

Stock Policy

Torbay Library
Services

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1. Introduction

The library service is affected by many factors both internal and external and these factors are reflected in the Stock Policy that sets out the principles governing the purchase and management of materials for the authority.

The policy will:

- Inform current working practices
- Ensure the uniform management of stock
- Ensure the efficient and effective use of resources
- Provide a framework to use in working towards the Public Library Service Standards

There are a number of policies for specific areas:

- Reference and Information Services – see ‘Policy Statement for Reference and Information Services’.
- Local Studies – see ‘Policy Statement for Local Studies Services’.
- Children and Young People – see ‘Policy Statement for Services to Children and Young People’.
- Inclusion Services – see ‘Policy Statement for Inclusion Services’.
- Stack Management document

Subject to budgetary constraints, the overall aim is to provide a comprehensive overall stock that will meet the needs of the whole community, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion and beliefs or disability.

2 Legal Background and other influences

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (section 7) states:

“It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”

and

“a library authority shall in particular have regard to...the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangements with other library authorities, and by any other appropriate means, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter, and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children”.

Statutes that can influence the emphasis upon stock management are:

- British Phonographic Institute/Library Association Agreement 1994
- Children Act 1989
- Computer Misuse act 1990
- Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1995
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (2005)
- EC Directive No 77/62 (Public Procurement)

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991
- Local Government Act 1999 (2003)
- Obscene Publications Act 1959, amended 1964
- Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Video Recording Act 1984

Guidance is also provided by the ‘National Acquisition Group Code of Conduct for the acquisition and supply of library materials’.

The Local Government Act 1999 requires a library authority to “make arrangement to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has produced a set of Public Library Service Standards against which library authorities will measure performance and which will assist the Audit Commission in their Best Value assessments of library services. BV 220 – Compliance against the Public Library Service Standards and CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) 2006 are also relevant. ‘Framework for the Future’, DCMS’ 10 year vision for the future of public library services, and its application will be considered.

Public Library Standards

The table below details the Public Library Service Standards (PLSS) relevant to the management of stock:

PLSS	Detail	Standard
3	Percentage of static libraries (as defined by CIPFA) providing access to electronic information resources connected to the Internet	100%
5	Percentage of requests for books met within: 1. 7 days 2. 15 days 3. 30 days	Percentage of requests for books met within: 1. 50% 2. 70% 3. 85%
7	Overall Adult user satisfaction taken from PLUS (Public Library User Survey)	94%
8	Overall user satisfaction taken from Children's PLUS survey	90%
9	Annual items added through purchase per 1000 population	216 per thousand
10	Time taken to replenish the lending stock on open access or available on loan	6.7 years

The library service will strive to maintain these standards within the constraints of the budget.

3 Freedom of choice

We aim to provide, within our financial limitations, a wide range of stock that promotes all aspects of life and we take the responsibility not to act as a censor or to promote individual opinion or prejudice. We take our lead from the following statement made by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP):

“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 a 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”

Publications that are legally available will not be excluded. Each will be evaluated and judged by the standards and selection criteria set out below. The stock will, therefore, reflect all shades of opinion.

4 ‘Stock and its role’

Stock is the core of the library service. This policy defines stock as being all the materials, printed, non-printed and electronic, acquired or borrowed by Torbay Library Services to meet the needs of the community.

The stock of Torbay Library Services is a service wide resource managed as a single entity.

We will offer the same range of services in each of our libraries, though the level of provision will reflect the overall size of the holding library.

Each service point will reflect individual branch requirements, give access to the whole collection, and to the national library network.

Information on items for loan can be accessed by any customer through the catalogue in each branch library and via the Internet.

Stock quality will be improved over time, within budgetary limits, to reflect the community’s needs, whether this is to provide learning, inspiration or enjoyment.

We will continue to monitor and assess stock provision, using Public Library User Surveys (PLUS) to encourage customers to play an integral part in the development of their library service.

We will provide a varied and balanced stock, reflecting current interests whilst maintaining an appropriate core stock for historical record.

5 Budget Management

The size of the Resources Fund will be determined at the beginning of each financial year. The breakdown of expenditure within the Resources Fund will be agreed at Management Group, following consultation with Branch Librarians, the Reference and Information Services Librarian,

Young People's Services Librarian, Inclusion Services Co-ordinator and the Resources and Technical Services department.

The core lending service is free to all members. However, the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, and Local Government Act of 1988, allow libraries to charge for reservations and the loan of certain non-book materials.

6 Selection criteria

6.1 Book stock

Fiction

A wide range of titles will be considered for purchase, including new authors, popular authors, English translations, classics, standard works and graphic novels.

In selecting fiction stock we will provide works which:

- Provide entertainment and leisure reading
- Extend literacy
- Encourage the reluctant reader
- Develop a wider reading outlook including books reflecting cultural diversity

Non-fiction

We will select from a wide variety of stock covering subjects at a range of levels from basic skills to undergraduate level. Materials of local interest will be purchased for both lending and reference collections. When selecting non-fiction stock, we will give emphasis to:

- Supporting individual lifelong learning
- Assisting personal development
- Promoting positive use of leisure time
- Furthering knowledge of the local area and its history
- Providing entertainment and relaxation

The following points are also considered during stock selection:

- **Quality** - Merits of author, series, reputable publisher, estimated shelf life, binding
- **Presentation** - Paper quality, typography, illustrations
- **Currency** - Current affairs, new edition, accurate and comprehensive contents
- **Relevance** - Fluctuating demands, topical interest, balanced stock, specific and known demands, needs and interest of community, best in field, stock gap
- **Graduate and research material** is provided, where appropriate, through selective purchase and interlending.
- **Sequel** - Do we hold previous title in this sequence?
- **Local interest** - for example the fishing industry at Brixham
- **Ethnicity** - Changes in the local ethnic minority population including people whose first language is not English
- **Ease of use** - Social inclusion needs
- **Format** - A variety of formats will be purchased i.e. hardback, paperback, spoken word, large print and multimedia but some formats may be inappropriate for library use and will not be purchased
- **Cost** - Value for money

- **Popularity** - Reviews, reader request, issuability
- **Existing stock**
- **Proportion** of Fiction to Non-fiction stock

Stock Analysis is used to look at the usage of different areas of stock and to help plan future purchases.

6.2 Newspapers and Periodicals

All libraries will take current local newspapers, plus a selection of national papers and periodicals. Libraries will also have access, where possible, to those newspapers published on the Internet. The selection criteria will reflect the readership of the local community. See: Policy statement for Reference and Information Services.

6.3 Audio Visual

We aim to buy a range of titles to reflect a variety of tastes and interests and to maximise income generation.

Spoken word will be purchased centrally in both cassette and CD formats to reflect the varied needs throughout Torbay. However items of less than 30 minutes duration are not normally bought, unless the content is considered to be of particular significance. See: Policy statement for Inclusion Services.

Foreign language material will be acquired in a variety of formats to support local interest.

6.4 Music and Drama

Torbay Library Services has joint arrangements with both Plymouth Library Services and Devon Library and Information Services for music scores and play sets. Extensive collections of music and play sets are located in Exeter and Plymouth Central Libraries, and Torbay borrowers, through the joint arrangements, have access to specialist staff and sets of music and plays. A small collection of single copy music scores is held by Torbay Library Services.

We will abide by the stipulations of the British Phonographic Institute (BPI). This agreement means that libraries may not legally lend new music items until 3 months after the date of release. Music is purchased centrally and we aim to buy a range of music that reflects a variety of tastes and interests and to maximise income generation.

6.5 Digital materials

Increasingly, material is becoming available in a range of digital formats including CD-ROM, DVD E-books and via online subscription. These will be assessed for suitability and the replacement of materials in a more traditional format. We will also look at ways of improving the range and quality of information made available using this technology.

7 Acquisition

The stock selection team carries out stock selection.

7.1 Appointment of Suppliers

Torbay Library Services is part of a book stock-purchasing consortium, which enables us to gain competitive discounts whilst maintaining a high quality of service. At appropriate times, the purchase of materials will be put out to tender by the consortium in order to secure best value. Important considerations will be purchase price, processing, bibliographical information and the ability to meet delivery targets. Where possible the library service will work in partnership with other organisations on cost cutting projects with common goals.

7.2 Processes

Stock will be selected by a variety of methods including the use of bibliographic sources, the Internet, CD-ROMs, publisher information, booklists and recommendations and requests from members of the public and staff, as appropriate. As part of the purchasing consortium, we will continue to work closely with our appointed suppliers to benefit from their expertise and ongoing innovative ideas; this includes the potentials of supplier selection of stock for lending materials.

The Resources and Technical Services department will place orders for stock using the DS Galaxy system. Orders will be sent by the most effective method. Orders will be monitored at all times. The efficiency of the procurement process will be re-assessed at regular intervals.

Each library supplier has a copy of servicing and processing procedures. Wherever possible, all stock will be supplied “shelf ready”. All stock in a particular format will be processed in the same way to ease transfer and circulation. New items will be added to the library catalogue, and made available for public use as soon as possible.

7.3 Donations

Donations are accepted, on the understanding that they become the property of the library service. We reserve the right to use donated material to the best advantage of the service and, should the decision be made not to add them to stock, items may be disposed of.

7.4 Unsolicited items

Items sent to the library services without an official order will be assessed by the stock selection team. However, if not purchased they will not be returned to the sender unless postage and packing have been included. We reserve the right not to purchase stock that we do not feel will benefit the library service.

8 Management of Stock

Management of stock is “based on the principle that the library’s stock should be viewed as one complete stock which is made available to customers through a network of service points, rather than viewing it as a series of separate collections. (*Audit Commission: Due for Renewal 1997*)

8.1 Circulation

- In order to maximise usage and availability of stock at all libraries, stock will be circulated on a regular, programmed basis, enabling library users to see a wider, more diverse range of titles on library shelves and making maximum use of limited resources.

8.2 Reservations

Reservations may be placed for materials not immediately available, although supply cannot be guaranteed. We aim to supply 50% of requests within 7 days, 70% within 15 days and 85% within 30 days.

The following criteria are used:

- Title in stock and on the shelf – the Galaxy system automatically sends messages around the branches for the first available copy
- Titles held in stock but currently on loan - a reservation is set onto the Galaxy system
- Titles not in stock but available for purchase will be considered for purchase.
- If the purchase price of the item is lower than the cost of inter-library loan, and the item is in print, the item may be purchased
- Titles not in stock and either not available for purchase, or not considered suitable for purchase, may be satisfied using the inter-library loan service
- If we are unable to satisfy requests, library customers will be informed

We subscribe to SWRLS (The South West Regional Library System) CONARLS (the Circle of Officers of National and Regional Library Systems) Unity UK and make use of the British Library Document Supply Service.

8.3 Shelf Organisation

As a result of PLUS (Public Library User Survey), shelf heights throughout the service will, where possible, be adjusted to increase accessibility. Guiding is provided via the OPAC (on-line public access catalogue), subject index and self help leaflets.

The catalogue is available in all libraries on public terminals and may be accessed from library web pages (www.torbay.gov.uk/libraries). Adult fiction item records are annotated to give guidance about the genre of the title.

Fiction is generally shelved in alphabetical order. New books will display spine labels indicating major genres; non-fiction is classified using the Dewey decimal classification. Audio-visual material is colour coded with explanatory guiding.

8.4 Security and Stock Loss

Library stock is protected by security systems in Torbay libraries.

A system of overdue letters is in place. Charges for lost and damaged items reflect the age, condition and rarity of the item.

8.5 Editing and Revision

Specialist staff, under the management of the Resources and Technical Services Librarian and the Professional Services Librarian, carry out stock editing and revision. The system is continuous, systematic and critical.

Stock management is an essential task and the following principles and criteria are used:

- Stock should change and develop to meet current needs
- Items that have not issued within a given time should be considered for circulation, stack or be removed from stock
- Non Fiction books containing information that is out of date will be removed
- Regular shelf checking for worn and dirty stock will take place in each library
- Some material is of limited appeal and over represented subjects will be edited
- Duplicate titles in excess of local requirements will be removed
- In Local Studies the emphasis will be on conservation
- Historical value will be considered
- If a replacement copy or later edition is available, this will be purchased and replace the old copy where possible

8.6 Stock Maintenance

Decisions to rebind, repair or replace items are made using the following criteria:

8.6.1 Repair

- If the item is worth retaining and damage is minor

8.6.2 Rebind

- If cost effective
- If the item is suitable for this process
- If the item has historical value

8.6.3 Replace

- Availability and cost of a replacement copy
- If beyond repair and rebinding but considered a valuable item
- Later edition available

8.7 Retention of infrequently used material

See stack management document.

8.8 Disposal

Withdrawn items will be offered to other libraries, sold or sent for recycling.

9 Promotion

The promotion of the stock is crucial to enhance good customer care and helps to inform choice. We endeavour to do this through:

- Guiding on the shelves
- Access to the library catalogue – available through public access terminals in each library and our web site www.torbay.gov.uk/libraries
- The Stock Promotion group
- Publicising events – for example our Reader Development Groups and children’s activities
- Awareness lists
- A rolling programme of themed stock promotions
- Making best use of national promotions and agencies such as the Reading Agency and Branching Out

10 Evaluation

Data relating to levels of provision and use of stock is collected annually for benchmarking, Public Library Standards, CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants), CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment), SQHC (Stock Quality Health Check) and for internal use. Customer surveys will also be carried out to assist the library service to make informed decisions on stock purchase and use.

Management information reports will be run using the DS Galaxy system to highlight stock use and performance.

The library service aims to co-operate with library authorities and other agencies, including departments within Torbay Council, to improve the service given to customers and to improve the development of the service for the future.

11 Conclusion

The Stock Management Policy is reviewed annually with a view to further developing the resources of Torbay Library Services.

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