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CONTEMPORARY

Disconnected Bodies

LIBRARY VISITOR PROFILES

SEGMENTED BY LIFE STAGE

ART WITHOUT DISCOVERY MOVES NOBODY

Disconnected Bodies: A social enterprise working to improve access to the arts, culture and heritage.

Supporting innovative people and projects: we help people choose, create, or take part in bold and brilliant arts experiences.

Widening cultural access and democratising the arts: the arts must remain a force for public good.

Advising on cultural audience engagement and securing funding: we work for those who most require the help; tackling industry gate-keeping and discriminatory practices to amplify voices.



19 years

Changing the face of cultural audience engagement and contributing our expertise to enabling more people to choose, create and participate in brilliant cultural experiences.



15 countries

Improving access to the arts and culture in 15 countries across the United Kingdom, Europe and Africa.



720,000 audiences

Reached in 2024. 375,000 being first time attenders.



2.1 million people

Engaged digitally in 2024.



8 national research projects

5 international research projects.



764 hours

Free advice provided in 2024.



“At DisconnectedBodies, we champion inclusive cultural access—empowering communities through bold engagement, free expert guidance, and equitable arts participation. Join us in transforming who the arts serve and how they connect us”.

- Pablo Colella, Founder

CULTURE: A CATALYST FOR TRANSFORMATION

At Disconnected Bodies, we believe in the power of arts and culture to catalyse real, lasting transformation in towns and cities.

This isn't just about regeneration; it's about unlocking the potential of place and people through a deeply rooted, locally led cultural strategy.

As an organisation that supports councils and cultural ecosystems across the UK, we help towns embed creativity at the heart of their development strategies.

Our approach recognises what we champion: that cultural participation fosters stronger, more connected communities, improves wellbeing, supports educational outcomes, and builds inclusive economies. With the creative industries contributing over £111 billion annually to the UK economy, investment in this sector isn't a luxury—it's a necessity for future resilience.

This kind of transformation isn't theoretical—it's happening. And at Disconnected Bodies, we exist to support councils to design, implement, and sustain similar cultural strategies. Whether through co-created public art, reimagined public spaces, or cultural programmes that reflect local identity and tackle inequality, we work side-by-side with local authorities to turn vision into action.

But we also understand the challenges.

COVID-19 reshaped the creative landscape, exposing systemic vulnerabilities—especially for freelancers, emerging artists, and underrepresented communities.

Our strategic advice doesn't shy away from these realities. It acknowledges deep inequities, and outlines a path forward that is both inclusive and justice-focused; mirroring our commitment to co-designing systems that elevate marginalised voices and redistribute creative power.

We've been able to demonstrate what's possible when a town embraces arts and culture not as an add-on, but as a foundation for change.

We're here to activate local potential, build cultural infrastructure, and centre communities in the stories they tell about who they are—and who they want to become.

Let's reimagine together.

LIBRARY VISITOR PROFILING

This document presents six detailed visitor profiles for library users, segmented by life stage, to provide a nuanced understanding of the diverse ways people engage with library services.

- Parents of infants
- Parents of toddlers
- Children
- Teens
- The retired
- The unemployed

Each profile explores visitors’:

- perceptions of the library
- motivations for visiting
- decision-making behaviours
- willingness and ability to compromise
- skepticism
- intolerance to ambiguity
- planning style
- variety-seeking tendencies
- awareness and use of wider library services
- information needs
- barriers to access
- modes of comparison
- opportunity cost

For each profile, insights are accompanied by recommendations and suggestions for further exploration, offering practical guidance to better tailor library services, engagement strategies, and outreach efforts to the unique preferences, behaviours, and expectations of different visitor groups.

PARENTS OF INFANTS

Motivations for visiting the library

- Parents who visit the library with infants often do so for practical and goal-oriented reasons.
- One significant motivation is the convenience of avoiding long waiting times at doctors' surgeries for services such as infant weighing or consultations with a Public Health Nurse.
- Additionally, if a baby was not registered at the hospital following birth, the in-library registration service offers a straightforward and accessible alternative to online registration, which some parents may find challenging or impractical.

Perceptions of the library environment

- Many parents may hold preconceptions about libraries that stem from their experiences in educational settings rather than viewing the library as a multi-purpose public space.
- This can lead to concerns about bringing an infant into what they perceive as a traditionally quiet environment, particularly if they fear their baby noises may disturb other users.
- Additionally, there may be misconceptions that library staff lack the necessary training or expertise to engage with and support infants and their parents effectively.
- Many parents retain memories of libraries from their school years, which may contribute to a sense of alienation from the space.
- If they do not associate libraries with community services, they may not immediately consider them as an option for infant-related needs.
- These ingrained perceptions can be challenging to overcome without targeted outreach and clear messaging about the library's broader role in the community.

Willingness to compromise

- Parents are likely to consider using the library's services if they are assured that the level of care and professionalism matches that of other community provisions, such as healthcare settings.
- Trust in the service's quality and reliability is paramount.
- If the library can demonstrate that its services are as well-managed and professionally run as those in a doctor's surgery, parents may be more inclined to compromise and utilise them because of their convenience.

Hesitations and skepticism

- When deciding where to take their infant, parents carefully evaluate the suitability of different locations.
- They may feel self-conscious about bringing their baby to a setting where crying, feeding, or nappy changing could be seen as disruptive, even if such concerns are unfounded.
- A fear of judgment from library staff regarding noise levels or hygiene-related issues may also deter some parents.
- Consequently, they may prefer established 'infant-friendly' spaces, such as parenting groups or healthcare facilities, even if the library is a more convenient option.

Decision-making and risk considerations

- Parents of infants often engage in 'what if' thinking when planning outings with their baby.
- If the library is an unfamiliar environment, they may have heightened concerns.
- This mindset can lead them to seek alternative options unless the library provides clear and reassuring information to address any uncertainties.

Tolerance for ambiguity in library communications

- New parents are generally less tolerant of ambiguity in messaging or service descriptions.
- Given the numerous uncertainties they already navigate in caring for an infant, they are likely to favour services that are thoroughly explained and easy to understand.
- Even if a library-based service is more convenient, parents may opt for a less convenient but more explicitly detailed alternative, prioritising their baby's guaranteed well-being over convenience but vagueness.

Barriers to access

- Several potential barriers may prevent parents from utilising infant-related services at the library.
- Cultural and religious factors may play a role, particularly concerning mixed-gender spaces, public feeding, or having their baby weighed by a staff member from a different cultural or religious background.
- Practical challenges, such as transportation difficulties or lack of awareness about available services, may also impact parents' willingness or ability to visit the library.

Decision-making process and external influences

- When considering whether to use library services, parents typically take more time to assess the benefits, potential drawbacks, and suitability of the service for both their infant and themselves.
- This decision-making process may be slower compared to other library users, as parents must weigh the potential consequences of using an inadequate or unfamiliar service.
- Parents often rely on external sources to inform their decisions, seeking recommendations from trusted individuals such as other parents, healthcare professionals, or community workers.
- Their reliance on external validation is likely to outweigh personal intuition, as they exercise heightened caution when selecting services for their infant.
- This underscores the importance of positive word-of-mouth and clear, timely communication from libraries to build trust and credibility.

Modes of comparison and service expectations

- Parents of infants will naturally compare library services to similar services in healthcare or community settings.
- When accessing services such as infant weighing or consultations with a Public Health Nurse, they expect the same level of cleanliness, professionalism, and customer service that they experience in healthcare facilities.
- Any perceived deviation from these standards may lead them to choose not to use the library's services.
- If parents lack prior experience with comparable services, the library must provide sufficient information to build trust and create a familiar reference point.
- While libraries may offer a more informal version of these services, they must still align with parents' expectations of quality and professionalism.

Use of the service and practical considerations

- Parents of infants typically seek efficiency when accessing services, aiming to complete necessary tasks as quickly as possible.
- The needs of their baby take precedence, meaning that services must be designed to accommodate feeding, changing, and nap schedules.
- Parents may arrive at the library feeling stressed, fatigued, or under pressure, making it essential that services are streamlined and easy to navigate.
- An overcomplicated or inefficient service is likely to result in a poor experience for parents and may cause distress to the infant.
- Ideally, parents should be able to leave the library feeling satisfied that they have successfully completed a task, without needing to spend additional time reflecting on the experience.
- Ensuring that services are user-friendly and designed with parental needs in mind will increase the likelihood of continued engagement with the library's offerings.

Awareness and use of wide library services

- Parents of infants are likely to be unaware of the wider services the library provides, only recently discovering that infant services are provided.
- However, considering a parent's need to establish a trusted support network and suitable services, they'll likely be enthusiastic and receptive to conversations with library staff where wider services can be introduced.
- Additionally, parents will appreciate building a closer trusted relationship with library staff, a familiar face, for who they can consult about wider library offers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote the library's infant-friendly services through multiple channels (social media, health visitor partnerships, and parent forums).
- Use clear, concise, and reassuring messaging to address concerns about noise, hygiene, and professionalism.
- Offer virtual or in-person tours of infant-related facilities to familiarise parents with the environment.
- Ensure pram-friendly access, ample seating, and dedicated feeding/changing areas.
- Provide clear signage and instructions to make navigating the space stress-free.
- Consider a booking system for infant services while maintaining flexibility for walk-ins.
- Train library staff to be visibly welcoming and proactive in supporting new parents.
- Develop a 'parent ambassador' program where experienced parents can assist newcomers in using the services.
- Implement a 'no-judgment' policy, reassuring parents that crying, feeding, and diaper changes are normal.
- Ensure that all health-related services, such as infant weigh-ins, are seen as equivalent in quality to those at clinics.
- Work with healthcare professionals to co-deliver services and build credibility.
- Offer informational sessions with public health nurses, reinforcing the library's role as a community health partner.
- Design the service experience to create a sense of accomplishment for parents (e.g., 'baby's first library visit' certificates).
- Encourage a community feel through informal parent meetups after weigh-ins or registrations.
- Provide a small 'next steps' takeaway for parents (e.g., recommended baby books, local resources).
- Use storytelling and testimonials from other parents to reframe the library as a family-friendly space.
- Provide clear step-by-step guides on what to expect when using infant services.
- Offer a 'library buddy' or staff-led introduction for first-time users who may need extra guidance.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

- Discussions with parents of infants would reveal more emotional and practical concerns, such as hesitations around public feeding, staff interactions, and the level of cleanliness expected in library spaces.
- Additionally, observational studies within libraries could assess barriers, ease of use, and stress points in the visitor experience.
- Observing parent–infant interactions would help researchers determine whether library spaces are accommodating or if adjustments are needed.
- Staff behavior and parental engagement could also be analysed to identify whether additional training or environmental changes would improve the experience for families.
- Key areas of exploration should include how parents perceive the library as a family-friendly space versus its traditional reputation as a quiet, formal environment.
- Research should examine whether trust in library services matches that of healthcare providers or if skepticism remains due to concerns about hygiene, expertise, or suitability.
- Another important focus is the effectiveness of marketing and outreach efforts in informing parents about available services, as well as the practical or cultural barriers that prevent parents from visiting the library.
- Future research should also seek to confirm whether noise concerns are a major deterrent or if this perception is overstated.
- A significant gap in knowledge exists in understanding cultural hesitations and how well libraries accommodate diverse parenting needs, particularly for families from different ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic backgrounds.

PARENTS OF TODDLERS

Motivations for visiting the library

- Parents of toddlers are driven by both goal-oriented and solution-driven motivations when choosing to attend library activities.
- From a goal-oriented perspective, they are actively seeking high-quality educational opportunities that contribute to their child's early learning and development.
- Additionally, these sessions offer a valuable opportunity for toddlers to engage with peers, helping to develop their social skills in a safe and structured environment.
- From a solution-driven standpoint, parents often face the ongoing challenge of providing continuous stimulation for their children.
- Activities at the library serve as a means of alleviating boredom, offering structured engagement that benefits both the child and the parent.
- Furthermore, attending these sessions supports the parents' own needs by providing opportunities to socialise with other caregivers.
- These interactions allow them to exchange experiences and parenting strategies, fostering a sense of community.
- Importantly, such activities can offer a much-needed respite from the isolation that some parents may experience when spending long hours at home with their toddler, potentially reducing feelings of loneliness or depression.

Comparison with parents of infants: *While parents of infants may focus more on convenience, accessibility, and reassurance, those with toddlers are additionally interested in activities that contribute to their child's learning and socialisation. They are also more likely to factor in their own need for social engagement when deciding to attend.*

Perceptions of the library, hesitations, and skepticism

- Although some individuals may hold long standing misconceptions about libraries, parents of toddlers are likely to view them as valuable resources for their child's development.
- Many parents will prioritise their child's educational and social benefits over any initial hesitations they may have. However, certain concerns may still arise.
- Parents may feel apprehensive about how they and their child will be perceived in a group setting.
- Concerns about their toddler's development in comparison to others, or anxieties regarding their own parenting abilities, could deter them from attending; especially within a library setting that's associated with education and intelligence by many.
- Some may fear that they will be judged on aspects such as their parenting style, their child's behaviour, or even parental choices such as clothing or pushchairs.
- Additionally, there may be uncertainty about whether the activity is suitable for their child's developmental stage; whether it is too advanced or not sufficiently stimulating.

Willingness and ability to compromise

- Parents of toddlers are often willing to make compromises regarding the quality of an activity, provided there are other benefits that make attendance worthwhile.
- For example, an activity that is not particularly engaging from an educational perspective may still be considered valuable if it offers convenience, social benefits, and an opportunity to occupy the child for part of the day.
- However, compromise becomes more challenging when parents must accommodate rigid daily routines, particularly concerning feeding and nap times. Activities that do not align with these schedules may be difficult for some parents to attend consistently.

'Only if' and 'what if' thinking

- Decision-making regarding attendance may be influenced by concerns about social judgment.
- Parents who feel self-conscious about their parenting choices or social standing may prefer to remain in familiar settings, socialising with friends or neighbours rather than attending a new and unfamiliar group.
- Additionally, many parents prioritise their child's comfort and needs above all else, meaning they may only choose to participate if specific facilities are provided, such as suitable seating, space for pushchairs, or changing areas.
- The duration of the session may also be a determining factor.

Intolerance to ambiguity and speed of decision-making

- While parents of toddlers generally require less information about an activity than parents of infants, having gained greater confidence in understanding their child's needs, they still require clear and detailed descriptions to make informed decisions.
- Compared to parents of infants, they may make decisions more quickly but will still weigh up alternative options.
- Spontaneous attendance is also a key factor. Parents may make last-minute decisions to attend an activity, particularly in response to external factors such as poor weather or an especially restless child in need of stimulation.
- Libraries should consider this when planning their marketing strategy, ensuring that promotional materials are available and visible immediately before activities take place to accommodate last-minute attendees.

Planning style, reliance on external sources, and influence preferences

- By the toddler stage, many parents will have established networks with other caregivers, unlike parents of infants who may still be in the process of building these connections. As a result, recommendations from fellow parents carry significant weight when deciding which activities to attend.
- Library sessions can serve as a regular meeting point, offering structure to both the child's and the parent's weekly routines.
- Since peer recommendations are valued over traditional marketing efforts, libraries should focus on creating clear and engaging messages that can be easily shared within parent groups, particularly through digital communication channels such as messaging apps.
- Organising activities that encourage group visits, such as inviting parents to attend with a friend, may further enhance attendance.

Modes of comparison and opportunity costs

- As parents explore various educational and entertainment activities for their toddlers, they develop clearer expectations regarding quality and value.
- Understanding the range of alternative activities available to parents allows libraries to position their own offerings competitively.
- In areas where multiple options exist, parents will evaluate the opportunity cost of attending a library session versus a different activity.
- If they perceive that their child is missing out on a more beneficial experience elsewhere, they may opt for that alternative, even if it involves a financial cost.
- Parents may also prioritise their own social needs when choosing an activity, favouring environments where they feel comfortable and welcome or where they can engage with their existing network of friends.
- Consequently, libraries should aim to build strong relationships within parent communities to remain a preferred choice.

Use of the library service

- Parents may approach library visits not solely for the organised activities but also for the accessible and welcoming environment.
- Many may choose to spend time in the library regardless of the specific activity on offer, appreciating the availability of a dry, warm space where they can entertain their child in a relaxed setting.
- Unlike scheduled activities with fixed durations, library visits are often dictated by the child's mood and energy levels, with parents making decisions on when to leave based on their toddler's needs rather than a predetermined time frame.

Awareness and use of wider library services

- Depending if the parent of a toddler had previously visited when their child was an infant, the parent may be aware of the wider library services, both for their child and for themselves.
- If a trusted relationship has been established between the parent and library then suggestions on the use of wider services will be welcomed.
- Considering the need for convenience many parents seek, they'll appreciate the ability to utilise additional library services when visiting with their child; but introduction of these services to them is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create an inclusive and non-judgmental atmosphere by training staff to reassure parents and encourage participation.
- Offer activities that accommodate a range of toddler development levels to prevent concerns over suitability.
- Ensure that messaging around library events emphasises the social benefits for both parents and toddlers.
- Offer flexible timings to accommodate different routines.
- Ensure that activities are engaging enough to justify attendance, even if they are not the primary motivator.
- Provide clear and visible information on facilities to reduce uncertainty.
- Emphasise an inclusive environment in all communications.
- Use clear, concise marketing materials to explain what each session involves.
- Implement last-minute promotional strategies to encourage attendance on the day of the event.
- Encourage parents to share library events within group chats and social media.
- Partner with local parenting groups to promote library activities.
- Provide visually engaging, shareable content that parents can easily pass along.
- Regularly review competing activities in the area to ensure the library remains an attractive choice.
- Foster community within the library to encourage repeat attendance and build social groups.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

- Key areas of exploration should include parents' awareness of library services beyond book lending and computer use, the role of social influences in their decision to attend activities, and how their perceptions of libraries evolve over time.
- Research should also investigate whether different demographic groups experience distinct barriers, such as cultural considerations around child care in shared public spaces.
- Additionally, understanding how parents weigh convenience, quality, and familiarity when choosing activities for their children would provide valuable insights into how libraries can better position their services.
- Research should aim to confirm whether parents' concerns about noise, judgment, or suitability of library services are widespread and whether these concerns significantly impact attendance.
- Gaps in knowledge may include the long-term impact of early library engagement on a child's future use of library services and whether libraries effectively build lasting relationships with families beyond toddlerhood.

CHILDREN (5-11)

Motivations for visiting the library

- Children will visit the library based upon their parent's goal-oriented and solution-driven motivations for both themselves and their child.
- From a goal-oriented perspective, parents will actively seek high-quality educational and social opportunities that contribute to their child's educational and social development.
- From a solution-driven standpoint, children's activities will provide an opportunity for parents to get their children out of the house and socialising with friends.
- Activities at the library serve as a means of alleviating boredom, offering structured engagement that benefits both the child and the parent. However the presence of the parent in the library during children's activities will be greatly different between children of five and children of eleven.
- Furthermore, having their children present for activities and clubs will give parents a chance to socialise with other parents.
- These interactions allow them to foster a sense of community.

Perceptions of the library, hesitations, and skepticism

- By the time a child reaches the age of five, many parents will have experienced a shift in their perceptions of the library, particularly if they have been frequent visitors since their child's infancy.
- Any initial hesitations about visiting the library will likely have diminished, and in many cases, parents will be enthusiastic about their child's participation in library activities. The diverse range of educational and social activities provided by libraries serves to reinforce this positive outlook.
- As children develop a greater sense of self and personal motivation, they are also more likely to engage enthusiastically in library activities, provided these are presented in a manner that is engaging and appealing to their interests.
- While some children may initially experience shyness in group settings, by the age of five, most will have gained familiarity with new social environments, having recently begun school. This transition period marks a time when they are increasingly exposed to structured activities and clubs.
- For children who find social interactions challenging, the perception of the library as a safe and supportive environment becomes particularly significant. In such cases, the parent's confidence in the library plays a crucial role in modelling appropriate behaviours and fostering a sense of belonging in these spaces.

Willingness and ability to compromise

- Parents are generally willing to make compromises when they perceive an activity as highly beneficial and of high quality.
- However, certain practical limitations may make compromise impossible, such as work schedules and childcare commitments.
- Despite these constraints, parents maintain high expectations regarding the quality of activities their child engages in. They are unlikely to tolerate unprofessional or unwelcoming environments and will make decisions based on the perceived value and standards of the experience offered.

'Only if' and 'what if' thinking

- By the age of five, parents have developed a strong understanding of their child's interests, preferences, and responses to different types of activities.
- As a result, speculative 'only if' and 'what if' thinking becomes less influential in their decision-making process.
- Parents at this stage are typically more confident in their planning, as they have a clearer idea of what to expect from children's public activities and clubs.
- For children, however, such thought patterns may begin to emerge as they grow and develop a stronger sense of personal agency. They may become selective about participation, preferring to attend activities only if their friends are also attending or if the event does not conflict with other interests they prioritise.
- Some children may also experience heightened social anxiety, leading to concerns about social judgment in new settings.
- The extent to which these factors influence a child's willingness to participate depends on their individual social and confidence development. For some children, the uncertainty of a new environment may be too overwhelming, leading to a firm refusal to attend if they perceive the situation as unfamiliar or intimidating.

Intolerance to ambiguity and speed of decision-making

- Once their child reaches the age of five, parents generally require less information about an activity before deciding whether to attend.
- This increased confidence in their child's needs and interests allows for more spontaneous decision-making. Nevertheless, clear and detailed descriptions of activities remain essential to enable informed choices.
- Spontaneity also plays a key role in attendance patterns. Parents may make last-minute decisions to visit the library or participate in an activity, particularly in response to external factors such as adverse weather conditions or a child's need for stimulation.
- The ability to decide on attendance at short notice highlights the importance of flexibility in scheduling and access to real-time information about library events.

Planning style, reliance on external sources, and influence preferences

- By the time their child starts school, many parents will have established social networks with other parents. Consequently, peer recommendations hold significant influence when deciding which activities to attend.
- Libraries can function as informal meeting points for these networks, providing a structured yet welcoming environment that integrates seamlessly into weekly routines.
- Since parents are more likely to rely on word-of-mouth recommendations rather than traditional marketing efforts, libraries should prioritise clear, engaging, and shareable messaging.
- Digital communication channels can be effective in disseminating information.
- Additionally, although young children may not consciously seek recommendations from friends, they are often influenced by peers who share enthusiastic accounts of enjoyable library experiences.

Modes of comparison and opportunity costs

- By the age of five, both parents and children have accumulated a range of experiences that shape their perception of the value offered by library activities and services.
- Parents may adopt a flexible approach when assessing these activities, whereas children often form more definitive opinions based on previous experiences.
- A child's strong recollection of past events, whether positive or negative, can play a decisive role in their willingness to participate in future activities.
- As children grow, they gain access to an increasing number of educational and recreational opportunities.
- Additionally, the need for a rigid routine decreases, affording families greater flexibility in planning outings. Parents may therefore be more inclined to travel further afield to explore a broader range of activities.
- Given this expanding array of options, both parents and children will naturally weigh the opportunity costs of attending library events against alternative activities available to them.

Use of the library service

- Parents may visit the library with their child not only for structured activities but also to make use of its welcoming and accessible environment.
- Many appreciate the library as a warm, dry, and comfortable space where they can engage with their child in an unstructured yet stimulating setting.
- Unlike scheduled activities with fixed durations, general library visits are often dictated by a child's mood and energy levels, allowing parents the flexibility to leave when it best suits their child's needs.

TEENS

Motivations for visiting the library

Early Teen

- Secondary school-aged students are likely to visit the library for problem-driven reasons, such as the need for a study space or access to digital resources, particularly when these are not available at home.
- For many students, visiting the library after school may be a necessity rather than a choice.
- They may require a safe environment to spend time while waiting for parents, especially if remaining at school is no longer an option.
- Additionally, while social motivations could be considered goal-driven, they often still stem from a problem-driven perspective. For example, students may choose to gather at the library when outdoor spaces are unavailable due to bad weather or when other social settings are not perceived as safe or welcoming.
- For some young people, the library may serve as a substitute for a youth club, providing a secure, supervised environment where they can access Wi-Fi, complete schoolwork, or simply spend time with friends.
- The lack of access to digital resources at home may further drive students to the library, making it an essential space for those needing internet connectivity for homework or personal use.

Late Teen

- Older teenagers (16–19) are likely to visit the library with more goal-driven motivations
- compared to younger teens.
- For many the library serves as a dedicated study space, particularly for those preparing for exams or coursework.
- Studying at home may be difficult due to distractions, lack of suitable space, or family responsibilities, making the library an essential alternative.
- The presence of specialist books, access to IT and digital resources, and a quiet environment are key factors in their decision to use the space.
- Some late teens may engage with the library beyond academic purposes, participating in volunteering opportunities or work experience (WEX) programmes. These initiatives may be particularly appealing to those looking to strengthen university or job applications.

Perception of the library

Early Teen

- Younger teenagers may perceive the library primarily as a space of security.
- Many are still in the transitional phase of gaining independence and may not yet feel comfortable spending time outside of the home or school without adult supervision.
- The presence of responsible adults in the library may offer reassurance, reinforcing its role as a safe and structured environment.
- Despite this, young people may see the library as a place of convenience rather than a space of intrinsic value. They may appreciate the benefits it provides, such as free Wi-Fi and charging facilities, while simultaneously holding preconceived notions about it being a restrictive or controlled environment, akin to school.
- These perceptions can shape their engagement with the space, making them more likely to utilise the library for practical reasons rather than leisure or enrichment.
- For some students, particularly those who have previously visited the library as children, the space may serve as a 'middle ground' between the structured environments of home and school and the more unstructured experiences of the wider world.
- Positive early experiences may foster a sense of familiarity and continuity, encouraging ongoing library use.
- Conversely, more vulnerable teenagers may see the library as a sanctuary, offering respite from challenging home situations. For these individuals, the library plays a crucial role in supporting their well-being and academic success.

Late Teen

- Unlike younger teens, older teenagers are likely to have a more defined perspective on the library's role in their lives.
- They may value it as a professional and academic resource, viewing it as a tool for their future goals rather than just a place of convenience.
- However, some may still associate it with outdated perceptions from childhood, leading to underuse of certain services.
- Older teenagers are also more independent and may be selective in how they interact with library staff. They are less likely to need reassurance but still appreciate an environment where staff are approachable and supportive rather than overly authoritative.
- A balance between independence and guidance is crucial in encouraging sustained engagement.

Willingness and ability to compromise

Early Teen

- Given the limited alternative spaces available to younger teenagers, they are likely to be
- highly willing to compromise on their use of the library.
- Their primary needs, such as access to digital resources, Wi-Fi, phone charging, and a safe social space, may outweigh any reservations they have about the library's atmosphere or rules.
- If alternative spaces, such as cafés or youth centres, were more accessible to this age group, they might prefer these options. However, for younger teenagers who lack financial independence and the confidence to navigate less structured environments, the library remains a viable choice.
- Older teenagers, who have greater financial freedom and do not require adult supervision, are more likely to opt for commercial spaces such as cafés for the same purposes. This distinction highlights the necessity of ensuring that library spaces cater effectively to the specific needs of younger teenagers who may not have other options.

Late Teen

- Late teens are likely to compromise on some aspects of the library experience if it meets
- their core needs.
- While they may prefer cafés or co-working spaces for a more social study atmosphere, the availability of free resources, a distraction-free environment, and specialist books often outweigh these preferences.
- They are also more likely than younger teens to seek out library resources deliberately, rather than using the space passively.

Hesitations and skepticisms

Early Teen

- As teenagers navigate social dynamics, they may hesitate to spend time in the library
- due to concerns about how their peers perceive the space.
- Visiting the library may be seen as an unappealing or 'uncool' activity, particularly if it is associated solely with studying. As a result, young people may downplay their reasons for visiting, framing them in practical terms such as charging a phone or using the internet rather than expressing genuine interest in the library itself.
- However, if groups of teenagers are welcomed into the library and allowed a degree of social freedom beyond what they expect, they may become regular visitors.
- Establishing an environment where social interaction is encouraged within reasonable limits can help dispel negative perceptions.
- Once young people feel comfortable in the space, there is an opportunity to introduce them to additional resources and services that may be of benefit to them.

Late Teen

- Older teens may still feel reluctant to visit the library due to peer perception, but this is less of a barrier than for younger teens.
- Instead, their hesitations may stem from concerns about whether the library meets their specific needs, such as providing quiet study areas separate from noisier social spaces.
- A key factor in their engagement is whether the library feels relevant to their current stage in life. If they perceive it as too rigid or geared toward younger students, they may be less inclined to visit regularly.

'Only if' and 'what if' thinking

Early Teen

- A key concern that may deter young people from using the library is the fear of judgement from their peers. A common 'what if' question is: What if my friends find out I study in the library? This concern reflects the social pressures teenagers face in balancing academic effort with peer acceptance.
- Similarly, many teenagers adopt an 'only if' mindset when considering the library. They may only use the space if no other options are available, such as if they have no other location to charge their phone or no alternative study environment.

Late Teen

- For late teens, 'only if' statements may revolve around necessity.
- They may only visit the library if their home environment is too distracting, if they require access to specialist books, or if they need a place to focus.
- 'What if' concerns may include doubts about whether the library provides the right resources for their academic or career needs.
- Addressing these uncertainties through clear communication of available services can increase their engagement.

Need for information and encouragement

- Teenagers vary in their need for information before making decisions about visiting the library.
- While some may be content with minimal knowledge, such as the availability of free Wi-Fi, others may require more encouragement, particularly if they are visiting alone for the first time.
- For those who are still exploring independence, clear guidance and reassurance about what to expect can be beneficial.

Barriers to library use

Early Teen

- There are several potential barriers that may prevent young people from accessing the library.
- Practical barriers include the need for public transport if the library is not within walking distance or restrictions imposed by library opening hours.
- Parental restrictions may also play a role, with some teenagers only permitted to visit if accompanied by friends or siblings.
- Cultural and social perceptions can also act as barriers. If family members or friends view the library negatively, a teenager may be reluctant to visit due to fear of embarrassment or social stigma.

Late Teen

- Practical barriers, such as travel distance and opening hours, remain relevant for late teens. However, additional barriers include whether the library provides the right study environment.
- If noise levels are too high or if the space feels uninviting for focused work, they may seek alternatives.
- Cultural and social perceptions continue to play a role, particularly in whether the library is seen as relevant to their academic and career ambitions.

Decision-making factors

Early Teen

- Teenagers' decision-making processes are influenced by various factors, including
- speed of decision-making, planning style, and external influences.
- While they may trust parents to recommend the library for practical purposes (e.g. educational resources), they are more likely to take advice from friends when it comes to age-related considerations such as a good place to socialise.
- If a recommendation comes from an individual or authority figure perceived as out of touch, the library may be dismissed as 'cringe' or irrelevant.
- Some teenagers may require time to plan their visit, inviting friends to accompany them. However, if no appealing alternatives are available, they may make spontaneous decisions to visit the library such as a need for a safe space or meeting place.

Late Teen

- Late teens are more autonomous in their decision-making than younger teens, relying less on parental guidance and more on peer recommendations or personal assessment.
- They are likely to be more selective in their engagement, choosing to use the library if it aligns with their study habits and aspirations.
- They may require minimal persuasion but need to perceive the library as an effective and relevant space.

Variety and opportunity costs

Early Teen

- Young teenagers may not expect a great deal of variety from library services, often
- viewing the space through a narrow lens.
- They may not consider the library as a place for social or leisure activities, instead associating it with studying or digital access.
- Additionally, they are highly aware of opportunity costs when deciding whether to visit the library. The fear of missing out (FOMO) is particularly strong among this age group, meaning they may feel reluctant to spend time away from activities such as gaming, social media, or streaming services.
- Any library-based offers or activities must be perceived as significantly valuable to overcome this barrier.

Late Teen

- Older teenagers may seek more variety in their use of library services, particularly in
- study-related resources and digital tools.
- If the library does not offer a clear advantage over other study spaces, they may opt for alternative environments, even if they're not as conducive to studying.
- They are also acutely aware of opportunity costs, time spent in the library must be worthwhile and provide tangible benefits when they could otherwise be socialising or participating in hobbies.

Use of library services

- **Early**

- Teenagers may require guidance in understanding how to use the library in a way that
- balances personal comfort with expected behaviour.
- If older teenagers are also present, younger ones may naturally observe and adapt to the social norms of the space.
- Their length of stay may vary depending on their reasons for visiting.
- Those with structured needs, such as a study session or waiting for a parent, may remain for a set period regardless of the atmosphere.
- Others may make brief visits to charge a phone or escape bad weather.
- If their expectations are not met, they are likely to leave quickly, treating the library as a transactional space rather than one that offers emotional or recreational engagement.

- **Late Teen**

- Older teens may require less behavioural modelling than younger teenagers but still
- benefit from clear guidance on available study spaces and digital resources.
- Their length of stay is often determined by structured academic needs, such as revision sessions or project deadlines.
- While some may use the library transactionally, others may develop a consistent routine, incorporating it into their academic habits.
- Encouraging a welcoming and well-equipped study environment can enhance their engagement and long-term use of the space.

Awareness and use of wide library services

- Early teens are likely to have a limited understanding of the full range of services offered by the library.
- For both early and late teens, while they will be aware that computers are available, they may not understand their potential uses.
- Similarly, although they know they have access to books, they may perceive them as unnecessary due to the availability of information online. They may consider e-resources to be useful but remain unaware of their existence.
- If they feel comfortable in the environment, free from a sense of being closely monitored by staff, who instead present themselves as supportive and approachable adults, they are more likely to be receptive to suggestions regarding the library's wider resources.
- Even if they do not immediately engage with these resources, increased awareness may encourage future use when needed.
- Enthusiasm to use the wider library services may be achieved by highlighting how many can be accessed for free. For early teens for whom money is limited, access to entertainment resources, such as e-books and gaming consoles, may be the 'gateway offer' that guarantees repeat visits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Early Teen

- Market the library as a welcoming, modern space rather than just a place for studying.
- Encourage peer-led promotion that involves students as ambassadors to share positive experiences and recommendations with friends.
- Host social-friendly events such as gaming nights, film screenings, or group study sessions to attract teenagers in a socially acceptable way.
- Allow informal social interaction within the library where groups of young teenagers are invited together and experience a freedom to socialise they didn't expect.
- Introduce cafe style options such as vending machines where early teens can buy affordable snacks, making the space more appealing.
- Encourage early teens to visit in groups and make the library more inclusive of casual activities beyond studying.
- Provide clear yet flexible guidelines on acceptable social behavior to balance order with freedom.
- Making it known that a responsible adult is present as drawing connections between the library and the school environment may help build confidence in visiting for the first time.
- Once young people feel comfortable in the space, additional resources and offers can be introduced to them as trust is built.
- Use reward systems or competitions to encourage the use of different resources.
- Highlight free ebooks, online courses, and other resources as valuable alternatives to paid platforms.
- Use Instagram, TikTok, or school announcements to promote library events and resources in a way that resonates with teens.

Late Teen

- Ensure high-speed WiFi and sufficient charging stations for devices.
- Promote the availability of e-resources, online journals, and specialist databases for academic research.
- Offer access to software useful for coursework, such as graphic design, coding, or essay-writing tools.
- Provide library orientations or 'study skills' workshops for sixth-form and college students.
- Allow for independent use of the space while ensuring staff support is available when needed.
- Maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment, ensuring diverse representation in library materials and events.
- Consider extending hours during exam seasons to accommodate study needs.
- Ensure weekend and evening access for students with busy schedules.
- Host revision sessions, study groups, and 'study with me' events.
- Organise workshops on research skills, academic writing, and time management.
- Offer casual, low-pressure social events that encourage engagement without disrupting study spaces.
- Address social and cultural barriers by normalising library use through peer-led initiatives.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

- Key areas of exploration would include the balance between practical needs (Wi-Fi, charging, study space) and emotional factors (safety, social acceptance).
- Research should aim to confirm whether libraries are seen primarily as secure, structured environments and how this perception may limit or encourage certain behaviors.
- Additionally, understanding the hesitations and skepticism students feel about the library's "uncool" image could help design interventions that make libraries more appealing to this age group.
- Investigating how library spaces can be reimagined to support social interaction and exploration beyond academic purposes would be crucial for bridging these gaps.
- Exploring the barriers students face, such as transportation issues, opening hours, and parental restrictions, is another area that requires attention. This can help determine what external factors influence decision-making.
- Furthermore, research should address the gaps in awareness about the full range of library services, especially digital and recreational resources.

RETIREMENT AGE (65 – 75)

ADDITIONAL NOTES: RETIREMENT AGE (75+)

For the purposes of this profile, individuals of retirement age will be classified as those between 65 and 75 years old, with those aged 75 and above being considered separately.

Perception of the library and motivations to visit

- People within the retirement age bracket are likely to engage with the library in goal-oriented and problem-solving capacities.
- While it is generally assumed that retirees visit the library primarily for access to books, it is important to recognise that the library may increasingly become a central part of their daily lives.
- With the additional spare time that retirement brings, many individuals seek new activities to engage in.
- Their motivations for visiting the library may include the pursuit of a pastime they previously had little time for, the exploration of new interests, opportunities for social interaction, or the development of new skills.
- Additionally, as of 2025, there remains a proportion of retirees who have limited experience with digital technology, although this trend is gradually diminishing. The library can serve as a valuable resource for these individuals, not only providing access to technology but also offering guidance and support.
- Beyond practical services, the library represents a community hub where retirees may reconnect with their local area and form relationships with library staff. The assurance that there is someone available to provide support or advice, sometimes on matters unrelated to library services, can be a significant factor in their continued engagement. #
- Many retirees hold positive perceptions of the library, even if their past usage has been infrequent, as they recognise its broader value as a community resource.

Willingness and ability to compromise

- Retirees generally have greater flexibility in their schedules compared to those who are still in employment.
- While disposable income may vary, many individuals in this age group are in a position to dedicate both time and financial resources to activities that interest them. This flexibility allows them to be more accommodating when it comes to scheduling, meaning they are less constrained by rigid time commitments.
- They may also be more willing to travel to a library that is not their nearest if a particular event or activity is of interest.
- The key factor influencing whether a retiree is willing to compromise on factors such as timing, location, or cost is the perceived value of the offering. With a greater understanding of their own interests and an appreciation for high-quality experiences, they are more inclined to invest their time, effort, and financial resources into attending events that align with their preferences.

Hesitations and skepticism

- By the time an individual reaches retirement age, many of the hesitations associated with new experiences have diminished. Years of experience and familiarity with various social and practical settings mean that most retirees feel confident in navigating a library visit. However, some uncertainty may persist, particularly regarding meeting new people or attending an activity for the first time. While this uncertainty is generally minimal, it could still act as a minor barrier to participation.
- Skepticism may arise regarding the relevance of the library's services to their specific needs. This is often due to a lack of awareness of the full range of offerings beyond traditional book lending.
- Ensuring that promotional materials clearly highlight the variety of available activities and services may help to mitigate such concerns.

Intolerance to ambiguity

- Older individuals, given their wealth of life experience, are generally adept at drawing logical connections and understanding the context of a library's offerings even if all details are not explicitly provided.
- However, towards the older end of the retirement age spectrum (70+), a lack of clarity in communication may be perceived as indicative of poor planning or a lower-quality service.
- As a result, retirees may prefer more traditional methods of communication that are straightforward and easily comprehensible. Ensuring that information is presented in a clear and structured manner, with minimal ambiguity, will be essential in maintaining engagement and fostering trust in the library's services.

Decision-making processes

- Despite having more free time, retirees are unlikely to act entirely spontaneously.
- Many individuals within this age range maintain structured daily and weekly routines, and while they may have greater flexibility, they are still likely to plan their activities in advance.
- Library events and group sessions may be scheduled into their routine as a regular feature, with planning typically occurring one to two weeks in advance.
- General visits to the library, on the other hand, are more likely to be planned a day or two beforehand, with the length of planning time increasing with age.
- Retirees tend to be thorough in their decision-making, preferring to understand all relevant details before committing to an activity. Once a decision has been made, they are likely to take note of key information to avoid last-minute confusion.
- Those who have recently retired may still have strong networks of friends or former colleagues whose opinions they trust.
- For older retirees, recommendations may increasingly come from professionals such as healthcare workers or public service providers. As individuals approach the upper end of this age range, they may become less confident in making decisions independently and may rely more on external guidance and support.

Variety-seeking behaviour

- The degree to which retirees seek variety in their library engagement depends largely on the individual. Some view retirement as an opportunity to explore new interests, meet new people, and participate in a range of activities. These individuals are likely to engage with multiple library services and offerings once they perceive the library as a high-quality facility.
- Conversely, other retirees may have a clear idea of what they wish to achieve through their library visits. For these individuals, variety may be acknowledged but ultimately disregarded in favour of fulfilling a specific goal.
- Understanding these differing motivations can help in tailoring library offerings to appeal to both groups.

Awareness and use of wider library services

- By the time they reach retirement, most individuals have a broad awareness of the library's core services, including access to books, computers, printing, photocopying, and audio materials. If they have previously visited the library with their children, they may also be aware of additional services.
- With fewer work and life commitments, retirees now have the opportunity to engage more deeply with the full range of library services. This includes exploring less commonly known offerings such as the rental of games consoles or iPads.
- Increasing awareness of these services could encourage greater engagement and further integrate the library into their daily lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure promotional materials clearly highlight the full range of library offerings, including lesser-known services such as digital technology loans and gaming console rentals.
- Use clear, structured, and traditional communication methods to provide comprehensive information. Avoid ambiguity, particularly for those in the older retirement age bracket.
- Offer both structured and flexible opportunities to engage, catering to retirees who seek variety as well as those with specific goals.
- Facilitate community-building initiatives within the library to help retirees reconnect with their local area and form relationships with staff and other visitors.
- Recognise that some retirees are willing to travel for high-value activities. Ensure library services and events are well advertised across multiple locations to encourage participation beyond their closest branch.
- Offer guidance on digital technology for those who may be less experienced, ensuring that all retirees can benefit from modern library services.
- Offer clear event calendars with enough notice for retirees to plan attendance in advance, accommodating their preference for structured routines.
- Engage with local community groups, healthcare professionals, and public service providers to help increase awareness and trust in library services among older retirees.
- Focus on delivering well-organised, valuable, and engaging activities that retirees perceive as worth their time and effort.
- Recognise that younger retirees may be more independent in their choices, whereas older retirees may rely on external influences, adjusting engagement strategies accordingly.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

- Investigate whether factors such as travel limitations, digital literacy gaps, or social confidence impact attendance.
- Assess current digital skills and identify effective training methods to increase engagement with online library services.
- Research should aim to assess to what degree retirees value the library as a community hub and appreciate interactions with staff, how they perceive and compare different library branches.
- Additionally, research could explore whether location loyalty exists or if retirees are willing to travel for better services.
- Furthermore, asking to what extent does digital engagement complement or replace in-person visits would go some way in understanding whether retirees prefer a hybrid approach or if digital services serve a different function altogether.
- Exploring what role intergenerational programming plays? Examining whether retirees are interested in activities that connect them with younger generations and how such offerings could be structured.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: RETIREMENT AGE (75+)

- Health and mobility limitations significantly impact older adults' ability to visit libraries and engage with their services.
- Reduced independence, increased healthcare appointments, and home visits from carers can make it challenging for individuals to access the library, even if they have a strong interest in doing so.
- Many older adults would welcome the possibility of library services being brought to them at home, ensuring they can continue to benefit from library resources despite physical constraints.
- While digital options provide an alternative means of accessing library services, a notable proportion of individuals over 75 in 2025 may lack the necessary digital literacy to navigate online resources confidently.
- However, as time progresses, more people in this age group will already have digital proficiency, making online services a more viable solution for future generations.
- Libraries could consider offering remote assistance or digital literacy training to help bridge this gap, ensuring equitable access to services.
- Transportation remains a critical factor influencing library visits for older adults. Many rely on support from family, friends, or community transport services such as Ring and Ride to access the library.
- Even when transport is available, their time in the library may be limited due to fatigue, mobility concerns, or safety considerations. Ensuring that library spaces are easily navigable, comfortable, and accommodating to these needs can help enhance their experience.
- Expanding home-based services, improving accessibility, and offering hybrid digital and in-person solutions would allow libraries to continue serving older adults effectively.

UNEMPLOYED

Perception of the library and motivations to visit

- Individuals experiencing unemployment are most likely to visit the library for goal-oriented reasons rather than for recreational or educational purposes.
- A significant proportion of unemployed individuals rely on the library for essential services, particularly those provided through Customer Access Points (CAP), which offer links to council services such as council tax inquiries and waste collection.
- The library is frequently used by individuals receiving Universal Credit and other benefits, as it provides access to digital resources and support that may not be readily available elsewhere.
- However, there may be a perceived stigma associated with visiting the library for these purposes. Some unemployed individuals may feel judged for their circumstances, leading to a sense of discomfort or reluctance to use the library.
- This perception may stem from concerns about standing out or being identified as someone experiencing financial hardship.
- It is important to note that, within this profile, unemployment is defined as individuals who are actively seeking employment. Those who are unable to work due to disability or other circumstances will be addressed separately.

Willingness and ability to compromise

- Unemployment presents numerous challenges that often require individuals to make compromises in various aspects of their lives.
- Those who are actively seeking employment are likely to take proactive steps to improve their situation, including accessing relevant support services to alleviate some of the pressures they face.
- However, the extent to which they can compromise is often constrained by the financial limitations that accompany unemployment. For example, reduced income may limit their ability to travel to the library, making access to its services more difficult.
- Additionally, unemployment is frequently associated with mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression. While an individual may technically have the ability to compromise and adapt, the psychological impact of unemployment can create significant barriers.
- Low mood and anxiety may make it difficult to engage with services, even when they are beneficial. This highlights the need for accessible and low-pressure support that takes mental health considerations into account.

Skepticisms

- Unemployed individuals may experience a sense of hopelessness, particularly if they have faced prolonged difficulties in securing work.
- As a result, they may be sceptical about the extent to which the library can provide meaningful support or services that could improve their circumstances.
- If they do not immediately perceive the library as a place that offers practical assistance, they may be less inclined to engage with its services.

Intolerance to ambiguity

- The experience of unemployment can be overwhelming, requiring individuals to focus their energy on job-seeking and financial management while coping with emotional distress.
- Given these pressures, unemployed individuals are likely to seek clear, direct, and easily accessible information regarding the services available to them.
- Ambiguous or overly complex information can be a significant barrier. If library services are not communicated in a straightforward manner, outlining exactly what is available, how it can be accessed, and how it will benefit them, individuals may simply overlook them.
- If they find the process confusing or time-consuming, they may decide not to engage, even if the service would ultimately be beneficial to them.

Decision-making processes

- Decision-making among unemployed individuals is often driven by a sense of urgency. Accessing financial support or other essential services may be a pressing need, leading to quick, direct decision-making when a service is perceived as immediately useful.
- However, in cases where psychological distress is particularly severe, individuals may experience procrastination or hesitation, delaying engagement with services even when they recognise their potential benefits.
- Trusted professionals, such as job centre staff or employment advisors, may play a key role in influencing decision-making.
- A recommendation from a credible source may encourage individuals to access library services that they might otherwise overlook.
- However, it is important to acknowledge that feelings of hopelessness can impact rational decision-making, potentially leading individuals to disregard helpful opportunities.
- Additionally, some unemployed individuals may be required to engage with specific services as part of their obligations under Universal Credit or other benefit schemes. In such cases, decision-making is less about personal choice and more about fulfilling mandated requirements.
- Given that financial pressures are often the most significant concern, services that directly address financial challenges, such as job-seeking resources, digital skills training, or benefits assistance, are likely to be the most compelling factors in decision-making.

Variety-seeking behaviour

- Unemployed individuals are unlikely to seek a diverse range of library services.
- Their primary focus is on managing the immediate pressures of unemployment, meaning they will typically engage with the library in a highly targeted manner. Recreational or non-essential activities are unlikely to be a priority.
- However, for those who have been unemployed for an extended period, there may be some interest in engaging with alternative library services as a means of respite. Over time, once individuals have adjusted to their circumstances and feel less immediate anxiety about their situation, they may be more open to exploring additional library offerings.

Awareness and use of wider library services

- While unemployed individuals may be aware of the broader range of services offered by the library, they may not be in a position to engage with them during their period of unemployment.
- Their primary focus is likely to be on services that address their immediate needs, such as job-seeking support, internet access, and financial assistance resources.
- That being said, certain wider library services may still hold relevance, particularly those that could support individuals in re-entering employment. Digital skills training, educational courses, and access to online job-search platforms could be particularly valuable. Libraries could play a key role in introducing these services to unemployed individuals, ensuring they are aware of opportunities that could enhance their employability in the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that information about services is easy to understand, using straightforward language and avoiding unnecessary complexity.
- Promote the library as a multi-purpose community hub to normalise its use for employment support, reducing any perceived stigma.
- Encourage inclusive messaging that highlights a diverse range of users and services, rather than focusing exclusively on job-seekers.
- Provide discreet access to employment-related services, such as designated areas or self-service digital resources, to allow for more privacy.
- Offer flexible and low-pressure ways to engage with services, such as drop-in sessions and self-paced online resources.
- Train library staff to recognise the impact of mental health challenges on engagement and provide support in a non-intimidating manner.
- Ensure all service descriptions clearly outline what is available, how to access it, and the benefits it provides, avoiding ambiguous or overly complex explanations.
- Use bullet points, infographics, and FAQs to present information concisely.
- Regularly review and simplify service descriptions to remove unnecessary jargon or technical language.
- Develop personalised support services where individuals can receive guidance on the most suitable resources for their needs.
- Introduce structured programmes that help unemployed individuals build skills over time, such as digital literacy training, CV writing workshops, or interview preparation sessions.
- Consider offering peer support groups or informal networking opportunities to help unemployed individuals share experiences and find support.
- Provide flexible, low-commitment activities for long-term unemployed individuals who may benefit from non-essential services as a form of respite.
- Regularly review and adapt services based on feedback from unemployed library users.
- Provide staff training to increase awareness of the challenges unemployed individuals face and how best to support them.



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