

# Stock Policy

Birmingham Library and Archive Services

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**Birmingham Libraries provide the opportunity for everyone to access learning, information and cultural expression through written print, audio, visual and interactive resources and technologies**



# STOCK POLICY

## 1. Introduction

Birmingham aims to provide the opportunity for everyone to access learning, information and cultural expression through written print, audio, visual and interactive resources and technologies.

The Library Service supports:

- Government priorities of lifelong learning, reader development, social inclusion, citizenship and e-government expressed in 'Framework for the Future' (DCMS 2002)
- The City Council's strategic outcomes
  - Succeed economically – benefiting from education, training, jobs and investment
  - Stay Safe in a clean, green city – living in safe and clean neighbourhoods
  - Be healthy – enjoying long and healthy lives
  - Enjoy a high quality of life – benefiting from good housing and renowned culture and leisure opportunities
  - Make a contribution – valuing one another and playing an active part of the community
- Birmingham Libraries Standards

Birmingham Library and Archive Services is informed by the strategic priorities of the City Council, the aims of the library service and the MLA Benchmark performance indicators that relate to stock provision. The stock management policy ensures that the library service provides materials that support these priorities and makes the most efficient and effective use of resources in line with best value principles.

## 2. Aims

The Stock Management Policy aims to provide electronic, printed and audio visual resources to support lifelong learning, information and recreational needs which:

- promote reading as an essential life skill and as a source of pleasure and enjoyment
- promote literature of a high quality
- extend and develop the individual reading experience
- support children's independent reading/learning
- introduce children and young people to a variety of life situations and cultures, to encourage them to be sensitive to others
- reflect the widest diversity of cultural backgrounds and social views
- provide material in languages other than English to reflect the City's diverse ethnic and cultural population
- satisfy the need for all appropriate formats for people with special needs

- provide information for service users to enable them to make informed life choices
- provide access to a wide range of information and opinion to help people play a part in the democratic process
- widen awareness of the culture and heritage of the city and foster a sense of community identity
- preserve, present and help interpret the collective memory and identity of the city
- support the economic life of the community
- reflect the constantly changing nature of contemporary society

## **2. Definition**

In the Policy the term 'stock' comprises all forms of library material, including electronically accessible information and resources, books, newspapers, periodicals, maps, audio cassettes, videos, DVDs, CDs, microforms, CD-ROMs, photographs and ephemera.

## **3. Principles**

- Each library, including the mobile library, Library Services at Home and other outreach services, acts as an access point to the whole library service
- The physical stock of Birmingham Library and Archive Services is regarded as a single city-wide resource
- All items in the lending stock of Birmingham Library and Archive Services are available for loan through any library service point
- The physical stock will include material to suit a wide variety of needs from core skills to research level.
- The physical stock will reflect the widest diversity of cultural backgrounds and social views.
- The stock will include material in large print, electronic and other non-book formats particularly where this improves or provides access to the material for service users who cannot use standard size print
- The stock, including electronic resources, will be used to promote literacy and encourage a love of reading, to support lifelong learning, to reflect and celebrate cultural diversity, and to contribute to an informed and active citizenship
- The use of stock in all formats will be promoted through Reader Development activities and effective promotion and presentation
- The loan of recorded music, videos and DVDs are regarded as income generating services
- The range of the physical stock and services provided from any one library will be determined by the needs of the local community, by Birmingham Library and Archive Services' stock standards and by national standards
- Interlending services will be made available and promoted, without payment other than to recover the costs of administration, in order to make regional,

national and international library resources accessible to Birmingham citizens

- Birmingham Library and Archive Services stock management remains the overall responsibility of professionally trained staff.

#### **4. Scope**

The library service is provided for all. This may involve working with a wide variety of organisations, however, individuals remain the prime focus of the service.

Rotation and circulation of the physical stock will make sure that customers see a wider, more diverse range of titles on library shelves and that maximum use is made of scarce resources.

#### **Meeting the needs of particular groups**

##### Diverse Communities

People from all backgrounds and cultures have an equal right of access to library services. Birmingham is home to many different communities and the library service reflects this diversity in its physical stock.

Material is provided in a range of community languages where a significant need is identified and can be borrowed through any service point. Every service point stocks books and other materials in English that reflect a wide diversity of cultures, experiences and perspectives.

Selected libraries stock resources for speakers of other languages who are learning English. Learners can request the resources through any library, free of charge.

##### Children and Young People

The library service regards children and young people as a priority group and will provide an appropriate range of stock at every service point. The Centre for the Child in the Central Library acts as a centre of excellence for the range of material available.

The aims of Birmingham Library and Archive Services stock provision for children and young people are:

- To encourage a love of books and reading from the earliest age
- To supply material and support for education, information and recreational needs
- To encourage all forms of literacy through a variety of media
- To promote children's literature of a high quality
- To extend children's personal development and knowledge through imaginative learning experiences
- To introduce children and young people to a variety of life situations and cultures, to encourage them to be sensitive to others
- To support children's independent reading/learning
- To provide material suitable for children of all abilities to enable them to make informed life choices
- To provide material in appropriate formats for children with special needs, and promote positive images

## Learners

Birmingham Library and Archive Services are both a direct provider of lifelong learning and an accredited source of information, advice and guidance on learning opportunities. The library service supports the formal and informal educational needs of learners of all ages from core skills to research level. Electronic resources complement and extend access to formal and informal learning.

The Central Library holds many major research collections in addition to its comprehensive general subject reference provision. In a variety of formats All Birmingham libraries stock resources to support homework for children and young people and for adults wishing to develop existing skills or learn new ones. Selected libraries stock Open Learning materials for adult independent learners. Libraries with Learning Centres provide resources for independent learning together with additional support and help. Books that may be used as textbooks in schools and colleges will be found in libraries' stock.

## People who have difficulties reading print

To provide equality of access to information and reading material, all libraries stock books in large print and 'talking books' on audio tape, CD or digital downloads for adults and children. Subtitled DVD/videos are available for loan to adults. Clearvision text/braille books, tactile, 'noisy' and extra large books and signed DVD/videos are provided for children.

The charging policy reflects this provision as there are no loan charges for people who experience a visual or hearing impairment or dyslexia.

Access software is provided at all service points to increase access to electronic resources and selected service points have magnifying equipment for people with a visual impairment. Reading aids are available for loan to people with difficulty in holding books through the Library Services at Home service.

All Birmingham libraries stock material for people who wish to improve their literacy skills.

## **Exclusions**

Birmingham Library and Archive Services supports the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professional's (CILIP's) declaration:

*"The function of a library service is to provide, so far as resources allow, all books, periodicals, etc. other than the trivial, in which its readers claim legitimate interest. In determining what is legitimate interest the librarian can safely rely upon one guide only – the law of the land. If the publication of such matter has not incurred penalties under the law it should not be excluded from libraries on any moral, political, religious or racial ground alone, to satisfy any sectional interest.*

*The public are entitled to rely upon libraries for access to information and enlightenment upon every field of human experience and activity. Those who provide library services should not restrict this access except by standards which are endorsed by law."*

## **Free material and External Funding**

Birmingham Library and Archive Services welcomes donations and external funding for stock on the understanding that they are subject to the same selection criteria that apply to purchased stock. Stock specifically provided for an individual service point will remain there for a twelve month period, it is then treated in every way as normal stock.

Archive donations and donations of reference material relating to special collections in Birmingham Libraries are particularly welcome. Conditions of deposit cannot be applied to donated stock, apart from personal or business archives. A leaflet setting out standard terms of deposits of records is available on request and is on the library web-site.

## **5. Reader Development**

One of Birmingham Library and Archive Services' most important priorities is to promote reading as an essential life skill and as a source of pleasure and enjoyment. It is the policy of the library service to continue to develop local initiatives and to support national Reader Development activities.

The service will contribute to LitNet, the online literature centre; the Poetry Society's Poetry on Loan scheme, West Midlands Readers Network, and Reader Development activities with the Reading Agency.

## **6. Performance Information**

Birmingham Library and Archive Services aims to make the most effective and efficient use of stock in line with Best Value principles. The service measures the effectiveness of its stock management through a number of performance indicators. These are:

- User satisfaction levels for the range of stock available {Public Library User Survey's for children and adults}
- The number of 'new to library' titles at each service point
- Number of items added to stock through purchase per 1000 population per annum
- The percentage of the library's stock out on loan (volumes in circulation)
- The length of time it would take to replace all items in stock (replenishment rate)
- The number of issues per volume for different categories of stock

The information is provided through the Library Management System, the national Library User Survey (PLUS) and staff monitoring and is made available to staff and members of the public at each service point.