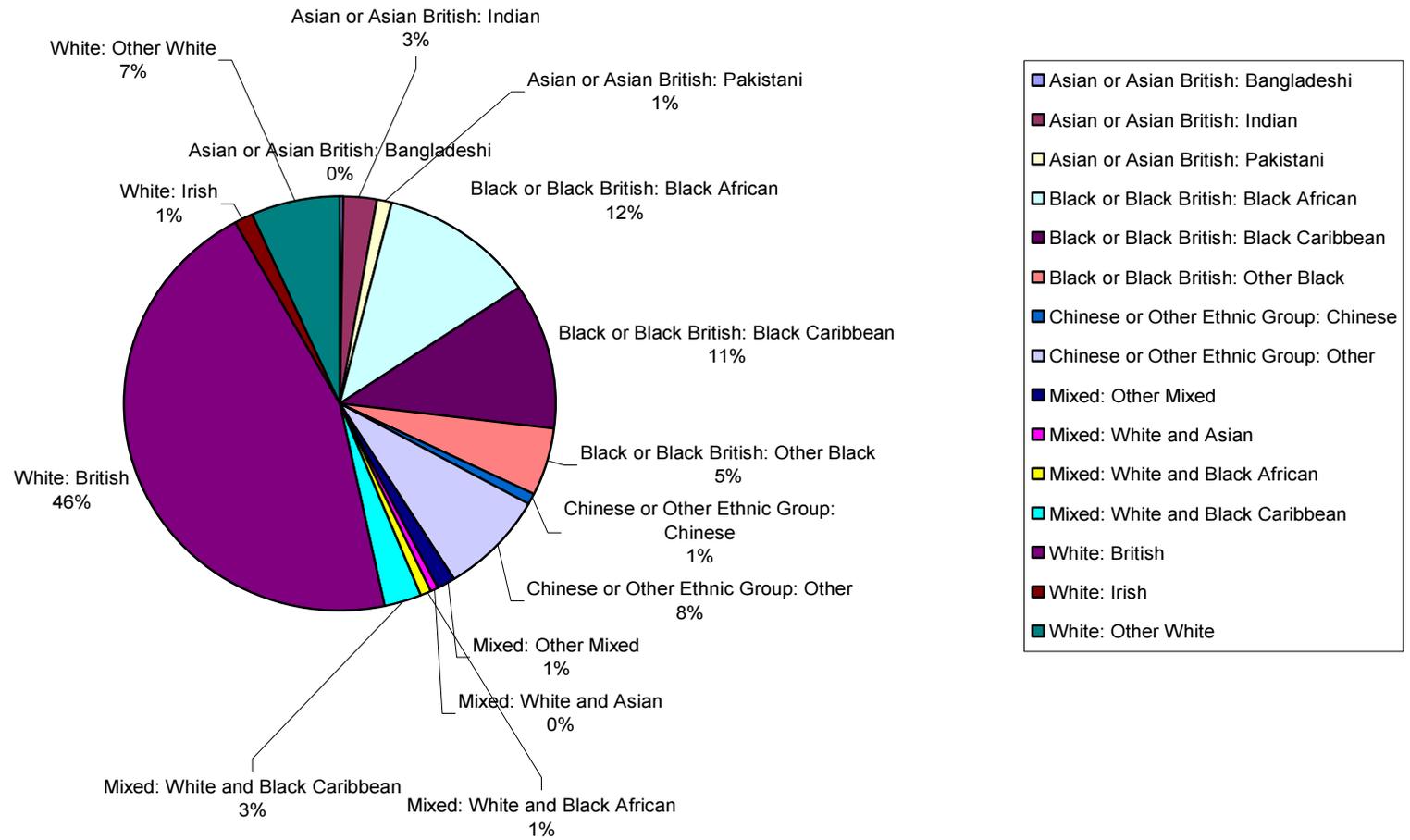
Sydenham Library  
Age breakdown of users



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

# Sydenham User Ethnicity

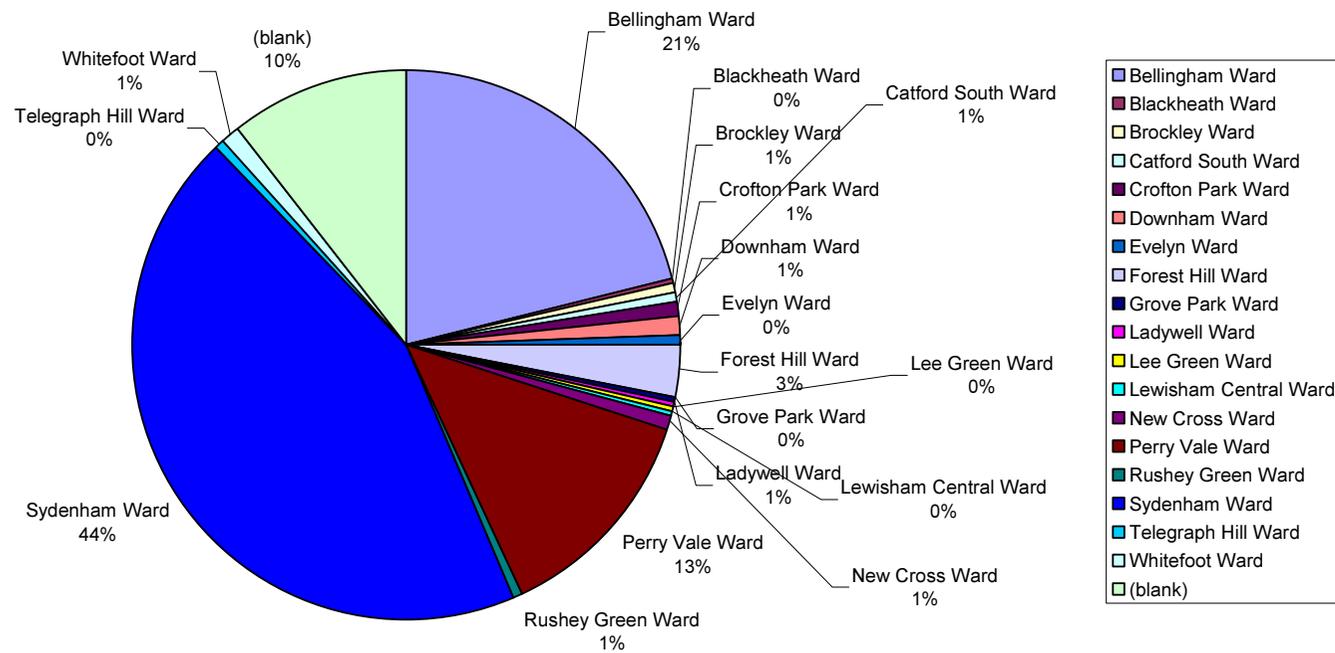
## Sydenham Library Ethnicity breakdown of users



Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

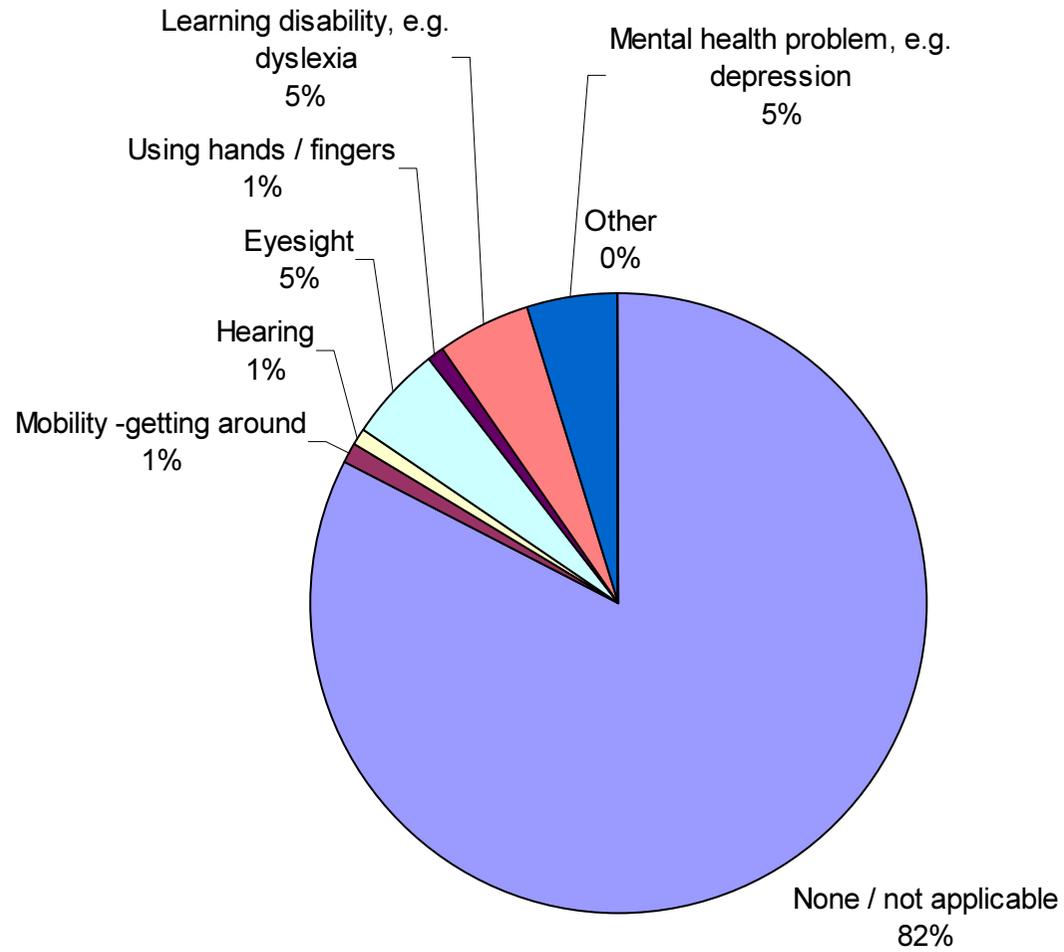
# Sydenham User Origin

**Sydenham Library**  
Where users come from

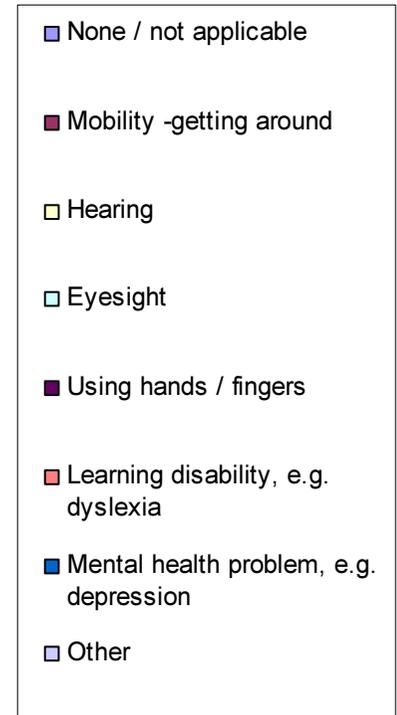


Source: Active User Statistics as at September 2010

## Sydenham User Disability

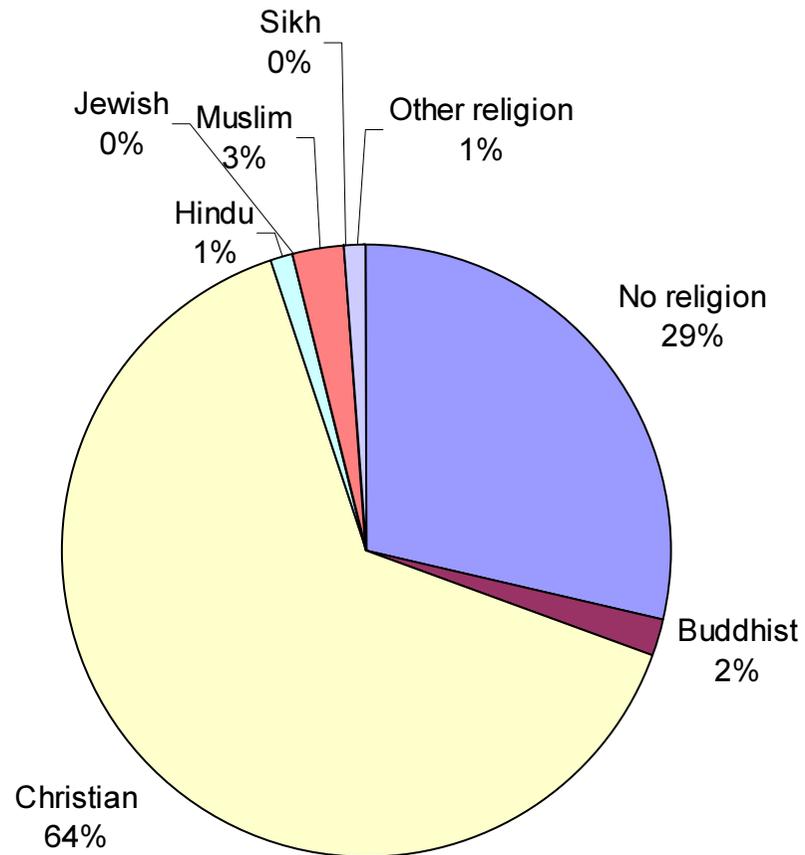


## Sydenham Library Disability PLUS 2009

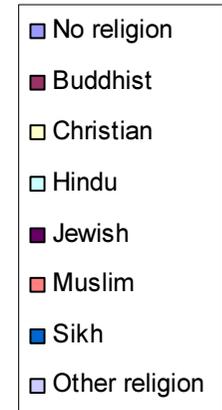


Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

## Sydenham User Religion



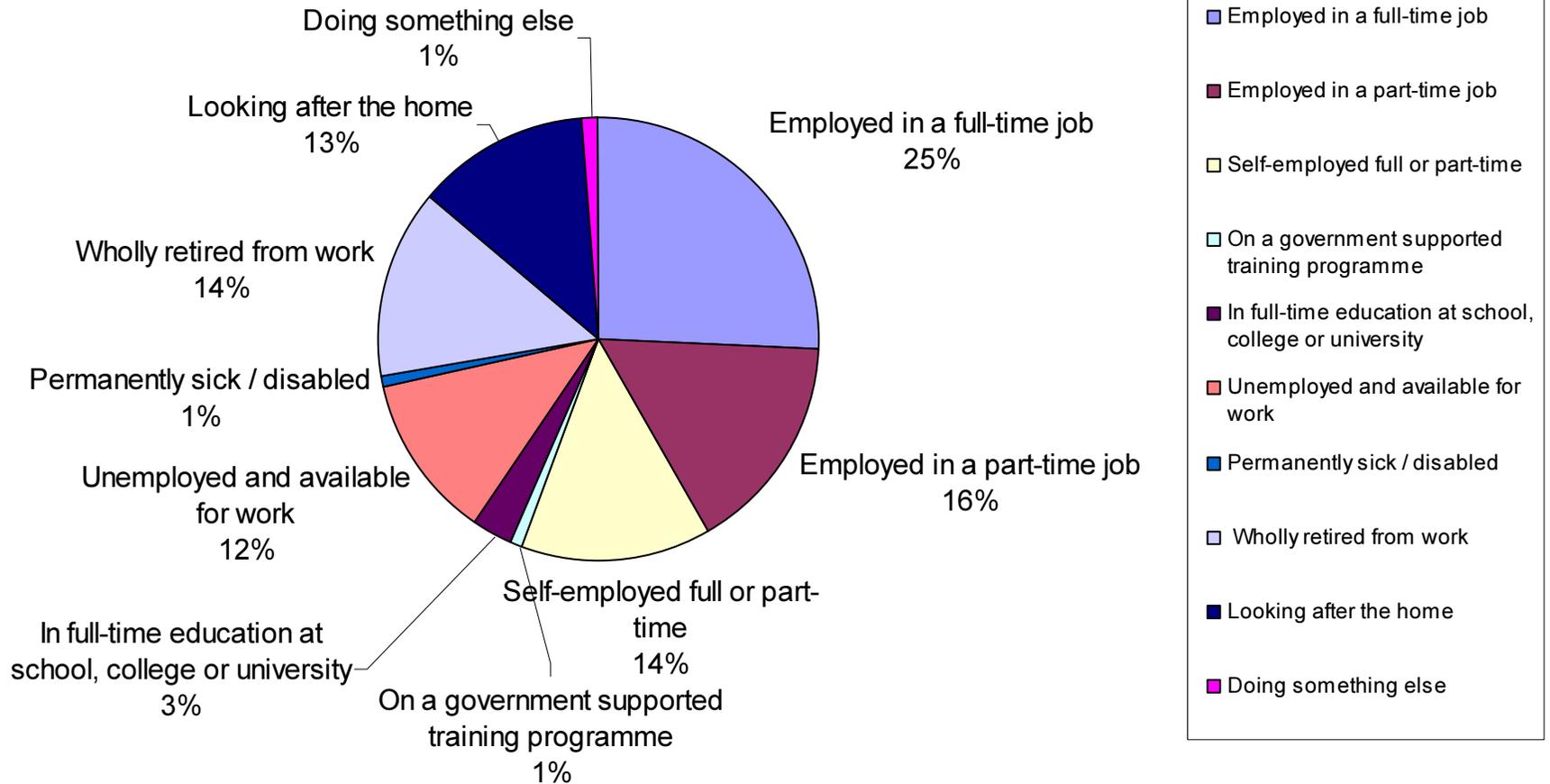
## Sydenham Library Religion PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

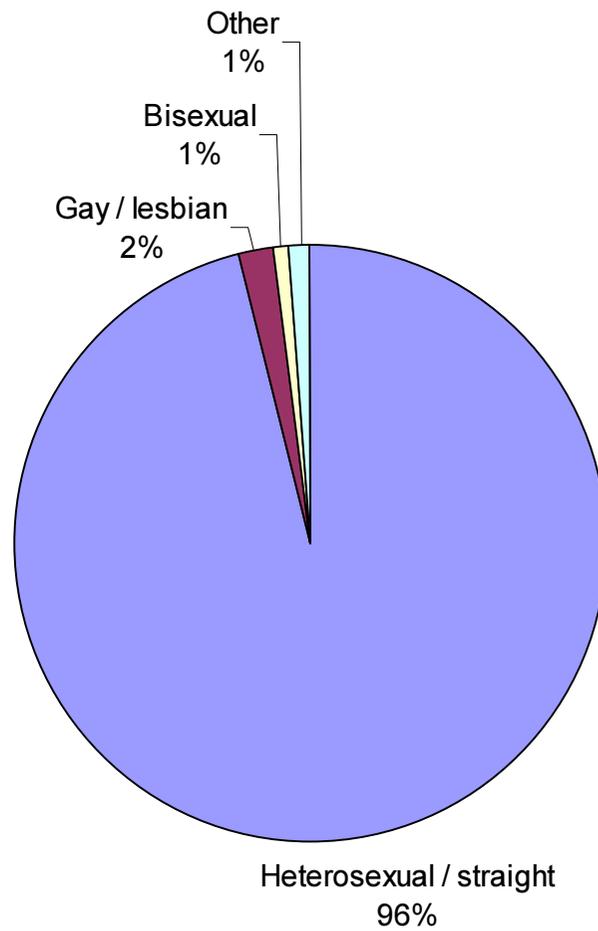
## Sydenham User Employment

### Sydenham Library Employment PLUS 2009

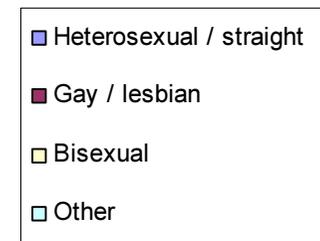


Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS) 2009

## Sydenham User Sexual Orientation



Sydenham Library  
LGBT PLUS 2009



Source: Public Library Users Survey (PLUS)2009

## 17. Overall assessment and mitigation

The overall assessment of this EIA is that the saving proposal will have an adverse impact across equality groups but will not lead to unlawful discrimination. A full and robust EIA has been conducted which has had due regard to legal requirements and has involved local residents and service users in considering the potential impact on the local area.

The EIA recognises that the closure of a library facility may make it more difficult for current users to access library services locally. As such the overall impact of the proposed closure has been assessed as having a negative impact across all categories. However, the proposal to close these library facilities does not lead to unlawful discrimination and no 'negative – high' impact has been identified, since the closure will not actively discriminate against or have a disproportionate impact on any single equality category.

### Mitigation

Full mitigation will not be possible and the proposals will have a negative impact across the borough. However, in the event of a decision being taken to close the library facilities, a number of actions will be taken to reduce impacts where possible. These include:

- Information for current library users as to alternative provision and how to access it
- Increased number of outreach library facilities, including small collections and book drops
- Increased outreach visits bringing storytelling and other activities to schools and community centres

By retaining the longer opening hours at the seven other libraries, the Council will continue to provide a comprehensive, effective and high quality service, well-placed to continue to its good work in promoting equalities and community cohesion. Activity is underway to improve residents' access to library services across the capital. From April 2011, Lewisham residents will have a library card that enables them to borrow a book in over 100 libraries across London, access any library service, such as public access computers, for free in 13 London Boroughs and request books from 16 different London library services.

The remodelling of the service includes a commitment to maintaining and developing some library services in the areas affected by the closure of the five buildings. The Library and Information Service has been working with potential partners to develop some community-based provision that will be sustainable. It is the Council's intention to develop up to eight community libraries using different delivery and partnership models and working closely with community organisations and local social enterprises.

The service will support the network of community based provision by providing up-to-date stock, delivering professional input on the quality of the stock, organising activities and book promotions. It is intended that many elements of the library's successful outreach and equality activity, can be maintained.

Where staff capacity allows, an extension of Home Library Service provision to include more vulnerable users will be considered. Under the current and proposed staff structure, the Home Library Service is operating at capacity. Therefore, taking on additional service users may generate a waiting list.

DRAFT